

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**THE USE OF CRITICAL LITERACY THEORIES AS AN APPROACH TO  
TEACHING ENGLISH AS A HOME LANGUAGE TO LEARNERS AT A DURBAN  
SECONDARY SCHOOL UTILISING COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS**

**By**

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## DECLARATION

I, **Saloshini Pather**, hereby declare that, except for referenced citations, this is my original work.

Signature 

**S Pather**

I declare that the dissertation is ready for examination.

  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Professor R J Balfour**

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## ABSTRACT

As a former journalist and a columnist for the very first community newspaper in Chatsworth: the *Chatsworth SUN*, which is no longer in circulation, and a teacher of English Home Language at secondary school level for twenty years, my research project combines an interest in print media with my efforts to promote a pedagogy in which issues of inclusion, access, and identity are addressed.

The impetus for this study was a research assignment I conducted in 2002 for the "Introduction to Research Methods" module of this degree. I carried out a survey at my school that aimed at ascertaining the media habits among a class of Grade 10 learners. The survey revealed important information regarding 'newspaper reading habits'. Almost every learner read the weekly community newspapers or 'knock and drop' publications circulated free of charge to almost every household in Chatsworth, south of Durban, where the majority of learners, of Indian descent, resided. In some cases these were the only publications that learners read. In 2003, I therefore decided to involve the same learners in a research project for the dissertation component of the degree. The Project would allow the learners to become active and critical participants in the media culture that is omnipresent in their lives. Interesting perspectives on issues of identity, ethnicity, and gender would emerge from this heterogeneous sample, which included five African learners, in the deconstruction of community newspapers that targeted Indian readers.

Community newspapers, by virtue of their convenience of access, are potentially very influential publications and the research project provided the opportunity to assess and change attitudes to the discourses that arise from reading such newspapers. Particularly important are the ideologies, hegemonies and issues of power found in the language of these community newspapers, as well as the technological and production processes involved. Hence, the main objective of my study was to narrow the divide that exists between educational experience and the real world. I demonstrate this in the thesis through the interactive application of Critical Literacy theories to printed texts by learners who deconstruct, critique, and subvert taken-for-granted assumptions that result from submissive interpretation of media like the community newspapers.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Audit Bureau of Circulations
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AMPS	All Media Products Survey
ANC	African National Congress
ASA	Advertising Standards Authority
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CEM	Council of Education Ministers
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CLA	Critical Language Awareness
CPA	Community Press Association
C2005	Curriculum 2005
DET	Department of Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
HoA	Houses of Assembly
HoD	House of Delegates
HoR	House of Representatives
HSDPA	High Speed Download Packet Access
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LLC	Language, Literature and Communication
LRE	Library Resource Education
LTSMs	Learner and Teacher Support Materials
LSM	Living Standards Measurement
MDDA	Media Development and Diversity Agency
MWASA	Media Workers' Association of South Africa
NAB	National Advertising Bureau
NECC	National Education Co-ordinating Committee
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NIC	Natal Indian Congress
NLS	National Literacy Strategy (United Kingdom)
NSC	National Senior Certificate
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PMSA	Print Media South Africa
PPN	Post-Provisioning Norms
RNCS	National Curriculum Statement
SAARF	South African Advertising Research Foundation
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SANEF	South African Press Association
SASM	South African Students' Movement
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
SSRC	Soweto Students Representative Council
3G	Third Generation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to establish the levels at which the community newspaper can be utilised to facilitate the implementation of the theories of Critical Literacy in the English Home Language classroom in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (Grades 10, 11 and 12). The first area of focus, Critical Literacy, has dominated the teaching of English in countries like the United States of America, Britain, Canada and Australia, but remains emergent in South Africa. The second focus area of the project, community newspapers, highlights the need for learners to be media literate in an increasingly media-dominated space. In this Chapter, I examine the rationale for the research project; highlight the four key questions that the project intended to address; provide an overall summary of the research methodologies and Critical Literacy theories employed in the project, and outline the different chapters of the thesis, of which Chapters 6 and 7 describe the manner in which the classroom intervention unfolded.

### 1.2 Critical Literacy: the first focus area

At the time of embarking on the Community Newspaper Project in 2003, education was in a transitional state from apartheid to democracy. The discourses of freedom that came with democracy filtered into the design of a new curriculum which went through many stages of refurbishment outlined in this thesis before finally being implemented as the *National Curriculum Statement (NCS)* (2003) in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase in 2006. The first group of matriculants graduated with National Senior Certificates (NSC) at the end of 2008 having been products of the methodology of Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

Critical discourses, being synonymous with democracy (Mather, 1996: 2), have informed the didactic basis of the *NCS* (2003) with the generic critical and developmental outcomes of the new curriculum, forming the foundation for meaningful change shifting away from the pedagogies that underpinned apartheid education.

When the project was undertaken in 2003/2004, critical discourses were not (and are still not) the dominant discourses in the English curriculum, both for me as an educator and for the

learners involved in the project. Therefore, learners' prior engagement with mainstream literacy practices pertaining to the pedagogy of English that they were already acquainted with, was used as a point of departure and lessons were synchronised into the English syllabus at the time. Thereafter, Critical Literacy theories like Intertextuality, Reader Response Theory, Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Language Awareness and Genre Theory were integrated into the lesson design of English and mediated to learners using a learner-centred pedagogy<sup>1</sup>.

The fundamental principles of the new *NCS* (2003) display evidence in the Languages Learning Field, of which English Home Language is a component, of the filtering of Critical Literacy into its framework on the teaching and learning of the eleven official languages at home and first additional language levels.

Furthermore, the *Learning Programme Guidelines: Languages (English)* (DoE, 2005: 23), one of the key documents that formed the basis of the workshops aimed at training teachers to implement the *NCS* in 2006, refers directly to Critical Literacy, along with media, computer, information and visual literacy, as one of the key forms of literacy that will transform the curriculum. Various ways in which teachers can develop Critical Literacy are outlined by the document. This project then, was forward-looking in piloting the Critical Literacy theories in the English classroom prior to them being introduced in the form of policy. Two of the four key questions in this project prompt the examination of engagement with Critical Literacy. These key questions are:

- How can the key concepts of Critical Literacy theories, that form the basis of this research Project, be utilised to inform the lesson design and pedagogy in the English Home Language class in the FET phase?
- How viable are Critical Literacy theories within the present English Home Language Curriculum in the FET phase?

In later chapters these key questions will examine the efficacy of using Critical Literacy theories within the framework of the English Home Language syllabus positioned in relation to the four fundamental learning outcomes of the subject in the *NCS* (2003): Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting, and Language.

Next, I summarise the remaining two key critical questions of the research project which are appropriate to the second focus area of the project, community newspapers.

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<sup>1</sup> This is discussed in detail in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

### 1.3 Community newspapers: the second focus area

The fact that the community newspapers analysed are circulated in the predominantly 'Indian' township of Chatsworth, incited two further important key questions, the third and fourth of the research project, to be addressed. The third question was:

- do these publications 'promote a narrow sense of community and ethnocentrism' (Steenveld, 2002: 17), perpetuating the legacy of damaging stereotypes left over from the days of apartheid? Or, conversely, do they provide an important narrative of community values and culture for people of Indian origin in the South African demographic milieu?

This question will be considered in later chapters by examining the locality, use of language and advertising of the community newspapers.

In this twenty-first century, media is ubiquitous; therefore we need to acknowledge the undeniable power of the media and its considerable impact globally. The lifestyles of people, not only in Chatsworth or South Africa but all over the world, are changing rapidly and according to Mather (1996: 2), changing structures of society, the marketing of products and ideas via multimedia, increasing social and cultural diversity and, the overload of information from all over the globe, means that literacy needs to be for lifelong learning. A critically literate learner will be armed with the skills to avoid the pitfalls, for example, of specious advertising; get-rich-quick schemes, time-share scams; political rhetoric; indoctrination; media bias; twisted statistics and other ills prevalent in an information-driven society.

Therefore, I would like to argue that media education must feature more intensively and extensively in order to be meaningful, particularly in the indigenous languages, and in time, as a subject in its own right. With this in mind it can be concluded that educational systems, especially in South Africa, can no longer delay their obligation to promote in learners a critical understanding of media in a dominantly digital era. My small-scale media project was an attempt to instil in learners that critical understanding of the kind of media they are exposed to regularly.

In being critical of media, it is imperative that learners, amongst other aspects, examine the power of advertising to generate a considerable income for media owners, explicitly the owners of community newspapers who distribute their publications free but still make a substantial profit. In relation to this the fourth and final important key question has to be addressed:

- are community publications simply 'revenue streams' or do they provide social and political resources for critically thinking citizens? (Steenveld, 2002: 17)

This question too will be discussed in chapters to follow by exploring the ownership and operating logistics of the community newspapers.

#### **1.4 A summary of the research methodologies used in the Community Newspaper Project**

The research methodologies employed in this project are case study and action research. The reason for using the case study is that it documents the experiences, thoughts and views of the participant while the justification for the use of action research was the improvement of pedagogic practice. With action research, lessons are designed to empower participants through research involvement and ideology critique, and to facilitate social democracy and equality (Cohen *et al*, 2000: 79). This form of research is synonymous with the promotion of critical discourses.

The research project included two questionnaires (one for learners and one for managing editors of the community newspapers) and a semi-structured interview schedule (for the Managing Editors). The qualitative instruments included lessons based on Critical Literacy theories and methodology (please see Annexure D1-9), and field notes which were recorded during and after each lesson (please see Annexure F).

I chose to work with the learners from the Grade 11A/12A class (many of whom constituted the sample for my "Introduction to Research Methods" assignment mentioned earlier) since they were at ease with the notion of research and with me and were in a more favourable position because of their prior engagement with media discourses<sup>2</sup>. In addition, their general academic performance was above average and furthermore the learners in the Grade 11A/12A class were also fairly well disciplined compared to other classes that I taught. The respondents chosen were therefore well-disposed to the demands of the Community Newspaper Project.

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<sup>2</sup> In 2002 I had conducted a project for the "Introduction to Research Methods" course with learners from the 10A class, the same group of learners who were in 11A in 2003. Learners were required to keep a media diary for a week in which they recorded their daily interaction with different kinds of media. In addition, learners engaged in other activities that involved in-depth discussions on media. Their prior engagement with media, therefore, made the majority of Grade 11A learners well-disposed to working with the Community Newspaper Project.

## 1.5 A summary of the Critical Literacy theories utilised in the Community Newspaper Project

The main Critical Literacy theories, already mentioned, that inform the project are essentially concerned with the extent and the ways in which actual and possible social practices of reading and writing enable human subjects to understand and engage with the politics of daily life (Lankshear and McLaren, 1993: 6). These theories will be summarised next.

Intertextuality can be understood as a process that permeates two levels. The first concerns the *writer* of a text who is first a reader of texts before he or she is an author of a text and therefore his or her work includes references, quotations and influences of every kind that he or she may have encountered in the past. The second is based on the fact that once that text is passed on to the reader, he or she brings to it the texts they may have read which leads to different interpretations of the text. A text is therefore a product of hybridisation (Still and Worton, 1993: 1-2).

Reader-Response Theory takes into account a learner's personal response to a text, focussing on relevance to a learner's life. It allows room for creativity and reflective thinking and provides genuine engagement between the text and the learner. It is aimed at increased 'self-knowledge', where students gain awareness of their own involvement with the text (Ali, 1993: 288).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is central to Critical Language Awareness and Critical Literacy. Fairclough (1995: 56) advocates that changing practices of media discourse relate to wider processes of social and cultural change, that discourse refers broadly to knowledge and knowledge construction, for example, Liberal, Marxist discourses, educational discourses and conventional medical discourses. Fairclough's (1995: 66), three-dimensional model for Critical Discourse Analysis was used as part of the lesson design of the curriculum intervention.

Critical Language Awareness (CLA), in essence, is CDA in practice and goes beyond meaning lying with the text or reader. The source of meaning is a result of a process that involves the reader, the text, and the social and political conditions of society, orienting learners to question their role in relation to power relations in society. Essential to CLA is 'positioning', how texts position readers and how readers position themselves when engaging

with texts. Texts do ideological work by positioning us. Important questions about the text, plot and characters illustrate how the reader is oriented in specific ways of perceiving, thinking and feeling (Misson, 1998: 108). From a pedagogical perspective, the engagement of CLA work encourages the development of creative, constructive subjects who are capable of resisting dominant discursive practices and contributing to processes of social transformation. Janks' work on CLA, in South Africa, especially as editor of *The Critical Language Awareness Series* (1990), represents some of the primary examples of resources for the English language classroom using a critical pedagogy. They are aimed at increasing knowledge of CLA discourses at secondary school level (Janks, 1997: 1-19) and are valuable and meaningful to the development of a critical pedagogy in this country within the new *NCS* (2003).

Genre is the use of language associated with and constituting part of some particular social practice, such as interviewing people (interview genre) or advertising commodities (advertising genre). Each genre is different and has its own structure (Fairclough, 1995: 56). When engaging with print media, the number of genres that are constituted within newspapers makes the concept relatively easy for learners to grasp. Generally, the theoretical basis of the project had to be approached in an uncomplicated manner in order to be used effectively by learners when analysing texts, including community newspapers.

## **1.6. A summary of the framework of the thesis**

This section summarises the framework of each of the chapters of the thesis that collectively explored contexts, histories, academic foundations, methodologies, the classroom intervention, analyses and findings that underpinned the project as a whole. I begin with the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 2 examines the educational and historical contexts of the project. South African educational paradigms, pre-1994 and post-1994 are sketched out by first tracing the roots of formal education from the early days of colonial rule, to missionary schools and eventually to apartheid education. I then explored the transformation of education after South Africa became a democracy in 1994. This is followed by a history of English as a school subject both in Britain and South Africa which precedes an examination of the development and need for media education in a world where media has become omnipresent. Finally, the genealogical background of the majority of the sample and the discursive space within which

the community newspapers function is traced. This entailed examining the history of the Indian diaspora in South Africa and the broad context of Chatsworth, in which the majority of the Indian community reside, the place where the community newspapers are distributed, as well as the location of the school where the research was conducted.

Chapter 3 analyses the concept of literacy both in general and in relation to South Africa in particular. In addition, the theories of Critical Literacy, summarised earlier, are discussed in greater detail. The history of Critical Literacy and the influence on literary theory of post-modernist thinkers and theorists like Jacques Derrida (1967), Ferdinand de Saussure (1974), Michel Foucault (1977) and Paulo Freire (1970) was examined. Critical Literacy is paralleled with the development of English as a school subject, especially in Britain and its concomitant effects in countries in the English-speaking world. For example, the possibilities for Critical Literacy within South Africa's new curriculum are explored.

The transforming dialogue of the media is discussed in Chapter 4 from a global to a local perspective. First, the dynamic and ubiquitous nature of the media is explored before tracing the general history of the press. Then the press in South Africa during the apartheid and post-apartheid eras is described. The discussion eventually culminates in a detailed discourse of community newspapers in general and those used in the research project in particular.

Chapter 5 is the methodology chapter that begins with a detailed description of Community Secondary, the setting of the classroom intervention, before illustrating the sample of learners used in the project. Thereafter, I outlined the main research methodologies employed, namely Case Study Research and action research which I summarised earlier in this chapter. The planning of the Community Newspaper project is then illustrated in two tables: *A preliminary list of activities* (please see Figure 5.2) and *A Schedule of the stages of the project: an ideal scenario* (please see Figure 5.3). Subsequently, I discussed: access to the research group, ethical considerations, the quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, also summarised earlier in this chapter, and the constraints and limitations encountered during the course of the research project.

The design of the project, and the changes to the original design over time, as divided into four phases, is outlined in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6 describes Phase 1 of the curriculum intervention, divided into three segments, which was completed in the latter half of 2003. This phase served to orientate learners about Critical Literacy theories and to reinforce and simplify these concepts by using fairy tales. Chapter 7 begins with the resumption of the

Project at the beginning of 2004. This chapter explains Phase 2, made up of two segments which focused on the deconstruction of international and local mainstream and community newspapers; Phase 3, which consisted of three segments, and analysed specific sources from community newspapers that centred around the theme of beauty pageants and Phase 4 which summarised the process of consolidation of the project. Phases 2, 3, and 4 of the project, described were completed in the first term of 2004.

Chapter 8 outlines the analysis and findings of the quantitative and qualitative data. First, the Questionnaire for Learners is analysed, followed by the Questionnaire for and the Interview of the Founder/ Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*. Finally, the lessons conducted during the four phases of the classroom intervention were analysed. Field notes written by the researcher during and after the lessons were conducted form the basis for the descriptions, reflections and analysis in Chapter 6, 7 and 8.

Chapter 9 is the conclusion which reflects on the project and thesis as a whole. It reveals how the project illustrates ways of translating Critical Literacy theories into improved pedagogic practice and reflects on the research implications of this work for other researchers and teachers of language.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

Given the limits of time and resources to 'find out what's really happening' many people read newspapers, and rely on that information because it is so accessible (Emdon, 1991: 204). The accessibility of this genre of media was used to empower learners, using Critical Literacy theories to deconstruct, critique and subvert the taken-for-granted assumptions that underlie the compliant readings of the media that they are repeatedly exposed to. I assert that learners must come to view newspaper texts not as windows on reality, but as discursive constructs open to challenge and radical renewal. With this in mind this thesis explores the future possibilities for the implementation of a critical pedagogy within the FET phase in the English Home Language classroom in South African schools. Chapter 2, which follows, examines educational and historical paradigms within transitional contexts in South Africa.

**CHAPTER 2**  
**CONTEXTS IN TRANSITION: EDUCATIONAL AND HISTORICAL**  
**PARADIGMS**

**2.1 Introduction**

This research project, using community newspapers as learner and teacher support materials, attempts to illustrate the efficacy of Critical Literacy pedagogies in an English Home Language classroom in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The context for such work cannot be static or fixed; rather it is dynamic and transitional (Chisholm, 2004). The national and regional context has been particularly affected by the radical changes and transformation that have occurred in all facets of life in South Africa after 1994. To achieve a holistic understanding of my research project, the national and regional contexts will be elaborated in this Chapter.

The history of South African educational paradigms is necessary to show how schools have arrived at a point where Critical Literacy is now feasible in classrooms at South African schools. During the apartheid era (1948-1994) the possibilities for such an approach would not have existed as it would have been considered subversive.

The third section of this Chapter focuses on the development of English as a school subject. Critical Literacy, the theoretical domain that underpins my project, exists within the discursive field of English education, the progress of which will be mapped out in this Chapter to show approaches to English education that are antecedents to Critical Literacy as well as those that compete for ascendancy with it. In this Chapter I argue that the opportunity for Critical Literacy within the domain of English as a school subject was made possible by changes to the curriculum under a democratic dispensation in South Africa. Media Education, the category of English education, to which this study belongs, will thereafter be examined.

The final two foci of this Chapter are concerned with demographics and location of the project. The location or research site is Chatsworth, the demographics of which, by apartheid design and despite many years of democracy, is still constituted mainly of

South Africans of Indian origin. The majority of the participants in my project is from a former 'Indian' school and are South African Indians. This, together with the fact that the community newspapers used in the project cater for South African Indians resident in Chatsworth, are aspects of the study that cannot be disregarded. The prejudices, stereotypes, idiosyncrasies, issues and narratives that emanated from engaging with media designed by and for people who are part of the Indian diaspora, gave direction to this project.

In order to reveal the extent of the paradigm shifts within the South African education system during the transition from apartheid to democracy, the framework of apartheid education will now be outlined.

## **2.2 Paradigms in South African education**

### *2.2.1 Education in South Africa before 1994*

The implicit and explicit curricula in schools are critical to understanding a transforming and culturally diverse society like South Africa. According to Jansen (*Mail and Guardian*, 13-19/08/04: 1), schools are where young people are socialised into living with others and living with difference. In pre-colonial African societies a formal schooling system did not exist; people were educated outside of schools using an oral tradition. It would be erroneous to assume that education is synonymous only with formal schooling. All societies have ways besides formal schooling, of passing knowledge of value to young people. However, if we have to understand the schooling system of a particular society, we cannot just look at schools but at the society in which they operate (Christie, 1985: 16, 17).

South African schools have a history of functioning within an unequal society. Before white settlers came to South Africa from Europe in 1652, the different groups of Black people that lived here were educated according to indigenous knowledge systems. This informal education entailed that people were taught through experience and learnt about their history and past traditions through songs, poems, and stories all passed down orally.

The Europeans that settled in South Africa from 1652 were from the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Britain. Control over South Africa as a colony shifted back and forth between the Dutch and British over a period of more than two centuries until the territory became a single British colony with the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. In the years preceding the Union, British authorities paid more attention to education than the Dutch had done, using it as a means to spread their language and traditions in the colony. In 1839 the British established a proper Department of Education. Schools were set up in the British tradition and teachers were brought over from Britain. However, schooling was not compulsory and was mainly for British children in the urban areas, so that many children received no formal schooling (*ibid*: 34).

Mission schools, which were plagued by continual shortages of money, provided almost all the schooling available for Africans. The aims of mission schools were to educate Africans enough so that they could participate in church activities, to spread a western way of life and to teach them certain work values and industrial skills in order to create a workforce of use to the colonists. While few Africans achieved high levels of education, most received no schooling creating class differences among Africans as well (Majeke, 1986: 68 - 69).

With the Union of South Africa in 1910, came the establishment of provincial control over primary and secondary education, but not higher education. African education fell under the control of the Minister of Native Affairs with laws passed in the 1920s that meant the continual shortage of funding for African schooling: not enough schools, not enough teachers and not enough children attending schools. This system continued until after World War II (1939-1945) (Christie, 1985: 50).

Segregated and unequal provision of education was entrenched firmly through legislation after the National Party came into power in 1948. In 1953 the National Party government passed the *Bantu Education Act*, placing African education in the control of the State. As a result almost all mission schools closed down with the exception of Catholic Missions, which were funded externally. The aim of the *Act* was to educate Africans to a level where they could become an unskilled labour force for white employers. Education

provided under this *Act* was not free and again inadequately financed. The curriculum reflected a racist approach, attempts to inculcate a narrow ethnic consciousness in learners and little attention to scientific and technical subjects. In the 1950s there was widespread disapproval of, and protest against, Bantu Education by African students (Pampallis, 1991: 252).

Later with the economic boom of the 1960s the government expanded schooling for Africans in order to meet the demand for skilled and semi-skilled labour. Although numbers increased the budget for African education did not (*ibid*). Also in the 1960s several Acts of Parliament were passed which translated into unequal educational provision for the different population groups thus entrenching patterns of social class. For example, in 1965 the *Indian Education Act* was passed which meant that Indian education would come under the control of the Department of Indian Affairs, and would also become compulsory (Christie, 1985: 55) though not free.

In the 1970s poor standards prevailed in schools under the control of the Bantu Education Department, which were under-resourced and severely overcrowded. There was intense dissatisfaction on the part of parents, teachers and learners. Further discontent arose when in 1975 this Department introduced a new language policy for secondary schools. Until then learners had studied through the medium of their mother-tongue in the primary school and then switched to English at Secondary school. From 1975, both English and Afrikaans were to be media of instruction at secondary schools in the Southern Transvaal region, which included Soweto. Some subjects were to be taught in English, some in Afrikaans and others in the mother tongue (an African language used by a particular community in South Africa). Punt Jansen, then Deputy Minister of Bantu Education, was asked if he had consulted with the African people on language policy, his reply was: "No, I have not consulted them and I am not going to consult them" (Pampallis, 1991: 253).

Unsurprisingly, learners who were proficient neither in English nor Afrikaans found it difficult to cope with these languages as the media of instruction at schools. Despite widespread protest from the African community, the Government refused to change its policy. By May 1976 many learners had stopped attending classes taught in Afrikaans.

The South African Students' Movement (SASM) called for a boycott of the June examination and planned a mass demonstration against the use of Afrikaans. This demonstration was organised by the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC) and was set for 16 June. On this day the demonstrators converged towards Orlando Stadium for a rally. The march was peaceful and disciplined until the police, armed with automatic rifles opened fire killing thirteen-year-old Hector Peterson and at least three others. The crowd retaliated with bricks and stones forcing the police to retreat. The Soweto Uprising sparked widespread mass action throughout the country and continued unabated until the end of 1977. The death toll exceeded a thousand, with young people dying mostly as a result of police action (*ibid*: 256).

In 1979 the *Education and Training Act* was passed to replace the *Bantu Education Act* of 1953. This Act placed African education in the control of the Department of Education and Training (DET). The *status quo*, however, remained the same (*ibid*). The decade of the 1980s began with countrywide boycotts at African, Indian and Coloured schools protesting among other aspects the unequal provision of education across the four population registration groups. The *per capita* expenditure on education in South Africa for the period 1953 - 1983 was as follows:

Figure 2.1: expenditure on education: 1953-1983.

Year	African	Coloured	Indian	White
1953-54	R17	R40	R40	R128
1969-70	17	73	81	282
1975-76	42	140	190	591
1977-78	54	185	276	657
1980-81	139	253	51	913
1982-83	146	498	711	1211

(Christie, 1985: 98)

The statistics in Figure 2.1 reveal that the lowest amount of money was spent on an African child. A coloured child received less than an Indian child, and an Indian child less than a white child. Education services for black children showed that there were disparities in funding and facilities, learner-teacher ratios, teacher pay scales, compulsory education requirements, school attendance practices, secondary and school matriculation rates (Asmal and James, 2002: 120).

At the beginning of the turbulent 1980s the Government set up the De Lange Commission (1980) to investigate education. This was in response to local and international political pressure against apartheid and apartheid education. The Commission recommended a single department of education for all, education of equal quality for all and, a changed schooling structure. The Government's subsequent White Paper accepted the principles of the *De Lange Report*, but refused the establishment of a single education department. Since the De Lange system did not bring fundamental changes to the educational and social inequalities, protests against apartheid education and apartheid itself continued and were exacerbated by the introduction of the Tricameral system<sup>1</sup> of Government (Christie, 1985: 270). There was widespread dissatisfaction with this system that sparked countrywide protests from all South Africa's population groups.

The culture of protest, which started with the Soweto Uprisings, continued throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. It was during this critical period in the history of South Africa that the struggle for freedom and democracy intensified forcing the National Party government to end apartheid and usher in a democratic dispensation. In 1985, the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) was formed to co-ordinate and lead the struggles around education in communities around the country. In 1990 the NECC commissioned the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) to suggest policy options for an education dispensation that embodied the principles of *People's Education* which were non-sexism, non-racism and the promotion of democratic values (NECC, 1993: 01). The *NEPI Framework Report* (NECC, 1993) would influence the future of South African Education policy. This would eventually create a space that would make it possible for a critical pedagogy to be put into practice, as was the case with the project I conducted. The *NEPI Framework Report* (NECC, 1993) was the genesis of the transformation that was implemented in educational policy in post-apartheid South Africa, which, this thesis examines at various stages.

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<sup>1</sup> This system of government created three houses in parliament, the Houses of Assembly (HoA), Representatives (HoR) and Delegates (HoD) to cater separately for whites, Coloureds and Indians respectively, but excluding Africans. This meant that education too came under the control of the different houses of parliament with the exception of African education, which was controlled by the Department of Education and Training (DET) (*Reader's Digest*, 1995: 473-477).

### 2.2.2 *The transformation of education in post-apartheid South Africa*

The relationship between national political visions and national curricula is illustrated very clearly in the case of South Africa. Curriculum policy is aligned closely to political vision (Harley and Wedekind, 2004: 195). Therefore when South Africa achieved democracy in 1994; it became essential for one of the pillars of apartheid, the country's education system, to be overhauled.

The *White Paper on Education and Training* (1995) provided the policy framework for the development of new curricula based on the principles of access, redress, equity, credibility, quality and efficiency (DoE, *NCS-Grades 10-12 General Overview*, 2003: 9).

The subsequent passing of the *South African Schools Act* (1996) ensured provision for equal educational opportunity, uniform policy and funding of schools, compulsory attendance for all children from ages 7-15 and admission to public schools regardless of race (Asmal and James, 2002: 120).

In addition, with the adoption of *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* in 1996, the foundation was laid for social transformation in post-apartheid society. The *Constitution* (1996) ensured that all areas of human activity, particularly education, are transformed to ensure that the imbalances of the past are redressed so that equal educational opportunities are available to all sections of our population (DoE, *NCS - Grades 10-12 General, Overview*, 2003: 9).

The number of problems that the Department of Education had inherited proved a daunting challenge for a relatively young democracy like South Africa. Given the structural inequalities and the devastating effect on people as individuals and for the country's overall human capacity, there was pressure on the new government to urgently transform education. In 1996 the *South African Qualifications Authority Act* (Act No. 58 of 1995) approved the establishment of a single, integrated, outcomes-based National Qualifications Framework and the state embarked on a revision of the curriculum (Prinsloo and Janks, 2002: 21).

A major review and overhaul of the curriculum, assessment, qualifications and development of human resources had become necessary to break with the past. The revision of the curriculum was undertaken in three stages. First to be addressed was the variations in the curriculum used by different education departments during apartheid. The second stage was the implementation of a temporary curriculum, which was purged, of racist and sexist content while the new curriculum was being developed. The third stage shifted the focus from content to assessment with the introduction of continuous assessment in 1996 (Harley and Wedekind, 2004: 197).

The new curriculum had three design features. The first was Outcomes Based Education (OBE), which still underpins educational policy in post-apartheid South Africa; the second was an integrated knowledge system; and the third was the promotion of a learner-centred pedagogy. These features linked the idea of democracy in society to the notion of democracy in the classroom.

The correspondence of political and curriculum values was instrumental in influencing the development of OBE, one of the central tenets of Curriculum 2005, which originated in debates about training that had taken place between labour, government and industry which necessitated an outcomes-based model to accommodate training within the schooling system. Harley and Wedekind (2004: 198, 215) outline three features of OBE advocated by William Spady (1993): traditional, transitional, and transformational, which are linked to the pattern of political transformation of education in South Africa. Spady, an American educationist, who is widely credited with being the 'father' of OBE and one of the most influential visitors informing curriculum design in this country.

Outcomes Based Education is an approach that describes the skills, knowledge, understanding and values that are the results of learning. It is a means of focusing and organising an education system around what is important for all students to be able to succeed at doing at the end of their learning experiences. The ethos of apartheid education involved teaching methods that did not engage the majority of learners in active and inspiring learning. The Department of Education has made OBE the basis for curriculum change in South Africa encouraging a learner-centred or activity-based

approach to education (DoE, 2003). The introduction of OBE as part of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2003) replaced the content-based approach to teaching and learning and allowed for the recognition of achievement without an exaggerated regard as to how the learning happens (*ibid*: 03).

In 1997, the Council of Education Ministers (CEM)<sup>2</sup> under the leadership of Sibusiso Bhengu, then National Minister of Education, took a decision to replace apartheid education with Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in the General and Further Education and Training (GET) band. This decision envisioned that the phasing of OBE into the GET (Grades 5, 6 and 7) and FET (Grades 10, 11 and 12) bands by 2005, hence it was called Curriculum 2005 (C2005). Teacher-centred pedagogy and content-based examinations had to make way for active self-discovery and continuous assessment of children's mastery of knowledge, values, and skills. Despite widespread criticism as to the practicality of the implementation of C2005, it was hastily introduced in January 1998 to Grade 1 learners and phased into Grade 4 (DoE, *Educator Guide to Phase OBE into FET*, 2002: i).

Kader Asmal became Minister of Education in 1999 and initiated a campaign that invited the views of society at large about C2005. There was overwhelming consensus that C2005 was too complex and needed to be reviewed. In 2000, the Minister therefore set up a committee to review the curriculum. The report of the Ministerial Review Committee (Review Report, 2000) confirmed that the implementation of C2005 could not continue as it had been designed (DoE, *Educator Guide to Phase OBE into FET*, 02: 03). The Chair of the Review Committee, Linda Chisholm, also headed the process of revision of the curriculum based on the findings of the report and the subsequent design of the Revised National Curriculum Statement between 2000 and 2002 (Chisholm, 2004: 1).

The findings of the Report were that the implementation of C2005 was too rushed, teachers' training was poor, provincial officials did not support teachers; teachers'

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<sup>2</sup> This CEM comprised of the National Minister of Education, the Director-General of Education and all the provincial Ministers of Education.

understanding of OBE was shallow, and as a result, reading, writing and arithmetic were not taught; the quality, use, and availability of learning materials needed attention and assessment was overly time-consuming. It was recommended that C2005 be phased out and that a revised curriculum be implemented (DoE, *Educator Guide to Phase OBE into FET*, 02: 03).

Thereafter, a Ministerial Project Committee was appointed in November 2000 to streamline and strengthen C2005. The Committee proposed the introduction of a revised curriculum structure supported by changes in teacher orientation and training, learning support materials and the organisation, staffing, and resourcing of curriculum structures in provincial and national education departments (Chisholm *et al*, 2000: viii). When the draft revised curriculum was made available for public scrutiny it was commended for being clearer and simpler. Consequently Cabinet approved the *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (RNCS R-9)* as policy on 20 March 2002 (DoE, 2003). A dramatically improved outcomes-based (*RNCS R-9*) was introduced to Grades 1 to 3 at the beginning of 2003 (DoE, *Educator Guide to Phase OBE into FET*, 02: 03).

As far as Grades 10, 11, and 12 of the Further Education and Training (FET) phase was concerned; the policy document that outlined the curriculum and qualifications for this phase was a cleansed 'interim' syllabus<sup>3</sup>. However, when those learners who had been following an OBE curriculum since 1998 entered Grade 10 in 2003, they had to go back to the old curriculum because the Department of Education did not have the appropriate curriculum ready to take them through to Grade 12 (DoE, *Educator Guide to Phase OBE into FET*, 02: 03).

In 2006 the interim syllabus defined by *Report 550*<sup>4</sup>, was replaced in Grade 10 of the FET phase by the *National Curriculum Statement (NCS)*. The essence of the new curriculum is contained in the *NCS Grades 10-12 (General), Overview*, (DoE, 2003: 7)

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<sup>3</sup> This had been implemented in schools free of gender and racist undertones as, *A Résumé of Instructional Programmes in Schools, Report 550 (2001/08)* (DoE, *Implementing the National Curriculum Statement in the Further Education and Training Band*, 2005: 01).

and is based on the following nine principles: social transformation; Outcomes Based Education; high knowledge and high skills; integration and applied competence; progression; articulation and portability; human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice; valuing indigenous knowledge systems and credibility, quality and efficiency.

These fundamental principles and structural features form the basis of all learning fields, starting with a clear notion of what is important for learners to be able to do, then organising the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to make sure that learning ultimately takes place (*ibid*). Subjects in the FET phase are categorised within six learning fields. English Home Language, the focus of this study, falls within the Languages (Fundamentals) learning field. However, the learners that constituted this study were those that followed the interim core syllabus outlined by *Report 550* and were not exposed to OBE at any point in their schooling career. In other words, they had ‘slipped the system’ and were at no point directly affected by C2005 although teaching and learning followed some of the basic tenets of OBE.

Also central to the *NCS (2003)* for the FET phase, are seven critical outcomes and five developmental outcomes inspired by *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)* and developed through a democratic process (DoE, *NCS Grades 10-12 General, Overview, 2003: 7*).

*NCS (2003)* policy documentation was released at the beginning of 2005 with the training of Grade 10 and 11 educators completed by the end of 2006. The class of Grade 12 2007 marked the last group of learners to have matriculated under *Report 550*. The training of educators for Grade 12 was concluded only towards the end of the first term of 2008, the same year that the first ‘cohort’ matriculated under the new *NCS (2003)*.

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<sup>4</sup> *Report 550* refers to the interim core syllabus explained in 3, above, which was based on the old syllabus but cleansed of racist and sexist undertones after the end of apartheid. It was replaced by the *NCS (2003)* in 2006.

Since the implementation of the NCS (2003) there has been widespread criticism of the new curriculum. In response, the Minister of Basic Education<sup>5</sup>, Angie Motshekga appointed a task team of curriculum experts who, after consultation with various stakeholders, presented a report to her in September 2009 (DoE: Basic, 2009: 2). The key focus of the report was:

To relieve teachers and schools of some of the challenges experienced as a result of the current curriculum and assessment policies, leaving more time for teaching and learning (*ibid*).

The manner in which educators will be *relieved*, with effect from January 2010, was as follows:

- educators require only one file for administrative purposes;
- learner portfolios in all subjects are discontinued;
- the number of projects required by learners must be reduced to one per year per learning area;
- the importance of textbooks in teaching and learning was emphasized (DoE: Basic, 2009: 2)

The document issued to schools at the beginning of the term in 2010 highlighting the above changes to the curriculum is ambiguous as it also stated that the educator's file, markbook and learners' exercise books with formal and informal assessments must be made available when required for monitoring purposes by Heads of Department, Senior Management Teams, Curriculum Advisors other educational officials and parents (DoE: Basic, 2009: 5). This means that documents and other planning work which educators previously filed separately for easy reference and access must now be crammed into a single file and learners' formal and informal assessments must be pasted into exercise books and made available when requested. This does not translate into real change, rather, it is doing the same thing in a different form. In addition, being restricted to textbooks as a learning and teaching resource limits the creativity of the educator in lesson planning.

Furthermore, not all learning areas require learners to complete a project. For example, English Home Language in the FET phase does not require a project but has too many

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<sup>5</sup> With the rise to power of the new ANC led government in 2009, the Department of Education has been divided into the Department of Basic Education which controls education from pre-school to Grade 12 and the Department of Higher Education which controls vocational and tertiary education.

assessment tasks. This, together with a brief evaluation of the above curriculum changes is discussed in Chapter 9.

### 2.2.3 *The two-school system*

The legacy of apartheid education is therefore officially over, but real educational change is going to be more arduous and long-term than we may expect, especially in the light of South Africa's 'two-school system' where the notion of 'advantage' and 'disadvantage' is perpetuated, as is the case of the 'disadvantaged'<sup>6</sup> Community Secondary, where the project was conducted.

Prinsloo and Janks (2002: 20) contend that the legacy of *historical advantage* and *historical disadvantage* is not yet history. South Africa now has a single national Department of Education with nine provincial departments<sup>7</sup> that are accountable to it. While the government's policy of redress continues to effect change, decades of unequal distribution of material and human resources and separate curricula and assessments continue to impact on the South African Education system. In an analysis of the 2006 matriculation results, Jansen (*Sunday Tribune*, 31/12/06: 16), corroborates this view by saying:

...Twelve years of matriculation results confirm that South Africa has settled for a pattern of two distinct school systems. The one system consists of a small group of former white schools that are increasingly de-racialised, at least as far as pupils are concerned and that accounts for the large percentage pass nationally and in provinces where such schools are dominant. ...The other system consists of the large majority of schools, all black, which together account for the fact that about one-third of pupils fail this high-stakes examination. ...There is little in policy or planning that suggests that this pattern of the two-school system is about to be disturbed. ... The matric results confirm the simple link between historical advantage and school results.

Metcalf (*Sunday Times*, 1/01/06: 18), also believes that the two-school system, the shortage of skilled teachers, the lack of professional development of teaching staff and the failure to facilitate conceptual shifts in pedagogy rather than enforcing rule-bound

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<sup>6</sup> The inequalities in education that continue in a democratic South Africa are discussed further in Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

departmental edicts, have had a negative impact on the South African education system. Until the government explores and addresses these issues and begins to adequately support teachers, ‘quality education’, ‘critical and independent thinking’, ‘multiple literacies’, ‘personal responsibility and discipline’ and a ‘learning ethos’ are all features of the *NCS* (2003) that remain meaningless clichés.

Theoretically, the *NCS* (2003) is in many ways an innovative and progressive curriculum designed for the twenty-first century, but if the great divide that exists in our schools between the minority ‘haves’ and the majority ‘have-nots’ is not narrowed, even the best of curricula will not result in the paradigmatic shift needed in South Africa’s education system.

Ironically, one of the most outspoken critics of the way OBE has been implemented in South Africa is one of the people that facilitated its conceptualisation, William Spady (1993), mentioned earlier. According to Spady (*The Teacher*, January, 2008: 22), what the Department of Education called Outcomes Based Education from 1998 has fallen far short of being real OBE. The 1997 reform policy did not have a clear, well-defined framework of outcomes that the country’s education system could legitimately and consistently be based on. Four distinct operating principles that characterized OBE models in countries abroad were absent from the South African context depriving educators of the benefit of implementing the very things that were making OBE practice effective elsewhere. These principles are: clarity of focus on outcomes of significance; designing down from your ultimate outcomes; high expectations for high level success and expanded opportunities and support.

In addition, the implementation of OBE was viewed by the Department of Education not as a “fundamental system change” but as “curriculum reform” with the assumption that teachers simply needed to be taught some instruction and assessment techniques in a cascaded training process that was often distorted. Teaching has since become a

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<sup>7</sup> Each provincial Department incorporated the former homeland departments of Transkei, Ciskei and Bophuthatswana and the separate education departments of DET, HoA, HoR and HoD, formerly differentiated according to race.

nightmare of paperwork and bureaucracy with every task having to be marked and recorded and curriculum detail forgotten as soon as examinations are over. The real purpose of teaching and learning ‘what matters in the long run’, for the future, is lost (*ibid*).

However, notwithstanding the bureaucratic and administrative aspects, I believe that theoretically, the policy documentation outlining English Home Language as one of the eleven official languages of the curriculum is meaningful and well disposed to the implementation of Critical Literacy<sup>8</sup> in the classroom. I illustrate how Critical Literacy can be implemented in the English classroom when I describe the Community Newspaper Project in Chapters 6 and 7. In order to fully comprehend how literacies like Critical Literacy have come to constitute the pedagogy of English Education today, one has to trace the development of English as a school subject over the same historical trajectory described previously.

### **2.3 The evolution of English as a school subject**

As mentioned earlier in this Chapter the dominance of the British over the Dutch colonialists ensured that English gained prominence as the *lingua franca* of South Africa in the eighteenth century. Thus, over the centuries, the developments in English as a subject in Britain were mirrored in the evolution of English Education in South Africa given its colonial past. Within the context of apartheid South Africa the teaching of English must be viewed historically as a tool of colonial mastery, racial separation of education, unequal distribution of educational funding and fulfilling the needs of capital (Janks, 1990: 42).

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<sup>8</sup> The NCS Grades 10-12 (General) Overview: Languages: English Home Language (DoE, 2003: 9) states that the range of literacies needed for effective participation in society and the workplace in the global economy of the twenty-first century has expanded beyond listening, speaking, reading, writing and oral traditions to include various forms such as media, graphic, information, computer, cultural, and Critical Literacy. The Languages Learning Field prepares learners for the challenges they will face as South Africans and as members of the global community.

The history of English as a separate subject at elementary and secondary schools dates back to around the late nineteenth century, establishing a pre-eminent status within all levels of the school curriculum (Green, 1990: 143). It was a compulsory school subject in South Africa until the *NCS* (2003) was phased in at Grade 10 level in 2006 giving English the same status as the other ten official languages.

Prior to the nineteenth century, the focus of the formal curriculum was on the classics, great works of literature, on Latin and Greek, which constituted the work done by most school children in secondary schools. The study of English grammar with an emphasis on spelling, vocabulary and syntax was seen as inferior, suited mainly to the working class and women, when compared to the study of the classics, which was the preserve of the upper classes. As the demand for education by women and the middle class in general grew, so did English. This subject evolved to focus more on literature rather than language (Ball, 1990: 47).

Since the development of the mass schooling system in Britain in the late nineteenth century, English was regarded as a vital subject in the 'political education' of the masses. English as a school subject originated out of the fears of the negative effects of urbanisation and industrialisation on religion and Christianity. This meant that the moral degeneration of the working class would have to be prevented by teaching them how to read and write so that social stability would prevail. However, the ruling class believed that morality could not be achieved without the study of the 'great tradition of literature'. Therefore literature was added to reading and writing to evolve into the subject English (Graff, 1987: 187).

One of the key figures in the construction of the subject in its early years is Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)<sup>9</sup>, an inspector of schools and poet, whose aim was the creation of a classless society. His vision was to encourage the proletariat to aspire to a better life by developing English as a major subject in the curriculum. This he believed would instil national pride and foster moral values in its citizens (Eagleton, 1983: 24).

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<sup>9</sup> Arnold had an important influence on the development of English Studies steering it towards the preservation of poetry and high culture with the intention of emphasizing moral values and national pride.

Later proponents of Arnold's vision were George Sampson's *English for the English* (1921) and the *Report of the Newbolt Committee* (1921), which are seen as landmarks in the history of English. After World War 1 there was a resurgence of patriotism. The essence of the works of Sampson (1921) and Newbolt (1921) was to promote patriotism through the pursuit of literary culture in the teaching of English (*ibid*: 28-29).

F.R. Leavis (1933) and his Cambridge School also advocated these sentiments in the 1930s and 1940s, promoting the study of literature and a cultural heritage. Leavis believed in the great tradition of English literature with the English teacher as central to the equation, equipped with moral ideas and a canon of texts that embodied it. He believed that the study of literature provided the learner with the equipment for the understanding of life (Mathieson, 1975: 123).

The focus of the Cultural Heritage approach to teaching English was on the imaginative qualities of the text and on tone, style, figurative language and artistic structure. This involved a stringent, close reading of texts and a belief in the view that the literary text was the point of departure for moral engagement. The range of texts was limited and learning took place in controlled situations with responses from learners having to conform to specific interpretations held by the teacher and literary critics. These texts included works by Shakespeare, Chaucer, Wordsworth, Blake, Hardy, Dickens, Austen and a host of other English authors (Eagleton, 1983: 28).

Popular cultural and media texts were not included for study as they were considered 'bad' literature from which learners had to be protected. With its glorification of texts from the English canon, the common people were excluded from full participation thus defeating one of Matthew Arnold's goals. Consequently this approach can be viewed as monocultural, conservative, and one that favoured the elite. This Cultural Heritage position was sustained throughout the 1940s and 1950s in England (Ball, 1990: 54).

However, in the 1960s and 1970s new versions of English teaching emerged with the changes to the structure and constitution of the education system. The shift was away

from the concept of nationhood to an emphasis on the individual child. The *English as Language* lobby aimed to shift the emphasis away from the canonical tradition towards a notion of literature that embodied all that could be said or written. Such a shift also meant also a moving away from white, middle class, male perspectives (*ibid*).

The retreat from a Cultural Heritage position in the 1960s and 1970s advocated first-hand meaning and de-emphasised *standard* or *correct* English. It favoured imagination and expression by recognising *street languages* and different dialects of English. Literature was redefined to include a broader range of media like popular literature, literature from the commonwealth, newspapers and comics. Teaching methods were more learner-centred and included project work, worksheets and group work. The role of the teacher in nurturing the cultural and moral health of the nation still prevailed (Dixon, 1975: xv).

During the time of the post-World War II boom, English as a subject was transformed extensively as a response to economic, cultural and political changes. The emergence of a consumer economy and the mass media, a counter culture that questioned the dominant values of society, implied that a shift in subject content and pedagogy would be inevitable. It was essentially through the work of two educationists, David Holbrook (1967) and John Dixon (1966, 1975) that the Personal Growth model or the 'English as Language' movement emerged in England in the late 1960s, developing a wide support base. Later this approach to English teaching came to be known as the London School (Richardson, 1991: 173).

The essence of the dispute between the Cambridge and London schools of thought was that the former advocated elite knowledge and the latter the knowledge of the masses. According to Aronowitz and Giroux (1985: 133) the London School was further divided into two versions, the *progressive* and the *radical*. The progressive school stressed the importance of each learner's culture, language and self-expression, viewing working class culture as vital. The radical version moved beyond a celebration of working class culture towards an analysis of the political and economic factors that create inequality in society. It takes into account the lives, culture, alienation and lack of opportunity that working class people encounter which in reality translated into Critical Literacy.

Critical Literacy encouraged the development of analytical skills and a greater self-consciousness in reading. One cannot view Critical Literacy as a fixed, universal, homogeneous entity that education must develop, just as one does not accept that texts are entities that contain fixed meaning. Critical Literacy is dynamic and imbibes a variety of ideas engaging the teacher and the learner, prompting them to action in different contexts.

However, such an approach was considered at the time to be subversive and threatening as it encouraged learners to be critical of their own knowledge, to identify common experiences of oppression, and to be spurred on to action for change. The exception to the norm and ahead of its time, this radical version of English was unable to flourish. Since Critical Literacy is the primary pedagogical paradigm of this study, I will discuss it further in Chapter 3, which outlines theoretical perspectives.

Progressive English, also, became the object of an onslaught from the far right in the late 60s and was seen as the reason for the decline in family values and morality in English society. The 1969 Black Papers on education that contained the following three themes reinforced this opinion:

- The drop in academic standards was seen as the reason for economic decline,
- Politically motivated teachers preached revolutionary, feminist, socialist and sexually deviant ideas,
- Teachers were unable to assert their authority causing a decline in discipline which spilled over into society (Ball, 1990: 63-65).

In response to the perceived general decline in standards, Margaret Thatcher, then Secretary for Education in England set up an inquiry under Sir Alan Bullock that considered all aspects of teaching English including reading, writing, and speech. The Report, *A Language for Life* (1975) proposed a skills-based approach to the teaching of English. This Skills Approach advocated the teaching of basic skills as the point of departure for language development across all subjects of the curriculum (*The Bullock Report*, 1975: 125). The State and Conservative Party accordingly suggested that the *English as Literature* and the *English as Language* positions fuse. This implied far-reaching changes in pedagogy, which meant in-service training courses for teachers. In addition, this approach revealed the State's role as an active participant in the

reproduction of capitalism. Learners were taught to be passive and efficient workers and willing customers with schools becoming an arm of industry (Ball, 1990: 70).

However, in 1986, a further review of English as a school subject became necessary after the implementation of the *Bullock Report* was perceived as a failure. As a result the *Kingman Inquiry* (1988) chaired by Sir John Kingman was set up to recommend guiding principles for teachers and learners in the study of English. The *Kingman Report* revived the study of formal, correct, Standard English, and established national criteria for the testing programmes at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. This translated into increased control over education by the central government (Anderson, 1991: 20). The late 1980s and early 1990s saw the re-emergence of Critical Literacy, which was more suited to these less conservative times in some English-speaking countries around the world.

Peim (1993: 197-198) asserts that there exists no full account of the history of English in schools as a history of specific practices. The differences represented by different practices that have fissured the subject remain in a variety of forms that are operative even now, though their forms of expression may have changed. Therefore, in other words, different aspects of different schools still remain and a teacher of English may not necessarily be confined to a single paradigm. An awareness of the different pedagogical practices that have constituted the teaching of English, in the English-speaking world over a number of years, is essential in order to contextualise a critical pedagogy. This is especially relevant in the South African context where democratic discourses have only recently come to the fore, thus, Critical Literacy has not had sufficient time within the discursive space of the English classroom, and so, remains a developing discourse. The Community Newspaper Project, described in later chapters, is an attempt to test the efficacy of Critical Literacy in a setting where a transmission, teacher-centred, Cultural Heritage pedagogy has prevailed.

## **2.4 English in South Africa: then and now**

As mentioned earlier, Critical Literacy was never a fully viable component of the formal English Home Language curriculum under apartheid education. Prior to 1994 the focus

was predominantly cultural heritage with the analysis of media texts evading the issues of politics, class, race, gender, and social justice (Prinsloo and Janks, 2002: 24).

Since the study that I had undertaken is located in KwaZulu-Natal, a doctoral study completed by Prinsloo (2002) would be particularly pertinent. Prinsloo concluded that three strands informed English literacy practices in KwaZulu-Natal since 1969. The first inscribed a thinking, reasoning subject with comprehension and précis work seen as integral to language study. The second drew on developments in England, when in 1973 Personal Growth was introduced to the syllabus focusing on the development of the learner from an intellectual, emotional and social perspective, a learner who expresses ideas and opinions with ease and confidence. The third was a cultural heritage approach to literature, which demanded a close scrutiny and developed a reverence for high cultural texts. In addition to these three strands, by 1990, a widening range of media texts had been incorporated into literacy practices. The syllabus stressed the importance of English as a world language of science and technology and constituted the learner of the subject English as socially mobile, intellectually adept and part of a global elite (Prinsloo and Janks, 2002: 22-29).

South Africa is at a point in the transition of education, where Critical Literacy has been formally included in the *NCS* (2003). The implementation of the *NCS* (2003) also means greater control regarding the standardisation of educational policy by the central government through a single curriculum.

The *Language in Education Policy*<sup>10</sup> (*LiEP*) (1997) and *The Norms and Standards for Languages* (1997) are still in effect as the national policies that form the basis on which the syllabi for the Languages Learning field of the new curriculum are developed. The language policy of the new curriculum specifies that all learners must receive tuition in at least two official languages until the end of Grade 12. One of the two languages must be the language of teaching and learning at the institution at which the learner is enrolled. Either of the two languages must be studied at Home Language level (DoE, *NCS Grade 10-12 (General) Learning Programme Guidelines, English*, 2005: 7, 8).

The *LiEP* (1997) promotes additive multilingualism which means that learners must learn additional languages by transferring the skills like reading, writing, and speaking that they have acquired by developing their home language. Equal status is given to all eleven official languages and a single subject framework is applicable to all eleven languages at Home and First Additional Language level (*ibid*).

Therefore, from 2006, English was no longer offered as a compulsory school subject in the FET phase, as it was with the interim curriculum, and will enjoy equal status to all other South African official languages. This is intended to bring about uniformity among all eleven official South African languages. The interim syllabus which was adopted in 1995 and the Language Standardisation Policy (2001) that outlined the process for the teaching, learning and assessment of all official languages, applied to the teaching of English as a compulsory subject until the old curriculum was phased out and the last group of learners completed Grade 12 in 2007. The basic tenets of the Language Standardisation Policy remained, as it was the foundation upon which the language policy for the *NCS* (2003) was built with an emphasis on a text-based, communicative approach embracing different forms of literacy including Critical Literacy (*DoE, Languages Resource Pack, 2001: 19, 20*).

At the outset of the classroom intervention of the research project in 2003/2004, the interim curriculum aimed at phasing OBE into the FET phase was used. *OBE: Transitional Guidelines for Languages* (DoE: 2001), the precursor to the Subject Statement for English Home Language of the *NCS* (2003) included seven specific outcomes that were predisposed to the implementation of Critical Literacy. These are included in Figure 2.2.

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<sup>10</sup> 'Language in Education Policy', Section 3(4)(m) of the *National Education Policy Act, 14/07/1997*.

Figure 2.2: Specific Outcomes: Interim Syllabus: English Home Language.

SO1 Learners make and Negotiate meaning and understanding.
SO2 Learners show critical awareness of language usage.
SO3 Learners respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values in texts.
SO4 Learners access, process and use information from a variety of sources and situations.
SO5 Learners understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context.
SO6 Learners use language for learning.
SO7 Learners use appropriate communication strategies for specific purposes and situations.

(DoE: 2001)

The Specific Outcomes (SO) outlined in Figure 2.2 were later changed to four learning outcomes for English Home Language in the FET phase when the *NCS* (2003) was finalised. The possibilities for Critical Literacy using the core principles of the *NCS* (2003) will be discussed in Chapter 3.

In my view, the inclusion of Critical Literacy in the post-1994 curriculum offers many possibilities for the teaching and learning of English. Examples abound in recent publications of learner and teacher support materials (LTSMs) of how the media and popular press might be utilised to promote Critical Literacy and Critical Language Awareness (CLA), (see for example, Janks, 1997: 01) in the classroom. These publications provided the impetus for the study of the ubiquitous community newspaper in the English classroom, an important development explained in sections to follow.

In using community newspapers as a resource to complement the implementation of Critical Literacy, I have extended my research intervention into the realm of media education. The rationale for media education as a choice of subject area is that it is imperative that citizens have a discerning and critical view of the media that embodies a full understanding of how it operates in a highly technological world where media artefacts continuously assail people with messages. Mass communicators work in complex organisations that incur great expenses to get their messages across; for example, millions of rands are invested in publishing a daily newspaper (De Beer, 2002: 9). Many of the recipients of media messages are oblivious of the production processes involved in the electronic and print media fields. We often take for granted the extent to

which media shapes our world and so, learning how to interpret all aspects of its functioning is an important skill for all people to acquire.

## **2.5 Media education in a dynamic global space**

If media education is the process of teaching and learning about media, then media literacy is the outcome, the knowledge, skills and competencies that learners acquire in order to use and interpret media. Media education aims to develop both critical understanding and active participation. In other words, young people should be able to interpret and make informed judgements as consumers of media but they should also be able to develop their creative and critical abilities by becoming producers of media in their own right. Initial studies on media education grew from a distrust and negative view of media (Buckingham, 2004: 4).

Such a view, which was embodied in the work of Leavis (1933), represented the first attempt at teaching about the mass media in schools in England. Leavis and other educationalists considered the mass media to be undesirable; 'low culture' against which learners must be 'inoculated', while the tradition of studying texts, usually the classics, was good literature and therefore perceived as 'high culture'. A close reading of these texts was undertaken using the transmission model of teaching. This approach is still present today and, according to Prinsloo and Criticos, (1991: 12, 52, 55) if teachers wish to facilitate media education, it is advisable to do so using a critical pedagogy.

Louw (1991: 239) suggests that it is far more important to teach high school learners how to critically read media rather than how to critically read Shakespeare, because critical users of media enhance the possibility of a democratic society. Ashworth (1991: 125), concurs with Louw (1991) by arguing that as English teachers we have to confront a changed reality: the book no longer forms a significant part of teenage culture. She adds that the forms of media that dominate learners' lives must be transported into the English classroom therefore it is solely in the hands of the English language teacher that the study of the media rests.

However, Masterman (1985), a British media educationist, believes that media education has to inform the teaching of *all* subjects as it should be thought of as a lifelong process within which not only teachers but other agencies and institutions have important roles to play.

Thus, it is important to examine the role media education can play in critical citizenship, instilling the ability to make decisions and to formulate opinions. The relationship between media and schooling is interminably linked. As noted earlier, in South Africa, these two institutions were fundamental to the propaganda machinery of the State during apartheid. The media, especially newspapers and television, together with pedagogical control at racially segregated schools, was instrumental in maintaining hegemony, both political and pedagogical, for the apartheid government prior to the attainment of democracy in 1994.

According to Giroux and Simon (1988), pedagogy addresses how knowledge is produced, mediated, refused, and represented within relations of power both in and outside of the school environment. Therefore, together with the media, which play a powerful role in subjugation through purveying aesthetics, style, tastes and preferences of all kinds, education systems have the potential for psychological and social control of the masses through the hidden curriculum (*Mail and Guardian*, 04/03-10/03/05: 28).

This implies that the scars of apartheid are, especially for South Africans of colour, still experienced as a deep psychological impairment that affects our conceptions of the self, a kind of self-hate, sense of inferiority, and lack of self-respect. Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), the Caribbean writer and revolutionary who espoused the view that both the body and the psyche of black people have been deeply damaged by racism (Wyrick, 1998: 7). Schooling reinforces the vision of the oppressor through curricula and hidden curricular that elevate western culture casting it as universal and eclipsing by far all other cultural identities. Therefore, given South Africa's repressive and oppressive past, the role of media education in a new democratic dispensation is vital.

More than two decades ago the burgeoning global influence of the media and the role of education within this dynamic milieu, was highlighted in the 1982 *UNESCO*<sup>11</sup> *Declaration on Media Education* (in Prinsloo and Criticos, 1991: 295), which states:

We live in a world where media is omnipresent: an increasing number of people spend a great deal of time watching television, reading newspapers and magazines, playing records and listening to the radio. In some countries, for example, children already spend more time watching television than they do attending school. Rather than condemn or endorse the undoubted power of the media, we need to accept their significant impact and penetration throughout the world as an established fact, and also appreciate their importance as an element of culture in today's world.

The all-pervasive influence of the media alluded to in the *Declaration* has since intensified. In March 2005, research conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation in the USA investigating media in the lives of eight to eighteen year olds, found that the subjects' lives were saturated with media and that they were spoilt for choice in respect of the variety of media available to them. Young people were exposed to up to eight hours of media a day, both electronic and print. The research also reveals that young people have a ready acceptance of technological innovation, which extends to a constantly changing media environment (*Sunday Times*, "Generation Next", 24/04/05: 16).

According to Buckingham (2004: 32-34), the relationship between media and education is affected by changes in the notions of childhood. Previously distinct boundaries between adults and children are fading. Children can no longer be easily protected from morally damaging and unsuitable media that are becoming more accessible especially outside the environment of the school. While the social and cultural experiences of children have transformed dramatically over the past decades, schools have failed to keep the pace with these changes. Through media education, schools must engage with the children's media cultures and the knowledge they already possess in order to bridge the gap between the world of school and the world outside its walls.

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<sup>11</sup> The United Nations was formed on 24 October 1945 and was divided into five basic units, one of which was the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) aimed at bringing different cultures and ideas together in the hope that people of the world would come to understand each other better (Ritchie, 1966: 1268).

Worldwide, eight to eighteen-year-olds constitute the impressionable population of school-going children. This would imply that schools have a tremendous responsibility in educating the youth about media, not simply about how to use it but how to understand, relate to, and critique it. Therefore the inclusion of media education is important to any school curriculum. In defining media education, the British Film Institute (BFI), quoted in Prinsloo and Criticos (1991: 11), formulated the following:

Media education is essentially the exploration of contemporary culture, alongside more traditional literary texts. A media education programme will deal with fundamental questions of language, interpretation and meaning. Such a programme seeks to increase students' critical understanding of the media. Interests include the way media work, how they produce meanings, how they are organised and how audiences make sense of them.

According to Prinsloo and Criticos (1991: 11), this definition highlights the need to develop in learners a critical understanding and knowledge of the complexities of the media and its relevance to the societies in which they live. The technologies and processes involved in the production and reception of media and the social, political and cultural roles of all kinds of media genre would form an integral part of this critical understanding.

The *UNESCO Declaration* (1982), in referring to the role that educational systems have to play in media education, goes on to state that the gap between educational experience and the real world in which people live is disturbingly wide. In order to narrow this divide, education systems around the world need to embrace change and recognise their obligation to promote in their citizens the skills to comprehend fully the dynamic phenomenon of media despite the paradox that may exist in many contexts between the developed and developing worlds (*ibid*: 295).

Buckingham (2004: 5) contends that media must not be seen as all powerful or promoting a singular and consistent view of the world but it must be acknowledged that the media is now ubiquitous and unavoidable, embedded in the textures and routines of everyday life and is therefore at the centre of our capacity to make sense of the world in which we live and should therefore be studied.

While developing countries like South Africa are briskly assimilating into global media trends, from personal experience as an English Home Language teacher for many years, I can testify to the fact that there is indeed a divide between rapid and advanced developments in these trends and the changes in the South African educational curriculum. Media education has featured in the curriculum of English as a subject to varying degrees in the segregated apartheid era education departments through the teaching of sections like advertising, propaganda, newspapers and film study. However, the teaching of these aspects requires skills and understandings that need to be supported externally by the Department of Education.

In the early 1990s, media education, in the form of film study, was introduced as a fourth genre of the Literature component at House of Delegates (HOD) schools but was short-lived. Practical concerns like the difficulty of allocating longer sessions to English as a subject to facilitate film study; the lack of resources at many schools, and limited technical knowledge of the film genre by teachers resulted in the already overburdened teachers of English being averse to sustaining film study at former HOD schools.

However, in post-apartheid South Africa, with the *National Curriculum Statement (NCS)* having been implemented in Grade 10 since 2006, the framework now exists for learners to be critically engaged with media. However, this can only be achieved with creative initiatives in curriculum design and the development of appropriate learner and teacher support materials that focus on all genres of media. In South Africa, particularly, curriculum planners, advisers, educators and parent bodies must acknowledge that progress is slow within the South African schooling system to promote proper understanding of the media among our learners and educators. If effective support in this regard is not given to teachers, there is the danger that they may feel overburdened by the demands of the new curriculum for home languages, resulting in opportunities for media education not being grasped. I will discuss this issue in greater detail in Chapter 9 which concludes the thesis.

In the 1960s Marshall McLuhan<sup>12</sup> argued for the potential for modern media technologies and communication networks to establish what he called ‘the global village’, to connect the myriad of situated cultures into one idealised, face-to-face planet-wide unity (O’Sullivan *et al*, 2003: 08). This phenomenon has come to pass but the majority of the world’s population are not yet citizens of what McLuhan (1964) terms the ‘global village’. However, according to Jordan (*The Media*, 12/03-01/04: 15-17), many of the world’s populace reside in common garden villages that have been familiar throughout the world for the greater part of the history of humanity. That is specifically true of the many people on the continent of Africa, and in many parts of South Africa too.

Nevertheless, knowledge and critique of the media is essential to prevent the uncritical and complete surrender to any kind of media genre, irrespective of whether learners can truly be defined as citizens of the global village or not. In South Africa, access to highly sophisticated technology and media, obscures the boundaries between rural and urban settings. One cannot assume that people in rural areas are averse to the influences of the media and that those in urban areas are media literate. Modern-day technologies make it possible to bring mass media like community radio and community newspapers within the reach of smaller or more remote communities. This is referred to as *narrowcasting* instead of *broadcasting* (De Beer, 2002: 9).

This idea of *narrowcasting* is central to the community newspaper project which focused on community media in Chatsworth, a predominantly Indian township, south of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This is the life-world of the majority of the respondents who participated in the project and engage with media designed by and for members of the Indian diaspora of Chatsworth. Next, I expand first, on a description of the Indian diaspora in South Africa and then on Chatsworth, the context for the research project.

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<sup>12</sup> Marshall McLuhan, one of the most well-known proponents of the impact of the media on consciousness and culture, which he summed up in a phrase he coined, “the medium is the message”, examined the media as an extension of the human senses. As one of the first major analysts of the media, he wrote many influential publications (Jensen, 2002: 16).

## 2.6 The South African Indian diaspora

The cornerstone of South Africa's democracy is its *Constitution (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996)*. While apartheid has been removed from the statute books, it is still visible in the structure and demographics of our communities, many schools and other aspects of civil society. In addition, Black people (a term used by the apartheid regime to refer collectively to Africans, Indians and Coloureds), are still acutely aware of the physical and psychological effects of apartheid, mentioned earlier in this Chapter, which are in many ways still present today.

It is imperative that the socio-historical background of South Africans of Indian origin be examined, as the life-world of this particular group of people is central to this project. Like all other diasporic subjects that settle outside of their motherland, South African Indians have had to deal with plural identities that they have embraced for generations. They identify themselves first as South Africans but also acknowledge their cultural and religious links with their motherland, India. It is this dual identity that manifests in the idiosyncratic subject matter of the community newspapers and the everyday lives of most of the respondents that the discussion to follow will illuminate.

Indian South Africans have always constituted the minority group among South Africa's four main population groups. However, according to Comaroff and Comaroff (2004: 6)

... South Africa has fashioned for itself a Constitution founded on the most comprehensive, most liberal, most enlightened notions of democratic pluralism. This Constitution is not only unusually attentive to universal enfranchisement and human rights; it is also quite explicit in its accommodation of the cultural claims of minorities.

This accommodating *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)* affords South Africans of Indian origin<sup>13</sup> the opportunity to enjoy religious and cultural freedom and promotes a better understanding of such cultural diversity in a culturally plural society.

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<sup>13</sup> According to Arkin (1989: ix), South Africans of Indian descent have generally remained socially cohesive maintaining links to Indian culture as well as subscribing to the growing movement of a broad sense of South Africanism. Within the overall political trajectory, Indian South Africans who suffered degradation at the hands of the racist white regime in the days of apartheid are now more freely able to engage in cultural and religious discourses.

The first Indians who came to settle in South Africa in November 1860, fell into two categories, those that arrived as indentured labourers and those that came as free or 'passenger' Indians. The arrival of the former was borne out of a desperate need for labour on the sugar cane plantations of Natal which prompted the appeal to the Indian colonial government to make legal the recruitment and transportation of indentured labourers to the British colony. The latter were mainly traders from India and Mauritius who wanted to take advantage of new opportunities abroad (Bhana and Pachai, 1984: 02).

The first of a total of 384 ships from India, the *Truro*, docked at Durban Harbour on 16 November 1860; its human cargo numbering 342<sup>14</sup>. These Indians were the first batch of 152 184 immigrants that would arrive in Natal between 1860 and 1911<sup>15</sup> (*Sunday Times*, 23/11/03).

The cultural units brought from India to South Africa had to re-site and re-negotiate social relationships and unravel customs, castes, religions and dialects that were centuries in the making. Many would remain burdened to the past while others would embrace the new (Desai and Vahed, 2007: 12). Even after their period of indenture was over, most Indians chose to remain and make South Africa their home with the majority settling in and around Durban. They succeeded in creating a new kind of society in South Africa based on neo-Indian Creole identity influenced by interaction with both the indigenous African population and the dominant white colonist element. They forged this new identity by re-establishing family life, organising religion, for example, the construction of temples and mosques, and the arrival of religious scholars and reconstructing elements

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<sup>14</sup> The actual number of indentured Indians that arrived in Natal was 339. Although 342 passengers appear on the *Truro's* list, passenger 143 and 274 were not shipped and passenger 151 absconded (Desai and Vahed, 2007: 69).

<sup>15</sup> Among those that arrived from India were skilled and semi-skilled workers like farmers, leather workers, jewellers, confectioners, weavers and so on. This disproves the erroneous belief that the labourers were recruited from among the "untouchables" in India. The Indians were also from various religious affiliations, Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Rajputs, and Malabars who spoke different Indian languages like Tamil, Hindi, Arabic, Gugerati, Telegu and Urdu (The Indian Academy of South Africa, 1981: 09, 52). Although most of the passenger Indians who arrived were Moslems, there was a significant Hindu element amongst them. The colonial government, however, classified together all as Indians, a single ethnic group, despite internal differences (Freund, 1995:10).

of Indian culture like cuisine, music, folk art, religious practice and dress codes which have survived or were transmuted (*ibid*: 8, 9).

Also significant was the fact that South African Indians did not revive the caste system that was so much a part of life in India. However, caste, mostly in connection with inter-marriage has continued to have meaning for the few descendents who have maintained some sense of having belonged to a higher caste. The barriers of language and religion remained and marriages across these barriers were rare until recently (Mesthrie, 1995: 17).

The area of Indian identity that has not been extensively sustained is language. The census in 1990 estimated that 95% of South African Indians speak English as a first language (Freund, 1995: 9). The contact with the hybrid colonial culture outside the home had great appeal and gradually the language that Indians began to speak was termed South African Indian English. For this Mesthrie (1995: 56) coined the term koineization whereby related dialects come together to form a relatively standard speech in a new physical space.

One hundred and forty years after their arrival in South Africa, the number of Indian South Africans had grown to 1.1 million (*Statistics South Africa*, 2001), comprising the most urbanised sector of South Africa's four major population groupings. Like other settler or immigrant communities around the world, South Africans of Indian origin are diasporic subjects who do not seek the recognition of a separate national status in their country of birth, but position themselves as part of the nation that they were once linked to only in terms of religion, customs, culture, food, dress, and music. The question of identity is always an important concern.

According to Maharaj (*Sunday Tribune Herald*, 12/3/06: 4), most South African Indians today have no direct links except to an abstract and spiritual motherland. "Indianness" was progressively built by combining many identity patterns, some of which have disappeared today while others have been strengthened. Maharaj (*Post*, 22-26/04/09: 16),

also contends that because of their phobia of losing cultural identity, they tend to be very religious, rigid and conservative.

Dhupelia-Mesthrie (2000: 09) states that in April 1999, radio talk-show host Devi Sankree Govender asked the predominantly Indian listeners of Lotus FM whether Indians should call themselves 'South Africans' or whether the tag 'Indian' should be added. Of the twenty-six listeners who got through, eighteen regarded themselves as South Africans; seven wanted the tag 'Indian' to be added to their 'South Africanness', and just one favoured 'Indian' only. In the twenty-first century 'Indians' have come to see themselves as primarily South Africans with an Indian heritage (*ibid*: 10).

An important photographic exhibition entitled *The Indian in Drum*<sup>16</sup> was held at the Durban Art Gallery in May 2006. According to the organiser of the exhibition, curator Riason Naidoo (*Sunday Times, Lifestyle, 4/2/2007*: 10-11), the exhibition focused on an alternative representation of 'Indian' history in South Africa through a selection of artistic photographs that appeared in *Drum* magazine<sup>17</sup> in the 1950s countering the clichéd representation of Indians as affluent, passive and conservative and of the women being preoccupied with household chores. The exhibition was also an attempt to restore Indian memory to show a more complex and animated lived experience in ways that transcend the limits of the colonising eye. The exhibition showed an Indian woman riding her Harley Davidson around the *Wall of Death* in 1957, famous Indian women doctors and professors and poor Indian children working on the sugar plantations. Through an exhibition such as this, one acquires glimpses that lead to a greater understanding into the lives of Indians in South Africa (*ibid*).

The media gives identity to communities, cements their discourses, and is the main vehicle used to ensure that the South African Indian diaspora, scattered throughout this

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<sup>16</sup> Riason Naidoo has documented the contents of the exhibition in his book *The Indian in Drum Magazine in the 1950s* (Bell-Roberts Publishing) launched in October 2008.

<sup>17</sup> *Drum* magazine was launched in 1951 under the proprietorship of Jim Bailey and later British social and political commentator, Anthony Sampson. Through its pictures and stories it epitomised the vibrancy of black life (Indian, African and Coloured) in South Africa in places like Sophiatown. Photo-journalist G.R. Naidoo, who became the first black editor-in-chief of *Drum* in 1969, and, photographer Ranjith Kally completed a substantial body of work in *Drum*. At its height *Drum* sold more than 450 000 copies throughout Africa (*Sunday Times, 28/5/06 and 4/2/07*).

country, have a common space to perpetuate a sense of community and identity that links them to their heritage. Art exhibitions such as *The Indian in Drum*, the publication of *Inside Indenture* (2007)<sup>18</sup>, Radio stations like Lotus FM and Radio Al-Ansaar, *Eastern Mosaic* (a weekly television magazine programme highlighting issues of interest to Indian South Africans), weekly newspapers like *POST* and Sunday newspaper supplements like the *Sunday Times Extra*, and the *Sunday Tribune Herald*, Bollywood movies and local community newspapers, are all examples of the different media genre that have Indians as their target audience.

Cunningham (2002: 272, 276) argues that such formats of diasporic popular media as those mentioned above are situated in narrowcast cultural spaces that are exemplified by the "modular" Bollywood film and accompanying live and playback musical culture. Such a limited diet of ethno-specific media are mined deeply for social cues like fashion and language use, gossip, public information and entertainment, serving as guides to choice, or guides to the attitudes that inform choices.

Such perspectives need to be, in the first instance, localised because local communities, schools and cultural groups endorse and support values, perceptions, norms and stereotypes. These either enable or possibly (dis)enable learners to better position themselves to interpret, adapt, exploit and filter the various stimuli and data produced by the media.

Collectively Indians in South Africa are economically most advanced among the Indian diaspora worldwide (Arkin, 1989: ix). A study released in 2004 by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) revealed that for the period 1996 to 2003 dramatic changes in earning capacity have emerged in South Africa showing that inequality between groups is starting to decline. The findings showed that Indian South Africans had the fastest growing household incomes, especially in the formal sector, which requires high levels of education, where Indians were predominantly clustered. Also, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) has identified Indians in the worldwide

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<sup>18</sup> *Inside Indenture: A South African Story, 1860-1914* written by Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed (2007) provides rich accounts and narratives of the struggles of indentured Indians in South Africa.

diaspora as viewing education as the key means of upward mobility (*Sunday Times*, 06/02/05: 07). While the scenario outlined by the SAIRR (2004) may be a growing trend, this is just the top end of the scale as thousands of Indians constitute the working class that still struggles to 'make a living' and are concentrated in former Indian townships like Chatsworth, the location of the research project.

The focus of the genre of media used in this study, the community newspaper, is almost exclusively on the Indian people of Chatsworth and can therefore be classified as ethno-specific (*ibid*). Given the homogenous nature of the context, not only is an understanding of the history of the Indian diaspora in South Africa essential but also a knowledge of the community of Chatsworth.

### **2.7 Chatsworth: A microcosm of a diasporic Indian community**

The community newspapers under scrutiny in this project chronicle the events and activities in the lives of the rich and the poor of Chatsworth, their achievements, struggles, tragedies, joys, social events, institutional activities and factors that drive the economy of this ambivalent place. Particularly important is the way the South African Indian is represented in these newspapers and the attitude of the respondents to these representations.

In addition, the majority of learners that participated in this study are fourth or fifth generation South Africans of Indian descent, living in Chatsworth, resident in sub-economic flats, semi-detached double-storey or free-standing single-storey houses or as tenants in out-buildings. Such is the composition of the neighbourhood of Chatsworth where the school, the immediate research site, is located. This location and other township settings like it form part of the life-world of all the respondents.

The history of Chatsworth goes back to the passing of the *Group Areas Act No. 41* (1950) which resulted in the dislocation of many settled communities in South Africa through a process of massive social engineering which led to the establishment of artificial urban developments called townships (Subramoney, 1993: 01). Such geographic distribution applied to Africans, Indians and Coloureds and sought to physically separate the races by

segregating the ownership and occupation of property for residence and trade. Thus the different races lived in their own areas, went to their own schools, and had their own businesses and recreational areas with minimal inter-communal contact (Arkin, 1989: 30).

The government of the time argued that the *Group Areas Act* (1950) aimed to bring people of the same racial origin together and to minimize racial friction and social conflict between different groups (*ibid*: 6). The *Act* precipitated a course of territorial and racial segregation, with townships like Chatsworth being designed for dispossessed peoples throughout the country. The genesis of such places was not as a result of a natural process of growth, but was shaped to impose the political ideology of apartheid. The *Group Areas Act* would have far reaching social, economic, political and demographic effects on South Africa in the decades that were to follow. It led to the uprooting and resettlement of 70 000 Indian families to Chatsworth (Subramoney, 1993: 5).

Indians were removed from Cato Manor, Magazine Barracks, Seaview, Bluff and other areas that were re-zoned for white occupation. Chatsworth situated twelve kilometres south-west of Durban, would be constructed on five hundred acres of banana farmland which was already sparsely populated by Indians (Freund, 1995: 64, 73).

On 8 December 1961, the Department of Indian Housing detailed its proposed plan for the establishment of Chatsworth. This report became the blueprint on which all planning and development was devised (Subramoney, 1993: 57). The design of Chatsworth was aesthetically unpleasing with a layout that was a linear pattern of rows of monotonous houses resembling “matchboxes” (*ibid*: 143). The grim architecture was not designed in consultation with those who would have to live there. No socio-economic survey of the community was done. The result was a total lack of understanding and acknowledgement of Indian people’s traditions and way of life (*ibid*: 103-104). No consideration was given to human values, choice, community spirit, home ownership and pride when Chatsworth was built (*Chatsworth SUN*, 01/07/1988: 17); bureaucracy, not people, planned Chatsworth (Subramoney, 1993: 144). The central government’s conception and the City Council’s planning went hand-in-hand to creating a self-contained ‘Hindustan’ (*ibid*:

66). Chatsworth was also placed as a kind of buffer zone between 'white' Durban and the large new African township of Umlazi (Freund, 1995: 73).

The Natal Indian Congress (1894) had foreseen that the implementation of the *Group Areas Act* would result in the creation of 'pariah' communities, with high crime rates and other indications of social disorganisation. Their worst fears were realized in Chatsworth. Relocation cut people off from existing community support; it changed family life, employment patterns and even impacted on individual and group behaviour (Subramoney, 1993: 105). Unlike any other evolutionary urban development, middle class and working class people were forced to live together in a soulless mass housing estate and the barriers of class were altered (*Chatsworth SUN*, 01/07/1988: 17).

Also, the sudden forced transition, for many, from a 'joint family' system to the 'nuclear family' left people experiencing varying degrees of alienation in a complex urban milieu, as was the case of those who had been forced to move to Chatsworth. Feelings of frustration, powerlessness, and disorientation were engendered that had far-reaching negative effects, as indicated by the increase in alcoholism, the high divorce and suicide rates, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, child neglect, family discord, vandalism and a variety of more serious crimes (*Chatsworth SUN*, 01/07/1988: 17).

Chatsworth is linked to the city of Durban by Higginson's Highway with a railway line running alongside, giving it its sprawling, elongated feel, creating an urban space that is like a maze (Desai, 2000: 4). Over the past forty years Chatsworth has emerged as a place of contrasts with abject poverty existing side by side with relative affluence. An overwhelmingly large number of municipal homes have been upgraded. The residents themselves undertook these renovations and not the city council after many exercised the option to buy the homes they were occupying after seven years (Freund, 1995: 74). Situated short distances away from freestanding houses are bulky tenement blocks containing six units each. According to Desai (2000: 4) here the poorest of the people of Chatsworth have been placed in cramped, ugly, unsafe conditions. Although Chatsworth had an official population of 192 168 in the last population census in 2001 (*Statistics SA*,

*Census*, 2001), it is believed that the unofficial figure was around 300 000 (Desai, 2000: 4).

With overcrowding and other socio-economic problems, ironically, a new political movement has emerged in a place where generations of Chatsworth people have had their identities framed by particular notions of struggle. People here take pride in the knowledge that the iconic human rights campaigner and political activist, Mohandas Gandhi, once lived among South African Indians from 1893-1914 (*Reader's Digest*, 1995: 272 - 279). Chatsworth was also the home of the student activists, unionists, the intellectuals of the "struggle" against apartheid. With parts of poverty stricken Chatsworth still sites for mass-based struggle for service delivery in post-apartheid South Africa the pre-occupation with the fight for survival continues to characterise the lives of many residents of Chatsworth.

It is from the perspective of this unique life-world that the learners participating in the project have responded to various classroom activities centred on issues highlighted in their local community newspapers that record life in their context, the predominantly 'Indian' neighbourhood of Chatsworth where their school, Community Secondary, is located.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

Within this context of marginalisation, dislocation, re-location and transition, I have embarked on a Critical Literacy intervention concerned with identity in relation to ideology as an important facet of the unfolding discourses in a transformative society. A description of the socio-historical, cultural and educational contexts of the research project, in this chapter, has been necessary in order to make possible an understanding of the context of the research project. Since context is an essential element of widening the concept of literacy explored in the project, I have outlined how political and economic struggles have characterised each aspect: education in South Africa, the development of English as a school subject and Media Education. The achievement of democracy in South Africa, and the subsequent overhaul of the educational system, have provided a

space for Critical Literacy to develop since it is compatible with democratic discourses and would not be workable otherwise.

Neighbourhood life and schooling are two important sites where the local and the global converge especially in relation to the popular media. One of the pioneering proponents of Critical Literacy, Ira Shor (1997: 02) said, “we grow up and live in local cultures set in global contexts where multiple discourses shape us”. If I draw comparisons between Shor’s statement, and the ‘life worlds’ of the majority of participants in the project to be described in later chapters, then the omnipresent existence of the media, both local and global, in Chatsworth, is an example of a local culture set in a global context.

From a local perspective, the three major local community newspapers are advertised on huge billboards along the main highway and on public refuse bins; there is a constant movement of company vehicles of the newspapers with the logos and newspaper print emblazoned on them going about their business; distribution and delivery personnel wearing bibs with the names of the publications take to the streets on specific days placing the newspapers in the post-boxes of every household, bringing news of the neighbourhood. Minibus taxis speed about all day blaring the latest songs out of America; radios and televisions are always on; satellite dishes can be spotted on the houses of the more affluent, and vendors of mainstream newspapers can be found at the corners of the main streets, all bringing in the world beyond the neighbourhood.

This and the other contexts that inform my project as a whole are ephemeral; they are in constant transition, changing and evolving all the time like the change in the status of English as a subject discussed earlier in this chapter (*Sunday Times*, 4/07/05). This concept of *change* is a central aspect of critical literacy as *change* is what its practitioners embrace and aspire towards.

More than ever before media education has reached a critical stage in its development in this twenty-first century context of omnipresent digital media. I believe that the significance of the systematic study of the media will not go away and South Africa has to play ‘catch-up’ in this regard. It is possible for changes in society and in the mindsets

of learners to be achieved through media education, the need for which I have already highlighted to show that it is a crucial aspect in the holistic education of any modern-day student. According to Masterman (1985: 25) the 'acid test' of any media education programme is the extent to which students are critical of their own use and understanding of the media when the teacher is not present, the main objective is thus not just critical awareness, but critical autonomy.

The contexts of English teaching and learning that have been outlined in this Chapter can be understood more clearly by examining the development of the subject within a political framework, both internationally and in relation to South Africa, as this informs the discursive field of English education. Not only does English as a school subject respond to the changes in society, but it is responsible for the production of change and subjectivity within society.

Educators need to realise that education is never neutral but political in the sense that it is either liberating and develops critical thinking, or that it is domesticating and serves to perpetuate the *status quo* (Freire and Shor, 1987: 14). Thus, the design of a progressive and dynamic teaching module around the issues contained in the community newspapers, and the use of Critical Literacy to deconstruct community newspapers as a significant and influential genre of media within a specific classroom context, is a potentially liberating political act, as will be illustrated further in subsequent chapters. The theoretical framework encompassing various aspects of Critical Literacy will follow in Chapter 3 and will be integrated into the discussion on the development of English as a school subject outlined in this Chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

### FROM LITERACY TO CRITICAL LITERACY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The principal theory that informs this research project is Critical Literacy, which I have decided to explore as an alternative to a conventional, teacher-centred pedagogy that characterised education in South Africa in the last century. The complete change in government and ideology in 1994 has meant that all institutions in South African society commit themselves to transformation. However, meaningful change cannot take place overnight and is generally a process of trial and error, as has been the case within South African education, where curriculum planners, educationists, educational managers, and other key role-players have gone back to the ‘drawing board’ on a number of occasions in order to propose a curriculum that promotes creative teaching and active learning. *The National Curriculum Statement (NCS)* (DoE, 2003), introduced in the *Further Education and Training (FET)* phase in 2006 is thus the culmination of various levels of review. Critical Literacy is suggested as a possible pedagogy in the *NCS* (DoE, 2003).

Therefore, in this Chapter I first deconstruct the concept of literacy (including the attempts to provide literacy to the millions of South African adults who are illiterate and functionally illiterate) before examining the rationale for Critical Literacy, what it recommends and the possibilities of it developing within the new curriculum in South African schools. Thereafter, I examine the theories of Intertextuality, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Critical Language Awareness (CLA), genre, and Reader Response Theory that are all crucially interdependent and are the cumulative synthesis of Critical Literacy (Janks, 2000: 184). All these theories have the common denominator of involving a dynamic, challenging approach to reading and textual practices, and I illustrate that they do not exist in isolation but function within a broad understanding Critical Literacy. They are, essentially, inter-connected through the concern with the extent, and the ways in which, actual, and possible social practices of reading and writing, enable human subjects to understand and engage with the politics of daily life in the quest for a more truly democratic social order (Lankshear and McLaren, 1993).

Finally, I explore the possibilities of Critical Literacy functioning within the *NCS* and the pedagogical paradigm of Outcomes Based Education (OBE), which is a fundamental feature of South Africa's school curriculum. However, a discussion on Critical Literacy is not possible without first examining the changing concept of literacy.

### **3.2 Literacy is no longer just reading and writing**

'Literacy' refers conventionally to a cognitive process that enables reading and writing. In the United Kingdom the introduction of a *National Literacy Strategy (NLS)* (1998) has extended the meaning of literacy asserting that the Literacy Framework is a combination of the skills of reading and writing as well as speaking and listening. The *NLS* elaborates that good oral work enhances a learner's understanding of language in both oral and written forms. To be literate is therefore no longer about just being able to read and write, rather it is about speaking and understanding the more elaborate forms of language that literacy has allowed us to create. Also, structured speaking and listening promote the successful use of written language and that successful oral communication is fostered by contact with the written word (Holme, 2004: 2)

The new South African curriculum, the *NCS* (2003), with specific reference to the Subject Statements for all official languages, is in line with the United Kingdom's *NLS* as the four learning outcomes for Home and Additional Languages at the FET phase are: Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening (DoE, 2003: 12-13)

Gee (1996: 122) argues that literacy is quantified, like time, work, and money. There are 'reading levels', 'graded texts', levels of literacy skills, and 'levels of literacy or illiteracy'. Jobs are matched with literacy skills and skills with economic needs making Literacy become a commodity that can be measured. Gee believes that the quantification of literacy is an all-pervasive idea that people generally take for granted and do not question, a view that ultimately advantages some groups over others; those that are literate are more advantaged than those who are illiterate. This is particularly relevant to developing countries like South Africa where literacy allows economic and social development to occur.

Viewing literacy as a set of basic skills that an individual needs to attain their economic and social potential, to follow a chosen career path and to do what society requires them to do, is described as *functional literacy*. UNESCO (1972) states that functional literacy results in greater economic self-sufficiency through improvements in productivity, an increase in wages and better standards of living resulting. (Holme, 2004: 16). The 2007 Community Survey conducted by Statistics South Africa notes that the number of people over the age of twenty with no education declined from 17.9% in 2001 to 10.3% in 2007, while the population with no schooling has dropped from 19.1% in 1996 to 7.3% in 2007 ([www.statssa.gov.za/community\\_new/content.asp](http://www.statssa.gov.za/community_new/content.asp)).

However, it is probable, given past anomalies, that many South Africans are still denied the basic right to literacy based on race. The findings of research conducted in June and August 2005 by *Research Surveys* revealed that 97% of white people were most likely to be literate and 86% of black people least likely (*Daily News*, 4/11/05), are still plausible today. The survey also indicated that the legacy of apartheid is still very evident with those most likely to have matriculated or to have a degree or diploma falling within the white sector of the population, in line with privileges afforded in the past and concludes that the great divide in South Africa was still very evident with the same demographic groups falling into the 'have' and 'have not' segments (*ibid*). Thus, much more than a decade of democracy is required to increase the levels of literacy that will ensure that citizens are given an opportunity for greater participation in society.

The Department of Education estimates that 9.6 million adults in South Africa are illiterate. Of these, 4.7 million have never been to school and are considered totally illiterate. The remaining 4.9 million dropped out of school before Grade 7 and are termed functionally illiterate. The Ministerial Committee<sup>8</sup> on Mass Literacy prepared a comprehensive 177 page operational plan for the literacy campaign, which was approved

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<sup>8</sup> The lead report writer of the Committee and author of the operational plan, John Aitchison resigned in November 2007 over the controversial plans within the Department of Education to privatise the literacy campaign and the publication of tender documents in the Government's Tender Bulletin (*Mail and Guardian*, 23-29/11/07: 10). Aitchison, influenced by radical literacy theorist Paulo Freire, was of the belief that bureaucratic and political interference had compromised the autonomy of the committee and subverted the design, ethos and rationale of the operational plan to apply the lessons from best international practice in literacy (*The Witness*, 28/12/2007).

in August 2007 to be implemented in three phases over five years (*Mail and Guardian*, 31/08-6/09/07: 12).

It is disturbing to note that fourteen years after attaining democracy, past educational dissimilarities are only now being addressed by the State with the launch of a free adult literacy campaign on 29 February 2008 by the National Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor. Advertisements placed by the Department of Education have appeared in South African newspapers since March 2008 promoting the government's R6.1 billion mass literacy campaign called *Kha Ri Gude* (Let us learn) *Literacy Plan South Africa* and calling for volunteer teachers. A private company SAB&T was appointed to control the financial and administrative aspects of the project operating independently of the Education Department while a directorate is being set up within the Education Department to train the volunteer teachers. This is the State's second attempt<sup>9</sup> at eradicating illiteracy by implementing a national literacy campaign (*Mail and Guardian*, 29/02- 6/03/08).

The literacy campaign is now operational and the Department of Education, in a double-page advertisement in *Umsobomvu Youth Magazine* (12/08: 8, 9), claimed that *Kha Ri Gude* was teaching reading and writing to more than 360 000 adults using almost 30 000 volunteer educators who are paid a stipend of R1200 per month. Almost two-thirds are below the age of thirty-five teaching the six month course of three lessons per week, each about three hours in duration in reading, writing, basic numeracy and spoken English. All learners receive their learning materials and stationery at no cost and the programme promotes inclusivity with 7.8% of *Kha Ri Gude* learners being disabled (*Umsobomvu Youth Magazine*, 12/08: 8, 9).

It must be taken into account that South Africa is a diverse nation and so an effective literacy campaign will not be generalised, but one that takes into account the idiosyncrasies of language and culture with literacy materials sensitive to the unique

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<sup>9</sup> When Kader Asmal took office as Minister of Education in 1999 he announced his intention to eradicate illiteracy by 2005. He launched the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI) in 2000, which was beset with operational problems that resulted in its failure. Only 300 000 adult learners were reached as a result of an intervention by the University of South Africa (UNISA) (*Mail and Guardian*, 23-29/11/07: 10).

circumstances of each community. In the case of a developing country like South Africa an increase in literacy rates is as much a product of economic development as a cause (Holme, 2004: 22). Conversely, Holme (2004) cites Graff's (1979) argument, that literacy *per se*, that is, the ability to read and write, is no guarantee of either freedom for the individual, or economic prosperity for the nation.

Despite the fact that it is seen as important in addressing poverty in developing countries, Holme (2004: 34) finds functional literacy problematic in its treatment of society as an order that is not open to challenge, preparing students for the efficient but uncritical consumption of texts produced by this social order. The present educational practice from Grade 1 promotes Functional Literacy, which is simply the capacity to use language to "do" something, for example, how to operate the lever in the voting booth. Critical Literacy, however, goes a step further to include the capacity for action, incorporating a broader sense of understanding of spoken, written or visual texts, for example, comprehending the issues that will make one decide for whom to vote and why (Ellsworth *et al*, 1994: 27).

Although this may be so, I believe that if we view South Africa's millions of illiterate and functionally illiterate in proportion to the total population of 48 502063 (*Community Survey* 2007, [www.statssa.gov.za/community\\_new/content.asp](http://www.statssa.gov.za/community_new/content.asp)), we cannot begin to meaningfully engage in the discourses of Critical Literacy if we do not first transcend the limitations of illiteracy. Many of the potential 80 000 volunteer tutors involved in *Kha Ri Gude* are not highly skilled themselves. The minimum requirement to be a tutor is to have matriculated (*Mail and Guardian*, 29/02-6/03/08: 14), and are not products of an education system that engaged in the discourses of Critical Literacy. Also, much of the literacy material is still being written, therefore it is unrealistic to expect Critical Literacy to be an integral part of this campaign.

While a discussion of the provision of literacy to all, including adults who had been denied basic literacy in the past, is significant to any literacy study in the South African context, for the purposes of this thesis the term *literacy* does not refer to basic literacy, that is, just the ability to read and write, but to a lifelong process of increasing proficiency

in this regard. In the present age of rapid technological advancement, Freebody and Luke (1997) view literacy as the flexible and sustainable mastery of a range of practices with texts of traditional and new communications technologies via spoken language, print and multimedia. As a consequence of these technological developments, the reference now is to *literacies* or *multiliteracies* (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000).

The use of the plural '*literacies*' is a key shift in recent times to recognise that there are multiple *literacies* present in our ever-changing post-modern world. The plural approaches to these literacies came to be called "New Literacy Studies" with scholars like Street (2001) providing rich accounts of literary practices that vary from one cultural and historical context to another (Collins and Blot, 2003: xi). The expansion of the concept of literacy to *literacies* includes, amongst others, the following:

*Figure 3.1: some examples of literacy.*

• Print Literacy – the ability to understand and interpret written texts
• Cultural Literacy – the ability to understand and interpret cultural, social and ideological values that shape our <i>reading</i> of texts
• Visual Literacy – the ability to understand and interpret pictures, images, signs and non-verbal language
• Media Literacy – the ability to understand and interpret cultural messages presented by electronic and print media
• Information Technology Literacy – the ability to use / access and evaluate information and ideas via computers
• Numeracy – the ability to understand and interpret mathematical symbols including reading charts, tables and graphs

(Australian Education Department: *Dialogue Group Draft White Paper*, 2001: 1)

This is by no means an exhaustive list as *literacies* are as many and as varied as the texts that we produce and our idea of what can be defined as text is expanding all the time. This is illustrated in South Africa by the proposed *NCS* (2003) for English Home Language, Grades 10-12 (DoE, 2003: 44) that recommends communicative language teaching and a text-based approach to the subject. It lists eight kinds of literary texts, twenty-three kinds of transactional texts, eight kinds of reference texts, eleven kinds of creative texts and twenty-four kinds of visual, audio, audio-visual and multi-media texts

that can be used for the integrated teaching of Home language<sup>10</sup>. This list of texts shows that the curriculum has embraced global changes in providing a very wide scope of texts, giving various points of departure for the teacher of English to work from. It suggests further that the new South African FET curriculum is responsive to the need to develop critical literacy in South Africa.

However, Kress (2004: 24) believes that although popular references to literacy like emotional literacy, visual literacy, social literacy, cultural literacy and other *literacies* are in common use; literacy remains the term which refers to the knowledge of the use of the resource of writing.

Street (2001: 2) makes reference to the New Work Order<sup>11</sup> that requires radical rethinking for literacy academics and practitioners and the development of new literacy programmes in a technology-driven, globalised setting. Complex communicative needs, for example, the icons and signs of the Microsoft Windows Word programme, with its symbols, images, texts, words and boundaries would have to be taken into account.

Of the different *literacies* present in the world today, there are some that are more powerful and highly prized than others, creating hierarchies of literacy that are related to the structures of power in society. Information Technology Literacy is an example of a highly rated literacy (West, 1988: 86).

Kress (2004: 1) maintains that literacy cannot be seen in isolation from a vast array of social, technological, and economic factors. As the dominance of writing moves to the dominance of the image, and as the dominance of the medium of the book moves to the dominance of the medium of the screen, a revolution in the uses and effects of literacy and of the associated ways of representing and communicating, at every level and

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<sup>10</sup> Home language is a term used to refer to one's mother tongue; a language studied at school at the level of first language. The *NCS (General) Overview (DoE, 2003)* refers to the levels at which any of the official languages can be studied as Primary Language (first language), First Additional Language (second language) and Second Additional Language (third language).

<sup>11</sup> Gee *et al* (1996) influenced by the writings of economists, business theorists and critical sociologists, have tried to characterize the New Work Order associated with globalisation of production and distribution and to examine the implications of these changes for the kinds of language needed in work and educational contexts (Street, 2001: 2).

domain, is taking place in society. He sees the world *told* as very different from the world *shown* and believes that the effects of the move to the screen, as the main medium of communication, will have wider political and cultural implications producing far-reaching shifts in power relations. The effects of new information and communication technologies make struggles over power inevitable, with a potential threat to democracy in time to come (*ibid*).

Freire and Macedo (1987: xii) believe that literacy is a meaningful construct insofar as it is viewed as a set of social practices that functions to empower or disempower people with both the *word* and the *world* being read essentially in similar ways. Literacy is therefore associated through language to discourse, which is socially accepted ways of using language to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or as playing a socially meaningful role.

Critical Literacy is an extension of this idea that involves the ability to analyse, understand, evaluate, and interpret the intentions, contents and effects that messages, power, language and texts have, embracing all literacies. Attitudes, values, and beliefs that lie beneath the surface are questioned and challenged, and meaning is viewed differently. Critical Literacy as a pedagogical approach can be viewed as a product of the times. It developed and expanded in a political climate that was characterised by anti-authoritarianism during the 1960s and 70s but was recognised as a distinct critical movement in English teaching only in the 1980s (Buckingham, 2004: 108).

### **3.3 Critical Literacy: a lifelong process**

#### *3.3.1 Beginnings*

According to Maclean and Green (1996), Critical Literacy is a term that emerged in the mid-1980s and has since come to occupy an important position to teachers, curriculum personnel and researchers becoming an expression of preference in language and literacy policy contexts. Critical literacy can be traced back to the 'Radical' view of English teaching that had its roots in the London School. This view remained silenced for many years until the mid-1980s when the voices of the Radical School were heard again.

Unlike the other approaches that were shifts within the Cultural Heritage paradigm, Critical Literacy was a paradigm shift in English Education. This shift represents the third major paradigm in the English curriculum at secondary schools since the *English as Literature* and *English as Language* paradigms of the 1960s and 1970s. With critical literacy the shift is to *English as Literacy*. There are two dimensions to critical literacy: *text analysis* and *text production and construction* (Maclean and Green, 1996: 13).

As outlined in Chapter 1, the pattern of change in English teaching in England was mirrored in South Africa, given its British colonial past. The post-structuralist view, largely associated with linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1974), that identity and meaning shift radically according to different perspectives and cultural contexts, applies to the development of English as a subject which can be traced through many levels of changing identity (Peim, 1993: 197) that have culminated in Critical Literacy. Each level of the development of English as a subject is a response to historical, cultural, political and economic changes mainly in English society, ideological constructs within the power frameworks of the time.

West (1988: 89) espouses the view that the levels of changing identity (please see Figure 3.2) in English teaching which were manifested as the Cultural Heritage, Skills, and Personal Growth approaches were all unequal in merit and the assumptions underlying them were different. Each one makes different assumptions of what is possible and desirable in an English classroom. He believes that the Cultural Heritage approach has an arbitrary imposition of a canon of literature; the Skills approach denies the creativity of the student and the Personal Growth approach, while it encourages creativity, does not focus on the social dimension that takes account of history, culture and ideology, which are contained in the Critical Literacy approach. This approach, says West (*ibid*), is concerned with the processes of language and with all aspects of the making of meaning. Its business is the production, reproduction, and critical interpretation of verbal, visual, spoken and written texts. It requires classroom activities that enable students to make meaning; to develop their understanding of the processes whereby meanings are made and those processes whereby meanings conflict and change.

Ball *et al.* (1990: 74-81) outline the main features of the four levels of English and thus four forms of literacy using the simple model below, which I have modified (please see Figure 3.2 below):

Figure 3.2: Ball's Model: the four levels of English.

<b>AUTHORITY: The State</b>	
<p><b><u>1  English as skills</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Lifeskills</li> <li>• Driven by self in relation to the economy</li> <li>• Presentation of self is more important than a sense of self</li> </ul> <p><b><u>SELF</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>2  Cultural Heritage</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English as the great literary tradition where the authority of the text is paramount</li> <li>• Directive, prescriptive</li> <li>• Promotes a cultural heritage and idea of nationhood that excludes outsiders and is therefore open to a type of xenophobia</li> <li>• Grammar is taught with a concern for fixed Standard English</li> </ul> <p><b><u>NOT SELF</u></b></p>
<p><b><u>INDIVIDUAL</u></b></p> <p><b><u>3  Progressive English/Personal growth</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child centred, each child seen as unique</li> <li>• Literacy if personal discovery</li> <li>• texts are varied, include modern media</li> <li>• However lots of emphasis on self</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>COLLECTIVITY</u></b></p> <p><b><u>4  Critical Literacy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Radical' English</li> <li>• Class conscious, political in content</li> <li>• Negotiation and participation</li> <li>• Promotes social action</li> </ul>
<b>AUTHENTICITY: The People; Self</b>	

This model illustrates how Critical Literacy is positioned within the scheme of English teaching. Each of the four versions of literacy illustrated above has a political basis where the learner is positioned differently in relation to subject knowledge, their teachers and the State, each produces different kinds of students with different kinds of views and attitudes. In each version the framework of meanings within English teaching differs (*ibid*: 80).

Thus, the course of English as a school subject and Critical Literacy within that discipline will always be contested territory since society itself is in a constant state of conflict given that the possession of knowledge, and thus power, status and material resources are always open to challenge. Critical Literacy must also be viewed as dynamic and evolving in relation to other discourses and practices. The Cultural Heritage approach, although it

no longer enjoys hegemony in the curriculum, is still a widely prevalent cultural force in the English classroom. Thus, Critical Literacy is often represented as being either a competing or complementary version of English teaching (Morgan, 1997: 1, 2, 6). In order to grasp exactly how critical literacy can be implemented, one must examine the philosophies of those who have worked in the field of Critical Pedagogy and whose ideas have influenced the development of Critical Literacy as a distinct movement.

### *3.3.2 Developments in Critical Literacy*

Critical Literacy theory is the product of three different but related movements: post-modernism, Critical Discourse Analysis and participatory pedagogy<sup>12</sup> (which will be discussed later in this Chapter). Post-modernism (1967) is an intellectual movement that affected the study of art, architecture, sociology, philosophy and literature during the latter half of the twentieth century, the period of the greatest technological and scientific developments that have shifted the reality of our world forever. Critical Literacy draws from post-modernism what is central to its design, the capacity of the community to empower itself and its members in the changing milieu of the twenty-first century. Empowerment sees a move towards women's rights, gay rights, children's rights, ethnic minority rights, language rights, animal rights and so on, as a reaction against the global spread of a single model of culture and the effects of global capitalism (Holme, 2004: 36-44).

Post-modernism also rejects a singular set of ideas. There is no final, fixed, universal meaning. We empower ourselves to see connotations, to read the subtext or unstated implications, understand metaphor and other language devices so that we are not consciously or unconsciously manipulated and become more than consumers of the printed word. Kress and Von Leeuwen (1996) see language as extending beyond reading, writing, and speech to a wider range of semiotic systems.

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<sup>12</sup> Post-modernist thinkers that have influenced literary theory are Jacques Derrida (1967), Ferdinand de Saussure (1974) and Michel Foucault (1977). Norman Fairclough (1992) is synonymous with Critical Discourse Analysis (1989) and Paulo Freire (1974) with Participatory Pedagogy (Holme, 2004: 36-53).

In a more structuralist analysis of language that can be traced to the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1974), Semiotics is seen as a sign system where a sign or a signifier is viewed as a concept that represents a meaning or a signified. Post-modernist philosopher Jacques Derrida (1967) took Saussure's analysis one step further. He argued that in order for us to identify what a particular concept is we must be able to differentiate it from other concepts. We must begin with a set of categories and their names and then use these to bring conceptual order to the world. The meanings we thought to be anchored in the world and referred to by language are constructed out of language. Language, which facilitates the sharing of concepts, enables society to exist by creating a network of meanings, which enables us to construct reality. This process is referred to as 'social construction'. Critical Literacy deals with the methods that society uses to construct itself through language (Holme, 2004: 41-43).

The two foundational thinkers in the area of Critical Pedagogy or Participatory Pedagogy are John Dewey in the United States of America (USA) and Paulo Freire in Brazil (Shor, 1997: 11). Dewey (1916: 191) recognised the power of experience to be central to critical learning and proposed that a curriculum must have a social ethic at its core. He said that the intention is to improve the life we live in common so that the future shall be better than the past.

Dewey's progressivist pedagogy that emerged through his writings in the early twentieth century was a direct response to the inappropriateness of traditional curricula, which imposed knowledge from above and outside. He believed that the traditional classroom was designed for listening thus creating a dependency on the teacher cultivating what he viewed as the negative virtues of obedience and submission. There was no connection with the life and experiences of the child and often irrelevant and meaningless, uninspiring tasks and information (Cope and Kalantzis, 1995: 45, 48).

Contrary to the traditional curriculum, Critical Literacy shares some of the basic tenets of Dewey's progressivism like student-centred activity, motivation, and experience. Dewey's ideas (1900, 1909) were acknowledged by Freire (1970) to have had an impact on his work. Freire suggested that critical pedagogy was a form of cultural action for

freedom the goal of which was to bring a humane future to life against and within an unjust present. Among other things, he argued that Critical Literacy makes possible a more adequate and accurate 'reading' of the world, on the basis of which people could enter into 'rewriting' the world into a formation in which their interests, identities and legitimate aspirations were more fully present and present more equally (Peim, 1993).

In order to achieve this, Freire coined the term *praxis*, which entailed translating theory into action. He said that it was unlike traditional education, which consists of transference of knowledge from knowing teacher to ignorant, passive student (Freire, 1985: 114). Thus an analysis of existing socio-political conditions leads to the prospect of changing them and so in trying to transform society, people also reshape themselves. This involved attaining an awareness of the nature of society that Freire referred to in Portuguese as *conscientizacao* (conscientisation) (Holme, 2004: 53). This idea of conscientisation was the rationale behind the deconstruction of texts during the Community Newspaper Project described in this thesis.

Freire's (1970) work built on cognitivist Vygotsky's (1962, 1978) *zone of proximal development* (ZPD) which proposed that such zones exist when a less developed individual or student interacts with a more advanced person or teacher, allowing the student to achieve things not possible when acting on his or her own. Freire added to the Vygotskian 'ZPD' by suggesting that the critical process is driven and justified by mutuality where students learn from each other and the teacher in the process develops the democratic competence in negotiating the curriculum and sharing power. This was a group process rather than an individual one. However, Freire did not suggest that teachers and students are free to do whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted to, rather, the conceptual knowledge and expertise of the teacher was seen as a prerequisite for responsible Critical Literacy.

Freire (1970: 57-60) believed that both teachers and students, having been socialised by previous banking models, through one-way teacher talk and non-negotiable syllabi, complicate the implementation of such pedagogy. He condemned the *banking* model of education, which consisted essentially of 'depositing' tokens of learning in the vaults of

passive students' minds. Instead, he advocated a collectivist method in which learning emerges out of a joint negotiation of needs and interests and blooms in a critical consciousness (Peim, 1993: 6). Traditional banking concepts position the teacher as oppressor and the learner as oppressed. Freire recommended that teachers share the class with their students in common dialogue, free from the facilitator's ideological control (Holme, 2004: 53-56).

Critical Literacy has clear political motives that aim to work in the interest of social justice and equality for all. According to Prinsloo (1998: 136), meaning is not appropriated just by the teacher but also emanates from the learner. The political basis of Critical Literacy challenges standard ways of viewing texts and learners are conscientised so that they can effect changes in society.

Freire's philosophy of educational praxis was extended by academics from the United States of America like Aronowitz and Giroux (1991), and Shor (1997). Aronowitz and Giroux (1991: 100) see the authoritative voice of the teacher making space for the voice of the student, a voice capable of speaking, listening, retelling and challenging. Shor (1997) illustrated how praxis can be put into effect when his students at City University in New York turned their attention to a common feature of American life, the hamburger. Students researched its nutrition, culture, politics and economics, which prompted them to set up a committee to change the decision-making structures of the student cafeteria and its menu so that cheap, nutritious meals could be purchased. In viewing the common burger as a text in the classroom, Shor and his students illustrated Critical Literacy in action (Morgan, 1997: 9-10).

Luke (1992: 10) suggests that:

of the ways in which literacy has shaped the organizations and values a critical literacy entails not only a rudimentary control of the linguistic and semiotic codes of written text, but also understanding of social life and the ways in which the texts of everyday life influence one's own identity and authority. Literacy is therefore as much about ideologies, identities and values as it is about codes and skills.

Teachers therefore have to introduce learners to the codes of written texts as well as to an understanding of the relationship between such codes and social ideologies, identities,

and values. In order for teachers to do this, the starting point has to be mainstream literacy, which includes the ability to read and write texts necessary for participation within the dominant culture. Reading and writing are important because we read and write our world as well as our texts and are read and written by them (Scholes, 1991). Reading facilitates the interpretation of meaning and writing the production of meaning. Critical Literacy extends the concepts of the reception and production of meaning through deconstruction, critique and subversion of texts that challenge compliant readings (Macken-Horarik, 1998: 75).

Macken-Horarik (1998) argues that Critical Literacy is dependent on students' prior engagement with mainstream literacy practices and that within school education there is no way into Critical Literacy practices but through the mainstream. Her argument is particularly relevant to my project. As a teacher of English, my first exposure to the concept of critical literacy was when I embarked on a Masters in Education programme in 2002. Although aspects of a critical pedagogy may have been present in my teaching, it was not formalised within a Critical Literacy framework, and I had never encountered it before. My students had never been exposed to Critical Literacy during their schooling prior to my intervention. I therefore had to use mainstream discourses in order to introduce the concept to the respondents.

### *3.3.3 Engagement with texts using Critical Literacy theories*

Critical Literacy presupposes a wide selection of texts that vary from print to electronic media and examines the role they play in power relations which are highlighted through class, race and gender issues. It goes beyond meaning lying with the text or reader. The source of meaning is a result of a process that involves the reader, the text, and the social and political conditions of society, orienting learners to question *their* role with regards to power relations in society.

Holme (2004: 43) suggests that Critical Literacy goes beyond becoming literate just to consume a set of signs, rather it is about understanding the subtext, a set of unstated

implications and meanings conveyed by the choice of language and the juxtaposition of one set of signs with another.

Thus, Critical Literacy is a pedagogy that examines the larger set of meanings that literacy makes available to us and is therefore for those educators and learners who are innovative and creative, who want to make sense of their subjective positions in particular social contexts, and who are disturbed by inequalities in society. Creative methodology of implementing Critical Literacy in the classroom can take many forms, involving engagement with, and estrangement from, the text. These can include:

*Figure 3.3: ways of engaging with Critical Literacy in the classroom.*

• disrupting the text
• using intertextuality
• juxtaposing texts
• providing alternative endings
• role playing
• role reversal
• adding information
• introducing parody
• examining the contexts of making and receiving texts

(Simpson, 1996: 120).

This engagement and estrangement with the text is a way of illustrating that meaning lies not only with the text, but that the text can be used as a catalyst to explore ideas, viewpoints and attitudes and to negotiate meaning.

In order to facilitate such an exploration, it is essential to Critical Literacy pedagogy that the roles a reader assumes when engaging with a text are examined. This is embodied in the Four Resources Model, which was devised by Freebody and Luke (1990) and outlines four social practices requisite for Critical Literacy:

*Figure 3.4: the Four Resources Model (Freebody and Luke, 1990).*

• Code-breaker ( <i>How do I crack this? What do the symbols or combinations mean?</i> )
• Text-participant ( <i>What does this mean?</i> )
• Text-user ( <i>What can I do with this information here and now? What is this text for? How can I talk about it?</i> )
• Text-analyst ( <i>What does this text do to me? How does it position me? What does it expect me to know, value?</i> )

This model can be applied to different types of texts. For example, assuming the role of code-breaker becomes particularly relevant if one is engaging with a mathematical or scientific text or text analyst when faced with religious or philosophical texts. The above model refers mainly to the analytical dimension of Critical Literacy. In Chapter 6 I illustrate how the updated version of the Four Resources Model (1997) was utilised to introduce learners to Critical Literacy at this level.

However, French theorist, Roland Barthes, in *The Pleasure of the Text* (1975: vi), holds the following view about writers through whom texts speak:

The qualities of a first-rate writer cannot be defined, but only experienced. It is just the thing in him that makes him first-rate. One can catalogue all The qualities that he shares with other writers, but the thing that is his very own, his timbre, this cannot be defined or explained any more than the quality of a beautiful speaking voice can be.

Are teachers of English then, not just at my school but throughout the world, guilty of *textual exploitation*, of killing the pleasure of the text through analysis and explanation? Misson (1998: 109) concurs with Freebody and Luke's view when he says:

Enjoyable work on texts in classrooms comes from reflection and analysis, from seeing more in the text, things not noticed in the first reading, seeing different possibilities that the sharing of different readings in the class builds up. It comes from the interest in seeing how the text is working. People, curiously to me, seem to think that analysis lessens the enjoyment, but if we like something, we inevitably want to know more about it.

He also believes that analysing the sources of pleasure in a text has entertainment value and is thus enjoyable. Theoretical analysis of a text provides an understanding that can be applied to other texts and thus help students get better control of them. Students are given insights into how texts operate by asking important questions about texts, characters, how texts position readers and how readers position themselves illustrating how the reader is oriented in specific ways of perceiving, thinking and feeling (Misson, 1998: 108). An understanding of the way texts position readers is central to Critical Literacy as it is through such positioning that we are, to a very large extent, created as human beings and given a sense of self. This advances the idea that texts do ideological and political work by positioning us (*ibid*: 106).

I argue that interactions with texts go beyond appreciation, analysis, and explanation to a critical engagement and play with the text that is similar to a child getting infinite pleasure from the varied creations of lego blocks. I have therefore incorporated Misson's strategies for positioning readers, outlined below, in my research project. According to Misson (1998: 103), gaining pleasure from a text, is linked to the concept of desire of which there are two ranges that successful texts call upon: the *desire for intense experience*, and the *desire for confirmation*. The former is unsettling and the latter settling.

As far as positioning is concerned, the basic questions that one can ask corresponding to each of the two ranges of desire are first, what kind of experience is the text offering us, and what is the purpose of putting us through that experience? Second, what are the text assuming that we know and/or value? (This is necessary for the text providing confirmation of what we already know) (Misson, 1998: 108).

These questions can be modified to make them appropriate to different types of texts in order to highlight how a text engages us and how it positions us. This is particularly relevant to life in the information age where students engage with media literacy more extensively than with traditional literacy.

Another advocate of Critical Literacy, Hobbs (1997: 165) said that in order to prepare students to understand the complex, symbol-rich culture in which they live, a new vision of literacy is essential to fulfill the broad goals of education which are: to be informed and effective citizens in a democratic society; to function effectively in a rapidly changing world that demands multiliteracies, and, to realise personal fulfillment.

This new vision of literacy expands the concept of *text* to include messages of all sorts and is constituted of four processes that assist students to develop skills to use language and other forms of symbolic expression. These processes, according to Hobbs (*ibid*: 175), are *access, analyse, evaluate* and *communicate*.

In order for democracy to be sustained, citizens of a country must critically analyse and evaluate information and resources. This is essential if citizens are to take meaningful action and make meaningful decisions on important issues. The theoretical traditions of semiotics, literary criticism, communication theory, arts education, and language and literacy development all constitute the new vision of literacy. The conceptual principles that inform the Critical Literacy approach are also the analytic concepts that support the new vision of literacy. According to Simpson (1996: 119), the analytical concepts of Critical Literacy are:

*Figure 3.5: analytic concepts of Critical Literacy.*

• All messages are constructions
• Messages are representations of social reality
• Individuals construct meanings, from messages
• Messages have social, political, aesthetic and economic purposes
• Each form and genre has unique characteristics and purposes

(Simpson, 1996)

The analytic concepts outlined in Figure 3.5 above, help students to negotiate meaning and to understand the complex and paradoxical nature of communicative messages in contemporary culture. They can be applied to all forms of media and provide a framework to recognize the manner in which messages have political and economic purposes, value in the marketplace and the ways in which audiences function as a commodity (Hobbs, 1997: 170).

Engagement with Critical Literacy involves questioning received knowledge and immediate experience with the aim of challenging inequity and developing activists. It is about a greater understanding of the intricate and complicated relationship between language and power. This means coming to terms with the structured inequalities of our society as they are played out in language, ultimately contributing to changing the dispensation. In some contexts then, Critical Literacy can be risky business and can hold the possibility of prison or persecution (West, 1988: 92) for its practitioners.

West's view is reiterated by Ball (1990: 80) who says that with critical approaches the struggles in society become the starting point for the acquisition of social and literacy skills. Learners are taught to be critical of the world around them and are united by their common experiences. Oppressed groups are encouraged to resist injustice and are spurred into action (Ball, 1990: 80). In the light of these views, I would like to argue that it was the subversive presence of Critical Literacy, in various forms among the marginalised, that shifted South Africa from apartheid to democracy. This can be inferred from the extensive discussion on the transformation from apartheid to democracy in Chapter 2.

However, Critical Literacy is not the dominant version of literacy in South Africa, as it has not yet acquired the discursive space and institutional power attained by the other approaches to English teaching as reflected in Figure 3.2. Also, one approach does not operate exclusively, as other approaches are also present at the same time, but to varying degrees. Some countries like Australia and Canada are ahead of South Africa. While South Africa is only now embracing Critical Literacy approaches, these countries have gone 'beyond' Critical Literacy to Digital Literacies<sup>13</sup>, see for example, the work by Buckingham (2004: 173). Critical Literacy remains emergent in South Africa as it is synonymous with democratic discourses and cultural hegemony is still in the process of being reorganised after the end of apartheid.

The move from emergent to dominant form will only come about if teachers exercise Critical Literacy at their own level (West, 1988: 83). It is my belief that teachers in South Africa cannot go *beyond* Critical Literacy until they understand and practice Critical Literacy. Closely associated with Critical Literacy, and sometimes functioning concurrently are Intertextuality, Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Language Awareness, Genre and Reader Response Theory. As already mentioned, these theories percolated the Community Newspaper Project which will be described in detail in Chapters 6 and 7. I will examine Intertextuality first.

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<sup>13</sup> Critical literacy approaches can still be applied to Digital Literacies.

### 3.4 Intertextuality: a network of textual relations

Although the term *intertextuality* dates back to the mid-1960s, the phenomenon is as old as recorded human society. The theory of Intertextuality, associated with Bakhtin (1919), Barthes (1953) and Kristeva (1965), can be understood on two levels. The first is based on the premise that a *writer* is a reader of texts before he or she is an author of a text and therefore his or her work includes references, quotations and influences of every kind that he or she may have encountered in the past. The second is based on the assertion that once the text is passed on to the *reader*, when reading that text the reader brings to it the texts he or she may have read which leads to different interpretations of a text. A text is therefore a product of cross-fertilisation (Still and Worton, 1993: 1-2).

Intertextuality is said to have its origins in twentieth century linguistics. It is a term first coined by French linguist, philosopher, psychoanalyst and semiotician Julia Kristeva in the mid-1960s designating the “passage of one sign system to another” (McAfee, 2004: 26). Kristeva also referred to the term *transposition* in reference to Intertextuality since every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an intertextuality). Signified practice is never simple and unified but the result of multiple origins and hence it does not produce a simple, uniform meaning (*ibid*). Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure’s work was also considered pioneering in the area of Intertextuality with his ideas focusing on the existence of language in various social situations (Allen, 2000: 3).

Intertextuality is a characteristic or feature of texts, whether literary or non-literary, that are lacking in any kind of independent meaning, being labelled as intertextual since the act of reading plunges us into a network of textual relations. To interpret a text, and to discover its meanings, is to trace those relations (*ibid*: 01). Intertextuality also applies to non-literary arts, the current cultural epoch and modern computer technologies. It encourages us to resist a passive reading of texts and to understand that there is never a single or correct way to read a text, since each reader brings with him or her different expectations, interests, opinions and prior reading experiences (*ibid*: 07).

Barthes (1997a: 159) employs Intertextuality to challenge the beliefs concerning the role of the author in the production of meaning and the very nature of literary meaning itself. He contends that literary meaning can never be fixed; readers can discover multiple meanings within literary texts. Barthes (*ibid*) reminds us that the original meaning of *text* is “a tissue, a woven fabric”; therefore the idea of the text and thus Intertextuality depends on the weave of the garment, which is a metaphor for text. The text is woven from the *already written* and the *already read*, which mean that it is then left to the reader to appropriate meaning. Meaning for the reader will emanate from his or her prior experiences and knowledge of texts (*ibid*). Still and Worton (1993: 18-19) construe Barthes’ view on Intertextuality as making sense of our lived experience and constructing our lives in relation to texts, whether these be Proust or television soap operas.

Macken-Horarik (1998: 76) states that the intertexts of any text are all the other texts that we use to make sense of it and these vary from reader to reader and community to community. Here this idea is similar to Reader Response Theory which will be discussed later. Consequently our students bring into our classrooms not just experiences of ‘reality’ but experiences of different kinds of texts. It is therefore incumbent upon teachers to assist students from poorer and non-English speaking backgrounds to gain access to specialized and critical literacy practices. Without the guidance of the teacher, students are stranded within narrow readings of contexts (*ibid*).

The way the intertext, the text within which other texts reside, are read, is affected by the relationship between two or more texts. Gérard Genette (1979) had coined the terms ‘hypertext’ and ‘hypotext’ to refer to the intertext and the text with which the intertext has a significant association (Hawthorne, 2000: 182). These concepts were mediated to learners in a simplified manner during the Community Newspaper Project to illustrate how texts are interwoven, as is described in Chapter 6.

Just as Intertextuality takes two paths: towards the reader and his or her experiences, and toward the text itself and all the other texts it implicates, so the teacher or student can, in the discussion of a particular text, bring in, or refer to, other texts and other genre of texts to negotiate meaning. The term ‘Intertextuality’ therefore promotes a new vision of

meaning, authorship and reading, challenging traditional notions of reading and writing (*ibid*). Thus, the essential idea of Intertextuality is that meaning is not fixed, and this idea is extended by and forms an integral part of Critical Discourse Analysis, which I consider next in order to show this relationship.

### **3.5 Critical Discourse Analysis: continuing the intertextual chain**

Intertextuality is central to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is central to Critical Literacy. The fundamental idea is that discourse constructs the social world in meaning, and owing to the instability of language, meaning can never be permanently fixed as language users build on already established meanings. This idea is purported by one of the pioneering proponents of CDA, Fairclough (1995: 77), who argues that a text can be seen as a link in an *Intertextual* chain<sup>14</sup>.

Fairclough (1995: 77) also reveals that CDA grew out of Critical Language Awareness (CLA) which was based on the idea that, with everyday life mediated and organized through language it was important, especially for children, to be taught how to engage critically with language in order to become active citizens in a democratic society. Fairclough (1995: 77) shifted his emphasis to the more encompassing term *discourse* with CLA being associated more with the application of CDA as will be discussed later.

In general, the use of the term *discourse* refers broadly to knowledge and knowledge construction, for example, liberal discourses, Marxist discourses, educational discourses, and conventional medical discourses (Fairclough, 1995: 56). Also, discourse is both constituted and constitutive in that it does not just contribute to the shaping and reshaping of social structures, but also reflects them (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002: 61).

However, CDA is the analysis of the discursive practices through which texts are produced (created) and consumed (received and interpreted). Fairclough (1995), considered this to be an important form of social practice which contributes to the constitution of the social world that includes social identities, social relations, and

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<sup>14</sup> Norman Fairclough's (1989) ideas on CDA have developed over the last two decades from within the disciplines of linguistics, applied linguistics and general language studies.

systems of knowledge and meaning. It is through these discursive practices that social and cultural production and change take place. Vital to CDA is the engagement in concrete textual analysis of language use in social interaction and the understanding of how discourse is implicated in relations of power. CDA encompasses not only written and spoken language, but also semiotics which focuses on multi-modal texts that include visual images, signs, and sound (*ibid*: 61- 62).

Theoretically, CDA is related closely to the work of Michel Foucault (1977) on the constitutive nature of discourse (constitutes the social and thus social subjects) and the nature of discursive practice (defined by its relations with others) (Mills, 1997: 150).

Holme (2004: 45) argues that CDA draws on two perspectives: the first is the social constructionist view that language constructs the reality with which a given society will deal, and the second is Halliday's (1985) systemic functional linguistics (SFL), a multifunctional approach to language. SFL assumes that every text has a context and that a language and its context are inextricably linked. A social context and a text affect each other which, in turn, structure the language that is used. For example, one will use formal language structures in writing a business letter as opposed to informal language usage in constructing a letter to a close friend.

We are made increasingly aware of the correct ways to produce language to achieve certain goals: salespeople are told how to structure presentations, business people have a particular way of writing a report, and police are given specific interviewing procedures. Accordingly, Fairclough (1995: 77) identified a trend warranted by the pervasiveness of the media called *technologisation of discourse* which is capable of scripting our lives according to its models of language use. Even personal encounters like declarations of love and the offer of condolences are set out for us in the soap operas we consume (*ibid*: 48).

Fairclough (1995: 66), used SFL to design a three dimensional model for CDA. In this model he shows that every instance of language use, referred to as a communicative event, like a newspaper article or a film, consists of three dimensions: text (speech,

writing, visual images or a combination of these); discursive practice (the context, which involves the production and consumption of texts), and social practice (when features of a text are linked to significant changes in society, for example, the use of politically correct terms in post-apartheid South Africa).

All three dimensions should be covered in a specific discourse analysis of a communicative event although the order in which they are analysed is of little significance. Fairclough (1995: 66) suggests a different kind of analysis for each dimension. These include: *text analysis* (a description of the formal features like vocabulary and grammar, lexicalization, use of passive and active voice and other analytical tools of SFL); *processing analysis* (an interpretation of the processes by which texts are produced and received by human subjects), and *social analysis* (an explanation of the socio-historical/political conditions that govern production and consumption) (Janks, 1997: 329).

When looking at text critically, subjects assume either engaged or estranged positions, reading with or against the text. This concept is aligned to the concept of the resistant reader developed by Day and Bamford (1998). When we begin from a position of estrangement or alienation from the text it is easier to read against rather than with the text. Therefore subjects must overcome their alienation in order to engage with texts. Part of the challenge of teaching English to speakers of other languages is to give them access to dominant discourses so that they no longer experience alienation from the text (*ibid*). The aim of CDA is to illustrate how subjectivities are created through language and to draw attention to the complex, multi-layered, and diverse nature of language (Maclean and Green, 1996: 14).

According to Gee (1996: 146, 147), one is not in a discourse unless one has mastered it and mastery comes through acquisition, not learning, or being colonised. The acquisition of many school-based discourses on the part of mainstream students is facilitated by the fact that they are reinforced by parents in the home and by the constant support of these discourses that their homes give to the schools. This is particularly true in more affluent homes where parents place a high premium on reading, computer, and other media skills.

Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds are generally excluded from participation in such discourses in the home (*ibid*). These learners are further hampered by the fact that traditional classrooms and schools are poor at facilitating acquisition and so they fail to master school-based dominant discourses<sup>15</sup>.

The idea of positioning the individual or the subject has already been acknowledged as important to critical pedagogy. The process, through which language constructs a social position for the individual thereby making one an ideological subject, is referred to as 'interpellation'. Individuals are interpellated or placed in certain positions by particular ways of talking. For example, if a child calls an adult *Mum*, the adult responds and becomes interpellated with the identity of mother. Discourse allocates positions for people to occupy as subjects, for example, doctor or patient. An individual may occupy several different subject positions throughout each day. The doctor may also be black, a consumer, a homosexual; the patient may be a father, a businessman, a Moslem.

Sometimes an individual can become interpellated in different conflicting positions at the same time, for example, a gay priest or an obese dietitian. Society is divided along the lines of various discourses among them race, class, religion and gender (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002: 41).

As an example, if one had to position the teaching of English, a number of interconnected discourses, proposing different pedagogies like Cultural Heritage, Skills, and Personal Growth and Critical Literacy, function within the wide discursive field of English teaching. No teacher can be defined exclusively by one discourse as Morgan (1997: 3) states:

Not only are there seepages between analogous discourses of English, but also we all have various political and religious and ethnic affiliations belonging to different ethnic groups and the like. Hence no one exemplifies a discourse in a pure form.

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<sup>15</sup> In my experience of teaching learners from disadvantaged backgrounds it is more likely for them to be concerned about survival. Books, magazines, newspapers and other forms of media are often seen as luxury items and therefore unnecessary. As a result a culture of reading (a school-based discourse) does not exist in the home and vocabulary and general knowledge are limited. In order to bridge this gap I have ensured that there is a constant flow of unwanted books, magazines and newspapers that learners can take (not borrow) in the classroom (please see Chapter 5 for further discussion on the context of the school).

The overall aim of CDA is to promote discourses that further democratisation. One way of achieving this is to make people aware of the fact that discourse functions as a social practice that contributes to reinforcing unequal power relations (Fairclough, 1992b: 239). The belief that exploitative power relations are supported by language standards and conventions is the impetus for Critical Language Awareness which is the method that can be applied in making people aware of the unequal distribution of power in society (Maclean and Green, 1996: 14). Thus, the application of Critical Discourse Analysis is Critical Language Awareness, which will be discussed next.

### **3.6 Critical Language Awareness: Critical Discourse Analysis in action**

Critical Language Awareness (CLA) is the set of educational applications of Critical Discourse Analysis, which originate from the work of Fairclough (1992b) who says that:

Critical language awareness should give people insight into the discursive practice in which they participate when they use language and consume texts and also into the social structures and power relations that discursive practice is shaped by and takes part in shaping and changing. Through training in critical language awareness, people can become more aware of the constraints on their practice and of the possibilities for resistance and change (239).

CLA is the creation of a systematic body of knowledge about languages that assists people to reject and challenge exploitation and oppression and has their voices heard in new areas; encourages language use that shows respect for people, and allows people to make informed choices about how they will use language (Maclean and Green, 1996: 14).

The relationship between language and power is not obvious therefore the way language is used to maintain and to challenge existing forms of power and the emphasis on the deconstruction of texts is central to CLA (Janks, 1993: iii).

Hilary Janks<sup>16</sup> is a researcher and proponent of Critical Literacies worldwide with her work in CLA grounded within a South African context. She believes that CLA is an approach to language teaching that attaches significance to the relationship between

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<sup>16</sup> Hilary Janks teaches English Language and Literacy at the University of Witwatersrand in Gauteng, South Africa. Her interests are Language Education, Critical Linguistics and Language Policy. She is concerned with the politics of teaching English in multi-lingual settings and has published the *Critical Language Awareness Series* of materials for the classroom.

language, ideology and power. In this regard Janks (1997) draws on the work of Foucault (1987) and Bourdieu (1991), both of which contain tenets of CLA.

Foucault's (1987) <sup>17</sup> theories about the way language is policed focuses on society's unwritten rules that prohibit certain forms of speech in certain contexts. Discourse has the power to construct subjectivity. For example, in policing language, discourse contributes to the social construction of our identities; languages that enjoy hegemony create a hierarchy of human subjects; we become members of some discourse communities and not others, giving us specific identities. For example, those who are highly proficient in English are viewed to be more marketable human resources as far as employment is concerned. Failure to master this hegemonic language is considered to be an impediment and can prevent social mobility.

Janks (1997) refers to Bourdieu's (1991) ideas which, on the other hand, focus on the way variety in language is suppressed. This means that different varieties of the same language are valued differently resulting in providing linguistic capital to those who have access to the dominant language. The education system promotes that dominance. In the South African multilingual context English has dominance as it is perceived as a global language, a language of science and technology that increases the linguistic capital of its speakers. This can ultimately be translated to economic capital and thus power and is therefore favoured by parents and students (*ibid*: 1-19). The language debate is discussed further in Chapter 6.

CLA must enable students to understand how their rights may best be served without being colonised by the hegemonic language<sup>18</sup>. CLA focuses on the analysis of texts and

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<sup>17</sup> Students are all too familiar with the policing of language, what is considered by parents, teachers, priests and their peer group to be appropriate language use. For, example, I am, as a teacher always aware of the subconscious ease with which learners switch from Standard English in the classroom to South African slang, or South African Indian English outside the classroom.

<sup>18</sup> An example of colonisation is an isiZulu speaking learner in Grade 8 who had come to my school from a former white primary school, speaking English very well without an African accent. The parents of this learner have since transferred him to a former white high school because they feared that his English would begin to suffer if he continued to interact with the vast majority of isiZulu speaking learners who speak English only within the confines of the classroom.

the way they position readers and on the critical reading of texts providing strategies for describing, interpreting and explaining texts. Students are shown that any text can be deconstructed, helping them to become resistant readers, do multiple readings of texts and understand how they are positioned by the text (*ibid*). These aspects were used extensively during the research project, and are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

In facilitating CLA one has to connect with a range of genres and how language is structured differently in each. If CLA is the application of CDA, then Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional model will have to be used in the deconstruction of texts. Genre Theory, associated with Halliday (1985), also offers an insight concerning this model since the best way to understand various genres of texts is to closely examine text consumption; to actually produce different kinds of texts, and to see genre as constituting a variety of social practices. The applicability of Genre Theory within a Critical Literacy framework is discussed next.

### **3.7 Genre Theory: constituting social practice**

Genre Theory, linked to Halliday (1985), refers to the use of language associated with and constituting part of some particular social practice, such as interviewing people (interview genre), or advertising commodities (advertising genre). Each genre is different and has its own structure (Fairclough, 1995: 56). Genre Theory emerged under the influence of and other functional linguists in the 1970s and 1980s at the University of Sydney, Australia becoming known as the Sydney Genre School. Genre has since become very much part of the Australian school curriculum (Maclean and Green, 1996: 14).

Maclean and Green (1996: 14) outline the following emphases of Genre Theory: first, they provide a detailed description of the genres of power, of language forms and the explicit teaching of these forms to marginalised students to increase their range of linguistic choices. Second, they focus on the teacher's need to acknowledge his or her

position of authority and responsibility in creating a more equitable classroom. Third, they open linguistic and social processes to debate and critique thereby facilitating independent decision making.

Cope and Kalantzis (1993: 7) claim that the learning of new genres allows students to realise the linguistic potential to enter new levels of social activity and social power. Kress (1995: 64, 65) argues that the key issue in genre is how learners from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds interact with language in a text. He adds that in a multicultural society, the values, meanings and structures inherent in texts are not shared by all members of society; therefore text construction must become an explicit part of the curriculum. This approach, clearly outlined in the *NCS* (2003), correlates with Genre Theory since it engages learners in constructing and producing electronic, multimedia, print, and an assortment of other genre to enhance their understanding of particular kinds of texts.

In addition to constructing and producing different kinds of texts, the value of a text is viewed as a function of social, historical and cultural circumstances. Thus the reading or interpretation of various genres of texts will reveal different meanings to different people depending on the context. An exploration of this diversity, which encompasses a variety of approaches to the analysis of texts, is called Reader Response Theory, a fitting progression from Genre Theory within the framework of critical pedagogies.

### **3.8 Reader Response Theory: diverse interpretations**

Reader Response Theory seeks to explore the diversity of readers' responses to literary works. It can be traced as far back as Aristotle and Plato, both of whom, to some extent, based their critical arguments on literature's effect on the reader (Rabinowitz, 1997: 1).

Murfin and Ray (1998: 1-3) state that Rosenblatt (1938) is credited with pioneering this theory in *Literature as Exploration*, and in multiple editions over the years. She argued that a text, a poem for example, is produced by a "reader" and a "text". "A poem," she said, "is what the reader lives through under the guidance of the text and experiences as relevant to the text."

However, Reader Response Theory only gained prominence in the 1970s with the work of Fish (1970) who argued that any school of criticism that sees the literary work as an object, describing what it is rather than what it does, misconstrues the essence of reading. Iser (1974) suggests that texts contain gaps, blanks that affect the reader, who must explain them, connect what they separate, and create in his or her mind aspects that are not in the text but are incited by the text. The reader, consequently, is redefined, no longer a passive recipient of the ideas contained in a text but an active participant (*ibid*).

A reader's initial interaction with a text is a private moment with meanings internally experienced within the consciousness of that reader. When the process of meaning making moves from the private to the public domain (for example, the classroom) the role of the adult intermediary (teacher) is to keep the discussion going as well as to make sure that there is time for reflection. Young people are encouraged to share their own meanings and to listen to the meanings of others in the interpretive community (Vandergrift, 1987: 1).

The recent reference to Reader Response Theory is *reader-orientated criticism* with reader-orientated critics being practitioners of some other critical approach as well. Many have argued that meaning is constructed within and by social discourses with references to the effects of racism and politics on reading, to 'reading like a woman' and 'a homosexual way of reading' (Murfin and Ray, 1998: 1-3).

In the design of the research project in Chapter 6, I demonstrate how Reader Response Theory has filtered through at various points in the intervention, taking into account a learner's personal response to a text, focusing on relevance to a learner's life. It was used with other critical approaches allowing for creativity and reflective thinking and providing genuine engagement between the text and the learner. It is aimed at increased 'self- knowledge', where students gain awareness of their own involvement with the text (Ali, 1993: 288). The overlap between this theory and the other theories discussed in this chapter places it firmly within a Critical Literacy framework.

### 3.9 The possibilities for Critical Literacy in South Africa

As mentioned earlier, in South Africa, Critical Literacy is far from being the dominant discourse in the educational paradigm as the new and revised national curriculum is presently borne out of transformational discourses. The policies underlying this emerging curriculum suggest tremendous scope for the implementation of Critical Literacy.

Berlin (1996: 17) said that a curriculum:

is a device for encouraging the production of a certain kind of graduate, in effect, a certain kind of person. In directing what courses will be taken in what order, the curriculum undertakes the creation of consciousness. The curriculum does not do this on its own, free of outside influence. It instead occupies a position between the conditions of the larger society it is serving - the economic, political and cultural sectors - and the work of teacher-scholars within the institution.

Such a definition is closely tied to the pedagogy for Critical Literacy and is in effect the foundation for envisioning a change from the disproportionate apartheid curriculum of the past. In Chapter 2 I argued that South Africa is characterised by oppression, subjugation and discrimination on the basis of race, class and gender and that this *status quo* was propagated by the education system. Today, South African society has been redefined and is in a process of transition. As already outlined, in changing the education system, curriculum revision was undertaken in three stages.<sup>19</sup>

The new NCS (2003) embraces Critical Literacy discourses not only in the Languages Learning Field but with all learning fields of the new curriculum. *The National Curriculum Statement* (DoE, NCS Grades 10-12, English Home Language, 2003: 9) acknowledges the role that the range of literacies including Critical Literacy will play in the functioning of a democracy and the challenges in local and global contexts. The NCS document states that this range

has expanded beyond listening, speaking, reading, writing and oral traditions to include various forms such as media, graphic, information, computer, cultural and critical literacy. The languages curriculum prepares learners for the challenges they will face as South Africans and as members of the global community. The Further

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<sup>19</sup> First, the cleansing of the curriculum of its racist and sexist aspects immediately after the election in 1994; second, the implementation of Outcomes Based Education through Curriculum 2005 (C2005), and third the review of C2005 to make it more understandable in the classroom. The third stage resulted in the creation of the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* (Grades R-9) and the *National Curriculum Statement* (Grades 10-12) (Chisholm, 2003:1). (See Chapter 2 for discussion).

Education and Training curriculum enables all learners to meet many of the requirements of the Critical and Developmental Outcomes (DoE, 2003: 9).

This is the ideal, grounded in policy, regarding language education in South Africa, an ideal that teachers ‘on the ground’, like me, know will take time to accomplish.

The seven critical and five developmental outcomes of the *NCS* (2003) encompass the fundamental ideas of Critical Literacy thus setting the groundwork for it to become an important element of all learning areas. The Critical Outcomes are outlined in Figure 3.6.

*Figure 3.6: Critical Outcomes of the NCS (2003).*

1. Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking.
2. Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
3. Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.
4. Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
5. Communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes.
6. Use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

(DoE, 2003: 2)

These critical outcomes, the result of overhauling the education system, clearly illustrate a shift away from the traditional teacher-centred pedagogy of the apartheid years to one that is learner-centred. At the end of the Further Education and Training phase, every learner will have to exit having achieved each of these outcomes. Therefore the inclusion of the seven critical outcomes outlined above, as the basis on which all learning areas of the *NCS* (2003) are built, is crucial in ensuring that South African citizens never allow authoritarian forms of government and apartheid to thrive again.

This view is embodied in the work of American educationists Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) who believe that Critical Literacy responds to the cultural capital of a specific group or class and looks at the way in which it can be established, and also at the way in which the dominant society undervalues students by either ignoring or demeaning the knowledge and experiences that characterise their everyday lives. The unit of analysis here is social, and the key concern is not individual interests, but with the individual as well as collective empowerment. Learners are encouraged to develop a critical

relationship to their own knowledge, to recognise common experiences of oppression and the possibility of concerted action for change. Therefore the development of Critical Literacy within the South African educational framework will ensure that a nation that is constituted of critical thinkers is more likely to guarantee that democracy endures. The seven Critical Outcomes of the *NCS* (2003) are supported by the Developmental Outcomes (please see Figure 3.7 below).

*Figure 3.7: Developmental Outcomes of the NCS (2003).*

1. Reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
2. Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and
3. Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social
4. Explore education and career opportunities.
5. Develop entrepreneurial opportunities.

(DoE, 2003: 2).

One of the essential aspects of Critical Literacy is ensuring that action is taken regarding issues that are examined. These developmental outcomes therefore support critical literacy discourses in that they spur learners on to action. The outcomes that have been outlined above pertain to *all* learning fields in the new curriculum. As far as the Languages Learning Field is concerned, four<sup>20</sup> broad learning outcomes now apply to all eleven official languages in South Africa including English both at Home and Additional Language level. The new learning outcomes with their corresponding objectives for learners are listed in Figure 3.8.

*Figure 3.8: the four Learning Outcomes of subjects in the Languages Learning Field in the FET phase.*

1] Listening and Speaking (The learner is able to listen and speak for a variety of purposes, audiences and contexts)
2] Reading and Viewing (The learner is able to read and view for understanding and to evaluate critically and respond to a wide range of texts)
3] Writing and presenting (The learner is able to write and present for a wide range of purposes and audiences using conventions and formats appropriate to diverse contexts)
4] Language (The learner is able to use language structures and conventions appropriately and effectively)

(DoE, 2003: 9, 11, 12)

<sup>20</sup> This is a shift from the seven outcomes for the Languages Learning Field that were applicable before the revision of the curriculum in 2003.

As already mentioned, the *NCS* (2003) makes direct reference to Critical Literacy and if one has to examine the diction of the rationale provided for each of the above learning outcomes in the Subject Statement<sup>21</sup> for Languages, one would immediately be convinced that this is a framework for the teaching and learning of English that is conducive to the implementation of Critical Literacy. Terms like ‘critical listening skills’, ‘respond critically’, ‘visual and multi-media texts for a variety of purposes’, ‘develop critical awareness... of how power relations are embedded’ all point to critical literacy (DoE, 2003: 12, 13).

Yet the danger, I believe, is that educators who are resistant to change will perceive this to be the same conventional curriculum packaged differently using new terminology. After all, the four broad components (Oral, Literature, Creative Writing and Language and Comprehension) that comprised the conventional curriculum are still inherent in the learning outcomes of the new curriculum. Since the new curriculum that governs the Languages Learning Field merely provides broad guidelines, and is not prescriptive of content, much depends on teachers to ensure the successful implementation of Critical Literacy within the *NCS* (2003). Thus the possibilities for change might be present but this would mean that the initiative to learn afresh needs to be taken by a number of educational role players: curriculum planners, subject advisors, developers and authors of Learner Teacher Support Materials (LTSMs), teacher training institutions and educators themselves.

The new South African curriculum has finally been transformed and envisages learners that are critically literate across multiple modalities and who have equal access to knowledge and skills across the curriculum (Prinsloo and Janks, 2002: 36-38). However, this innovative curriculum will not be effectively rolled-out into the classroom until the educators are adequately trained. My experience leads me to conclude that much more than a few orientation workshops are needed. Metcalfe (*Sunday Times*, 1/1/06: 18) states that only 5% of teachers have joined the profession since 1996 and that most current teachers were trained in separate apartheid education systems with many receiving an

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<sup>21</sup> Each subject within the *NCS* (2003) has a guideline document outlining all the requirements for that subject. This document is called a Subject Statement.

education that is authoritarian, inimical to critical and innovative thinking. Proper university-based in-service training is needed to change teachers' own literacy practices (Prinsloo and Janks, 2002: 36).

I agree with Prinsloo and Janks (2002) that, in addition to teacher-training, support needs to be provided to those learners who are not fully proficient in the language of teaching and learning, as national examination papers will be written in English and not in any of the other official languages.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This Chapter has traced the development of interconnected critical approaches and concepts such as Intertextuality, Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Language Awareness, Genre Theory, and Reader Response Theory in order to demonstrate the need in South African schools for the development of critical approaches to the teaching of English. In my experience as a teacher of English, these concepts and approaches are relatively obscure or unknown to my peers. Becoming familiar with them and the ideas of their key proponents provides a point of departure in introducing Critical Literacy discourses to English Language classes in South African schools.

Many teachers of English are still located in a Cultural Heritage paradigm with its metropolitan connotations. English teaching can be a combination of discourses and approaches; but to operate exclusively within the Cultural Heritage paradigm is limiting and prevents learners from utilising their full potential. Thus far, South African learners, in particular those who come from disempowered and marginalised groups have not had much opportunity to develop Critical Literacy in the classroom; after all, apartheid education ended only a decade ago. Conventional educational approaches, together with the use of textbooks as the main form of learner support material, tend to promote the uncritical acceptance of information.

It is my view that the teaching of English as a school subject and media education are synonymous and until it becomes a subject in its own right, it can best be located within English Education. Our rapidly changing lifestyles in a highly technological, media-rich

and globalised world, changing social and cultural diversity means that we need to look at literacy for enduring learning in new ways.

Both the subject paradigm (the appropriate content of English as a subject) and the subject pedagogy (the appropriate method to be used to implement the content) (Ball and Lacy, 1994) must be orientated towards Critical Literacy. Only then will the common goal of creating self-directed life-long learners who are well equipped to take up a productive role as information managers in an information-driven society be realised. Often this information is contradictory so learners must be equipped to assess it critically; after all, in a culture where citizens see themselves simply as spectators and consumers, democracy is threatened. What is required from educators is that they be more creative in their pedagogy and to demonstrate a real commitment to ensuring that oppression in any form does not ever have a chance of becoming the dominant discourse again.

Advocates of Critical Literacy and Critical Pedagogy perceive education as a form of political liberation, claiming to speak on behalf of the oppressed, making it relevant to a South African context. However, understanding the theory is not sufficient, as theoretical proposals have to be accompanied by examples of how Critical Literacy might actually be implemented in practice. In Chapter 4 I provide insights into the world of newspapers, and into the South African media industry in general focusing on the discursive practices of text production and text consumption as outlined by Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model for CDA. This Chapter provides the background to the design and implementation of the Critical Literacy intervention described in Chapters 6 and 7.

## CHAPTER 4

### TRANSFORMING DISCOURSES: THE MEDIA AND NEWSPAPERS

#### 4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1 I examined the transitional contexts, in which I locate, later in this thesis, my research project. Chapter 4 extends that discussion to include those contexts that pertain directly to the media. Media, widely known as the fourth estate is, like schooling, an important institution of society with which we must engage critically. Its relevance to the thesis is that it is the discursive field within which the pedagogical tool, community newspapers, operates.

Of all the kinds of modern media available to us, the newspaper is most ancient and most common. Newspapers have also long been a valuable resource in the classroom of the language teacher because of its appealing, pertinent, relevant and wide-ranging information. Newspapers in general, through their pervasiveness in society, exercise tremendous power and influence over readers. Therefore it is a form of media that learners need to approach with discernment and is thus demanding to interact with. Since the specific focus of my thesis is the description of an intervention using community newspapers in the English Language classroom, I will examine newspapers as a genre of mass media more closely, highlighting how they function within the broad discursive field of the media. A deconstruction of community newspapers can never be complete without an examination of the progress of the mainstream press in a South African historical context, as developments in this area have, over the years, significantly influenced the community newspaper industry.

Therefore, I analyse briefly newspapers in general and mainstream newspapers in South Africa specifically before moving on to a detailed discussion of community newspapers, first from a broad perspective, and then in the context of Chatsworth. By incorporating material from local community newspapers in the Critical Literacy intervention, described in Chapters 6 and 7, my intention was to instil in participants the ability to

develop a critical consciousness about the values and ideologies offered to them by the media in their most immediate context (their own local community newspapers).

## **4.2 The media: creating a world without borders**

### *4.2.1 A global perspective*

The eighteenth century British parliamentarian Edmund Burke (1729-1797), in describing the press and its role and influence in society, was reported to have said in parliament: ‘and yonder sit the fourth estate<sup>1</sup>, more important than them all’. Today the media is not just made up of the press and print media, but the electronic media as well, and remains the *fourth estate*. While books and newspapers go far back in history, other elements of the media and mass communication like television, satellite mass distribution, compact discs and sophisticated cellular phone capabilities are the technological innovations of our age (De Beer, 2002: 5).

However, the serious study of the media as we know it only began in the late 1950s when people started to question and become critical of it. Simultaneously, concepts of semiotics, based largely on the work of linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure (1974), Roland Barthes (1967) and Umberto Eco (1977) were emerging. They posed radical questions of how meanings are constructed in language. These questions were applied to the audio-visual workings of the media (*ibid*: 22). Semiotics or Semiology (associated with the above linguists and theorists) is the study of the production of meaning through signs, and the way in which signs come together. Thus meaning is traced to its smallest unit possible. Semiotics goes beyond verbal language, to include fashion, colour, photography, gestures, haircuts and a variety of other non-verbal signs and codes that can be studied just like verbal languages. This illustrates that there are many systems of meaning that show how things come to have importance. The media actually structure the very realities they describe particularly through meaning, which is socially produced via a range of languages and codes (Watson and Hill, 1993: 169). Media educators often use

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<sup>1</sup> According to Burke the other three estates were the church, the judiciary, and the commons (Watson and Hill, 1993: 76).

semiotic methods to analyse and deconstruct media texts.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, McLuhan (1964) predicted in the 1960s that by the end of the twentieth century, the mass media will have turned the world into a global village. A world in which we will know all that goes on elsewhere since information of events occurring around the world will become common knowledge within a short time and enter our homes, places of work, and play. Today, McLuhan's prediction has materialised with the development of a highly mechanised digital world without borders where technology is advancing at a startling rate.

Never before have there been such radical technological changes in the world as in the past decade as digital media become the dominant means of communication, creating a new paradigm by transforming human behaviour in every sphere of life. According to Gorham (2007: 179), this is the third revolution in communication in the Western world. The first occurred with the shift from oral communication to printed media in the fifteenth century when Johannes Gutenberg invented the movable type and printed the Bible in 1440. The second revolution took place when the broadcast era was heralded in the 1950s with the dominance of television. The power of broadcast is yielding to the age of digital media which is likely to gain hegemony by 2010.

Print communication brought with it linear, rational, reflective thought like the words of a sentence, replacing understanding through dialogue that was characteristic of the oral world. Although speaking and print will always be critically important to communication, television showed the world to itself, breaking down the barriers that separated people, for example and poor people could have a glimpse into the world of the rich. Broadcast communication encouraged reflexive thinking that demanded mainly attention and reaction, requiring no analysis (*ibid*, 179).

Some believe that the digital era is a throwback to the oral tradition, like Walter Ong, a professor at St. Louis University and a student of Marshall McLuhan, who coined the term "secondary orality" in 1982 to describe the tendency of electronic media to echo the cadences of earlier oral cultures. The work of Ong (1982) is particularly relevant today

with social-networking sites like Facebook, Mxit, MySpace and YouTube uniting people in groups through a virtual oral culture (*The New York Times*, 11/12/07: 18).

Digital media combine text, graphics, sound and data in an integrated multimedia, multi-sensory, multi-networked manner. The key to this digital environment is convergence of things that were once sharply separated, information that might take decades to surface within natural systems can now show up within minutes (Gorham, 2007: 180).

In this digital space the following have become significant technologies: Google (the search engine enabling quick access to information on any conceivable subject); Wikipedia (the Encyclopaedia Britannica of the internet); Facebook, Mxit, MySpace and YouTube (social-networking sites) that can be accessed with a variety of devices, including cellular phones, smartphones, portable modems and embedded laptops (a laptop with a built-in cellular phone modem). All these facilities are made possible through High Speed Download Packet Access (HSDPA), Third Generation (3G), broadband (providing faster, wireless access to information on the internet), and Bluetooth (providing the transfer of data from one unit to another, for example, from a cellular phone to a laptop or another cellular phone, wirelessly) (*Vodaworld Magazine*, Autumn '09: 16-17). With wireless connections the online world of web-based interactions has become mobile through 'smartphones' like the *Blackberry*, the *Apple iPhone*, and many other makes and models that allow one to have all of the above digital capabilities, and more, in the palm of one's hand.

Modern media are thought of as the conveyor belts of meaning between 'the world' and audiences, producing images of debates and events. One view is that it is a mirror of society, reflecting all that takes place to a public that is dependent on this information to make decisions (Steenveld, 2002: 1). However, to say that modern media is 'just a channel of mass communication' is an over simplification of its impact.

It is an effective manner of influencing attitudes and opinions as it is a pervasive social force that is part of everyday life, from the breakfast radio or television shows, to the billboards and numerous other advertising and mass communicated messages during the

day to the late night news bulletin. Mass communication supplies us with information, influencing, educating, and entertaining us (De Beer, 2002: 5).

According to De Beer, (2002: 22, 23) critical theories of media attempt to expose the way in which mass communication maintains this dominance by supporting the power and political structures in society. The media are said to promote stratifications and divisions in society by reproducing racism, sexism and middle-class values through the selection of news items, explanation of events and the use of stereotypes. Foucault (1977), whose critical theories about the mass media have influenced interpretations of social life, challenges the idea of individuals being at the mercy of a singular, all powerful, all pervasive ideology (*ibid*).

The idea that ‘knowledge is power’, that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, derives from Foucault’s belief that the transfer, production and reproduction of knowledge are always inextricably linked to the production of power relations (Foucault, 1977: 27-28). Foucault’s beliefs are embodied in Critical Discourse Analysis which is also one of the fundamental theories that has influenced the development of Critical Literacy as discussed in Chapter 3. Foucault’s (1977) ideas of power relations are particularly relevant to the South African context especially since this country had a past that was characterised by the use of propaganda machinery used by the apartheid government to maintain hegemony.

#### *4.2.2 A local perspective*

##### *4.2.2.1 The road to press freedom in South Africa*

South Africa during the time of apartheid was characterised by hegemony of western, racist, and sexist culture, and not only by institutionalised racism and oppression built on the distortion of power in relation to race, class and gender, but by a sophisticated propaganda network that permeated all forms of media at the time (Steenveld, 2002: 2).

The two pillars of South Africa’s propaganda machinery were the education departments and the mass media. As far as education was concerned, words and language were used

to manipulate black children to accept a distorted image of themselves and their culture as somehow diminished, inferior, and inadequate. In media the major vehicle was the radio and later television, the advent of which provided a powerful propaganda tool that the government lost no time in exploiting. Certain sectors of the press were also co-opted into the network of misinformation (*Sunday Nation*, 10/10/93).

The period of the apartheid years (1948-1993) needs to be examined more closely in order to contextualise South Africa's road to 'press freedom'. South African society during apartheid was characterised by an oppressive ethos which inevitably prevented the mainstream media from reporting on controversial issues in an unbiased manner. Particularly vicious was the 'gagging' of the media during the States of Emergency in the 1980s<sup>2</sup>. The media restrictions smothered insurrection by denying information about its existence; it was the silencing of text by context. This resulted in the failure of the commercial press to adequately reflect the events of the day which spurred on the formation of an alternative press that became a constant victim of censorship (Prinsloo and Criticos, 1991: 45). The alternative press were newspapers produced by progressive groups for mainly the black community and included independent news agencies, newspapers like the *Weekly Mail*, *New Nation*<sup>3</sup>, *Grassroots*, *UmAfrika*, *New African*, *Indicator*, *Vrye Weekblad*, *South* and *Cosatu News* a trade union publication (*ibid*: 190, 191).

The *Guardian* was another bastion of the anti-apartheid struggle, founded in 1937 and initially called the *Cape Guardian*, it had seven names in its twenty-six year history. In its initial stages it aimed to be more proletarian than other publications and adopted a socialist perspective without a specific political stance. However, the *Guardian* hosted beauty contests among women workers and also focused on fashion and cooking. One of its reporters was Ruth First. It was in the 1940s that the *Guardian* grew into a mouthpiece

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<sup>2</sup> Opposition to the apartheid government had grown so intense that the then president, P.W. Botha, announced on 20 July 1985 that a State of Emergency would be imposed on thirty-six magisterial districts. Another nationwide State of Emergency was enforced by P.W. Botha on 12 June 1986 which was far more stringent than the first (*Reader's Digest*, 1995: 482, 487).

<sup>3</sup> *The New Nation* was a Roman Catholic funded newspaper that was essentially the voice of the banned African National Congress. It was closed down on 30 May 1997 (*Reader's Digest*, 1995: 486).

for the Communist Party and African nationalism. It displayed uncompromising support for the anti-apartheid campaigns of the African National Congress (ANC) in the 1950s which eventually led to the apartheid state closing it in March 1963 (Zug, 2008).

Suppression of the press became more widespread in the years following June 1976. In October 1977, several newspapers were shut down by the apartheid government including *The World* and *Weekend World*. The Editor of *The World* was detained for five months under Section 10 of the *Internal Security Act* (*Sunday Times*, 19/10/08: 22).

Meintjies (1990: 31-32) suggests that the clampdown on the media saw the emergence of other forms of artistic expression, particularly poetry, which popularised the formation of organisations, celebrating leaders who were fighting against repression. Since many of these writings were in English, the language was purged of its colonial associations. With alternate artistic expression, which included an oral tradition, the perception that rural areas are traditional backwaters was dispelled. Also, indigenous African languages started to come into their own and the black working class constituency reclaimed Afrikaans. Types of electronic media at the time, like the overhead projector, the plain paper copier and the desk-top publishing facility of personal computers were utilised to produce newspapers, pamphlets, posters and banners which were either seized or banned by the security police (Prinsloo and Criticos, 1991: 46).

In the 1980s the repressive media laws spurred on the establishment of an alternate media to counter dominant media practices ensured that there was a 'watchdog' for the ruling National Party. The history of the *Weekly Mail*, which is now called the *Mail and Guardian*, is an example of a newspaper that thrived in the face of the State's machinations to silence the press. In South Africa's present democratic landscape the *Mail and Guardian* continues to be a barometer for South African politics. The forerunner of this newspaper was the liberal *Rand Daily Mail* which closed down in 1985. Some of its former unemployed journalists launched an anti-apartheid weekly in July 14 of that year. The newspaper was known as the *Weekly Mail*, later becoming the *Weekly Mail and Guardian* and then the *Mail and Guardian* (*Mail and Guardian*, 22-28/07/05: 25).

When President P.W. Botha declared the first State of Emergency in July 1985, he ushered in the most repressive period in apartheid history. The *Weekly Mail* avoided censorship by using new forms of coded journalistic writing where articles were worded obliquely so that meaning could be inferred from what was not said. An example was if a report said that the police denied that a particular event had taken place, it was confirmation that the event had occurred. Also, controversial issues of the newspaper were deliberately defaced with black strips and white spaces as an act of self-censorship. It was left to the reader to fill in the blanks (*ibid*).

Although not an economically lucrative publication, because of its dominance of copy over advertising, the *Weekly Mail* ethos has endured beyond the era of protest, in the form of the *Mail and Guardian*. This newspaper continues to be the voice of dissent in the South Africa of today, exercising its constitutional right to freedom of expression (*ibid*).

#### 4.2.2.2 *The media in post-apartheid South Africa*

The cornerstone of South Africa's new democracy is freedom of expression, which became law in 1996 by being entrenched in the *Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. Section 16 of the *Bill of Rights, Freedom of Expression* (1996: 9) states:

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes -
  - a) freedom of the press and other media;
  - b) freedom to receive or impart information or ideas;
  - c) freedom of artistic creativity;
  - d) and academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.
  
- (2) The right in subsection (1) does not extend to -
  - a) propaganda for war;
  - b) incitement of imminent violence;
  - c) or advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion, and that constitutes incitement to cause harm.

This section of the *Constitution* (1996) ensures that citizens of this country are free to express their opinions and engage in healthy debate, free to listen and free to share ideas, within reasonable parameters without fear of being victimised or silenced like in the days

of apartheid. The realisation of freedom of the press has completely transformed the media in South Africa making it possible for much that was considered taboo in the past to be published today. *Section 16* also reinforces the status of the media as the Fourth Estate and the role that it plays in facilitating citizenship. However, this can only occur with the transformation of the South African media and media power.

During the apartheid era media power lay exclusively in the hands of white-owned companies. According to Prinsloo and Criticos (1991: 253), the four main press groups were: Nasionale Pers (Naspers) controlled by the National Party of the Cape; Perskor, owned by the National Party of the Transvaal published the right-wing newspaper *The Citizen* and also owned Republican Press which produced most of South Africa's magazines at the time; the Argus Printing and Publishing Company and Times Media Limited (TML) both of which were owned by gold mining companies controlled by the Oppenheimers, South Africa's richest apartheid-era family. Of all these media companies, the Argus group was the most influential because they controlled newspapers in most South African cities. During this period the wealth of the country belonged essentially to white people, *class* empowerment translated into *racial* empowerment, so through media ownership the interests of the dominant classes were served.

Although significant changes occurred after apartheid ended with a widespread shift to black ownership of the media, some of the media companies left over from the apartheid era still continue to flourish by transforming their images and embracing the diversity and dynamism that has come with media freedom to adapt to a new order. One example is Independent Newspaper Holdings Limited which formerly used to be South Africa's oldest newspaper group known as the Argus Printing and Publishing Company (1889) which in 1994 changed ownership to an international conglomerate led by Irish press magnate Anthony O'Reilly. Independent Newspapers owns among others the *Cape Times*, *Pretoria News*, *Daily News*, *The Mercury* and *POST* (De Beer, 2002: 93).

Naspers, the largest traditionally Afrikaans press group, is another media company still enjoying success today. Historically, Naspers played an important role in the rise of the National Party but is now committed to transformation, and claims to be more

representative of all South Africa's people. With CEO, Ton Vosloo at the helm, it had reinvented itself by embracing the spirit of the African Renaissance and aggressively pursuing opportunities elsewhere on the African continent (*Mail and Guardian, Friday, 14-20/05/04: 16*). It is presently considered to be Africa's biggest media group expanding into emerging markets to compensate for slower growth in South Africa where interest rates have slowed down advertising spending (*Sunday Tribune Business Report, 19/12/07*). This company owns M-Web, Multichoice Africa, DSTV, Media 24 (which is responsible for sixty newspaper including *Daily Sun* and *City Press* and thirty magazine titles) and in November 2007 acquired a 38% stake in M-Net / SuperSport from Johncom (*ibid*).

In 1996 when the National Empowerment Consortium (NEC) which represented black-owned businesses and trade unions acquired TML, one of the leading media groups that had been established in 1987, placing a substantial portion of South Africa's print and electronic media interests under the control of black entrepreneurs (Steenveld, 2002: 12).

One of the country's biggest empowerment media groups Johnnic Communications Limited (Johncom) has in its stable newspaper titles like *Sunday Times, Business Day Financial Mail (BDFM), Sowetan* and *Daily Dispatch*, as well as Nu-Metro movie theatres, M-Net, Supersport, Exclusive Books, Gallo Music Group and others. Johncom under the leadership of Group Chief Executive Officer, Connie Molusi, had in March 2005 unbundled from its parent company Johnnic Holdings, the chairman of which was Cyril Ramaphosa, former trade union leader turned multi-million rand businessman and entrepreneur (*Sunday Times, Business Times, 20/06/04: 3*). Consequently, Johncom refocused its business on telecommunications, media, and entertainment only.

Soon after selling M-Net/ SuperSport to Naspers in November 2007, Johncom changed its name to 'Avusa' which means "to rouse feelings" and "evoke action" on November 25 2007. In February 2008, the Mvelaphanda Group, the company of Tokyo Sexwale, a member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress, bought 30% of Avusa shares from fund managers Allan Gray. Also in February 2008, Avusa's

37.79% Share in Caxton and CTP Publishers and Printers (which owns a lucrative array of community newspapers including a 49% share in *The Rising Sun*) was unbundled and renamed Element One (*Avusa Company Profile*, 11/05/08).

Another example of a media company that thrived through black economic empowerment is Newtrust Company Botswana Limited which owns the influential South African newspaper *Mail and Guardian*. The CEO, Trevor Ncube, a Zimbabwean publisher, has chartered a new editorial direction, by appointing a woman of colour, Ferial Haffajee, as editor of the *Mail and Guardian*. In 2003, Ncube himself became an example of redress and equity when he was appointed the new president of Print Media Association of South Africa (PMA), a local association representing 530 newspaper and magazine publishers at the time (*Sunday Times, Business Times*, 20/06/04: 3).

While Black leadership positions in the South African media industry indicate show Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) since the end of apartheid, conversely, the staying power of a white, Afrikaner company like Naspers indicates that the end of apartheid did not necessarily mean the end of the white-owned press. Tomaselli (1997) concurs, that post-1994 changes in the media, in the colour of ownership, did not have a significant impact on the media's role in addressing the inequalities of the past within these white-owned media companies.

O.J.J. Thabane, a chief executive of a Black communications company, noted in the *Mail and Guardian* (12-18/10/2007: 29), that if real diversity is to be achieved ownership patterns need to change through the encouragement of sales to emerging black publishers. He suggests that one way of doing this is for the Media Development and Diversity Agency <sup>4</sup> (MDDA) annual budget of R30 million to be increased. Multinational corporations, to varying extents, still have a stake in the South African Media industry and driven by commercial imperatives, our media follows the model of overseas countries, not necessarily best practice for this country which is still in a developmental state.

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<sup>4</sup> The MDDA is an independent statutory body established in terms of the *MDDA Act No. 14* (2002) to help create an enabling environment for the development of media diversity in South Africa.

According to Masterman (1985: 85), the media are not on the side of big business, the media are 'big business'. Leaders in the media industry in South Africa like Independent Newspapers, Naspers and Avusa have enjoyed the monopoly in this industry for many decades and in 2004 were still listed among South Africa's top companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (*Sunday Times Business Times*, 20/06/04: 3). The reason for this is that the media is selective of the issues that it addresses mainly because of the relations of power, especially political and economic power. It may claim to work in the public interest, but it also has its own interests at heart and is a major politico-economic participant in its own right (*Mail and Guardian*, 18–24/02/05: 23).

Nevertheless, as big businesses in a context of transformation, in their rampant pursuit of capitalism, media companies are affirming the adage, 'the more things change, the more they stay the same', they 'talk left' but 'act right'(Steenveld 2002: 7). This ideology is apparent where BEE is concerned, which has resulted in a new black elite emerging, placing economic power in the hands of only a few black companies and individuals. However, there prevails a sharp division between economic power (mainly white) and political power (essentially black) and the State plays an ambivalent role in this regard by restructuring the economy in favour of business, but at the same time instituting social policies aimed at the previously disadvantaged that frequently fail to deliver. This anomaly of society and the media industry prompts one to question the integrity of media products, an issue debated by respondents during the intervention (*ibid*: 10), as described later in Chapters 6 and 7 in more detail.

Thus, real transformation of media power can only be achieved when it reflects through ownership, staffing and the product, the society within which it operates, not only in terms of race but also socio-economic status, gender, religion, sexual orientation, language. All this is possible only if access is open in all facets of media not only to the emerging black elite but also to grassroots communities of all colours (Boloka and Krabill, 2000: 76). As will be illustrated later in this Chapter, community newspapers too, although many are distributed as free sheets, do not merely serve communities' interests. Many are owned by the large media conglomerates and are lucrative sources of advertising revenue.

It remains to be seen what role the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) will play to steer the media towards serving the previously disadvantaged communities especially through the ownership of media. The most accessible form of media to such communities is the newspaper, particularly the community newspaper, as they can be owned by neighbourhoods they serve. To comprehend fully the relevance of community newspapers to this project, it is essential to first know something about newspapers in general, then about the uniqueness of South African newspapers and newspaper readers before moving to community newspapers.

### **4.3 Newspapers: the business of chronicling daily life**

#### *4.3.1 Origins and overview*

The origin of the concept of the newspaper goes as far back as AD 59. During the reign of Roman emperor, Julius Caesar, the daily proceedings of the Senate were posted in public. This first example of mass news was referred to as *acta diurnal* (daily acts). The first actual newspaper is said to have been, the *Leipziger Zeitung* which was printed in Germany in 1660. The publication of the first true English newspaper was the *Oxford Gazette* in 1665, followed by the first daily newspaper to be circulated in England, the *Daily Courant* in 1772 (De Beer, 2002: 86, 87). Today, newspapers in the English speaking world are divided into the ‘quality’ and ‘popular’ categories. Some of the quality newspapers are the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and the *Times of London*. Examples of popular newspapers are the British tabloid newspapers like the *SUN* that thrive on sensationalism (*ibid*: 22, 23). The “tabloidisation” of some newspapers, (to be discussed in the South African context later in this Chapter) is a response to the challenge of decreasing circulation figures that newspapers are confronted by. One of the reasons for this in a highly technological and digital world is the impact of television.

Television was considered a blessing by some in the newspaper business as it had resulted in newspaper editors becoming introspective of their products, and being creative by providing what television did not. The Greenberg-Roloff study (Garcia, 1981: 26) found that one of television’s most desirable qualities is the ability of the audience to absorb information effortlessly and suggested that newspaper editors should therefore not

compete with television but rather derive ideas from that medium that could be adapted to their product. One example of deflecting the impact of television was to make newspapers more appealing to look at with well-designed pages that required little effort by the reader. Thus, newspapers have become more user-friendly over the years (*ibid*). Keeping up with the trends of other kinds of media is important in ensuring the survival of print media like newspapers. An example discussed in this Chapter is *The Times*, a relatively new South African daily newspaper that is published in line with the format new digital technologies.

Another challenge faced by newspaper editors is attracting specific kinds of audiences. Two groups of readers that modern newspapers target are suburban readers and young adults, the sixteen to thirty age group. These groups of readers are considered to be sophisticated, educated, more demanding and in possession of a greater disposable income. The most successful newspapers in the United States of America are those that are published for the suburbs, with high local news content and an intense coverage of people and what they are doing in each circulation area. The *New York Times* had latched on to this idea by publishing regional sections of their Sunday newspaper (Garcia, 1981: 28-29).

In Britain too, the owners of the *Daily Mail*, Associated Newspapers, have produced a highly successful freesheet, the *Metro*, introduced in London, Manchester, Birmingham and other large urban areas. This local newspaper offers more in content than other community newspapers (O'Sullivan *et al*, 2003: 182).

The rationale for newspapers that target the suburban reader also applies to the success of many community newspapers in the South African context. Readers are more concerned with local news, what's going on in their own neighbourhoods, rather than news of other suburbs.

To the extent that attracting young readers is concerned, editors have had to re-create the newspaper reading habit among this audience. Newspapers are aggressively pursuing this category of readership by creating an easy-to-read style, showing a dominance of pictures

and illustrations, including youth lifestyle sections, information about television programming and popular culture and educational supplements (Garcia, 1981: 28-29).

The idea of the audience as receiver is undervalued and the concern is usually not about how the power of audiences may be enhanced but about the extent to which audiences may be manipulated by those whose interests are served. The concept of ideology can be particularly valuable in examining the power relationship between media and audience thus creating critical media users (Louw, 1991: 240).

As far as ideologies and theories are concerned, those that generally pertain to media are also relevant to newspapers. They are among others: Roland Barthes' (1972) work in semiotics, Foucault's (1977) work on discourse and power, Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony and Stuart Hall's (1982, 1988) ideas on modern media (Ferguson, 1991: 81). Many of these theories and ideologies have been used by academics, media analysts, and media educationalists to deconstruct media not only in the context of South Africa's controversial past but in the present as well. These ideologies and theories thus feature in a discussion on South African newspapers to follow.

#### *4.3.2 The future of the newspaper in the digital era*

While the All Media Products Survey (AMPS) for January to June 2007 showed that South Africans were consuming more newspapers (*Sunday Times Business Times*, 23/09/07: 8), the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for 2008 revealed a drop in consumption in the print media sector. In the case of newspapers this was attributed not only to the declining economy but to the accessibility of online news. Africa Analysis predicts that this trend will result in more free newspapers entering the market (*City Press*, 16/11/08: 4).

In June 2007, a week after the launch of South Africa's first multimedia newspaper, *The Times*, the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) conference was held in Cape Town at which the future of the newspaper in a digital age was debated. The statistics revealed about global readership trends were optimistic: more than 1.4 billion people worldwide read newspapers every day, in the past five years, where free dailies were added to

newspapers global circulation increased by 10%, newspaper sales were growing in Asia, especially India, and advertising revenue had also increased by 15.77% over five years. However, the general consensus of the conference was that the newspaper was far from obsolete but that print and digital formats should combine to form integrated newsrooms, examples of which were *The New York Times* and Britain's *Daily Telegraph* and fifty-two newspapers in Japan that had merged into a single portal providing greater interactivity for readers (*Mail and Guardian*, 8-14/06/07: 14-15). Even media mogul Rupert Murdoch has a vision to combine his news businesses into a seamless digital platform with information moving across a ubiquitous array of screens: television, laptop and cell phone (*The New York Times*, 03/06/07: 5).

As far as South Africa's first integrated newspaper *The Times* is concerned, they have a completely integrated print and web operation with highly skilled individuals who operate across mediums. The launch of this newspaper is part of a long-term investment strategy that projects greater internet access with the launch of cheaper broadband in South Africa in the near future (*Sunday Times*, 03/06/07: 6).

While many world newspapers contemplate transformation in the digital age, the concept of the internet newspaper is not new. In the United States there were over 4000 newspapers on the web in 2004. United States newspapers started to publish in text-based format from 1992 but with the installation of Netscape in 1994 a milestone in newspaper publishing was ushered in using a more interactive format (Li, 2006: ix).

With the shift to digital media come the concepts of 'citizen journalist', 'public journalism' and 'civic journalism' with the consumer of news becoming the producer of news. The idea behind citizen journalism is to access the internet to engage the public in discussion and debate around important civic, community, and political issues to strengthen and encourage democratic processes (*ibid*: 230). As newspapers around the world decline in advertising and readers, and as the internet gains hegemony through sophisticated developments in cellular technology, the concept of citizen journalism is growing. This was evident during the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India in November 2008 when video footage, pictures and reports of events as they had transpired were

posted on the internet. The growth of citizen journalism has resulted in several highly-paid veteran journalists being retrenched (*The New York Times*, 5/12/08).

In the South African context, apart from *The Times* which provides an opportunity for this process, an important example of citizen journalism in the South African context is the *Mail and Guardian's* 'Thought Leader'. These are the latest trends emerging in the South African press; however, next I go back and trace the origins of South African newspapers.

#### 4.3.3 South African newspapers

##### 4.3.3.1 A background

In South Africa the press has served as a protagonist for freedom of the press but has also played a major role in supporting the interests of governments, interest groups and individuals (De Beer, 2002: 28). The newspaper industry in South Africa is unique given this country's cultural and demographic diversity and turbulent history.

Political and economic factors have played significant roles in shaping the history of the South African media especially in the twentieth century. This trend can be traced back to the very beginning, to South Africa's first 'real' newspaper, *The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*. First printed on 16 August 1800, it was the only newspaper that was allowed and was printed on a government owned press. Later this newspaper became known as *The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette* enduring throughout the nineteenth century (De Beer, 2002: 88).

In January 1824, *The South African Commercial Advertiser* edited by Thomas Pringle and George Fairbairn, and printed by George Greig, was published as South Africa's first privately owned, independent weekly newspaper (Muller, 1990: 5, 7). The freedom of expression enjoyed in the early years was short lived as Cape Governor, Lord Charles Somerset, clashed with the editors Pringle and Fairbairn over newspaper reports with political implications. When the Governor ordered that the publication of the newspaper be stopped, a prolonged struggle between the press and authorities began, culminating in *Ordinance No. 60 of 8 May 1829*, whereby the press won the freedom they desired from

the authorities. Pringle and Fairbairn were hailed as the first heroes in South Africa's ongoing struggle for press freedom (*ibid*: 9).

Over the decades the South African newspaper world has, in the presentation and dissemination of information, reflected features that emanate from operating in a multicultural society. Each type of newspaper comprised unique features that would appeal to specific racial or cultural groups. I have observed that the community newspapers used in my research project have in their content and format, much in common with historically 'Indian' newspapers like *POST*, *The Leader*, *Tribune Herald* and *Sunday Times Extra*. However, the colonial link with the western world reveals that South African newspapers, including historically black publications, have a distinctively British influence in their structure (De Beer, 2002: 92). With regards to the 'black press' this is largely as a result of the contribution of British missionaries.

The development of the 'black' press in South Africa has come through many phases, starting with newspapers initiated by the missionaries. The missionary phase (1830-1880), saw newspapers with a Christian religious bias being printed for black Africans especially by publishing companies like Lovedale Press. The independent phase (1880-1930) was characterised by the establishment of newspapers for black readers (De Beer, 2002: 90). The first black newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu* (1884) was owned and edited by John Tengo Jabavu who was considered to be the first black journalist in South Africa. Another independent publication, *Ilanga Lase Natal* (1904) was founded by John Dube, the first president of the African National Congress (ANC) (Geertsema, 1993: 10-15).

The third phase of the development of an indigenous press involved white funders establishing newspapers for black readers (1931-1976). An example is white entrepreneur, B.C. Paver establishing an organisation called the Bantu Press which had control of newspapers like *Ilanga* and *Ikwezi*. Later the white-owned Argus group gained control of the Bantu Press. Over the years this group would, during the 'multiracial', fourth phase (1977-1993), have in its stable black newspapers like the *Sowetan*, *City Press*, and *Post*. This phase saw the black journalists join forces with progressive white South Africans to chronicle the turbulent decades that preceded the end of apartheid.

There were different categories of newspapers during the apartheid years which indicated the political leanings of those publications. Some categories that have been proposed by Tomaselli and Louw (1991) are the liberal press (anti-apartheid English language newspapers); the conservative English language press; the social democrat independent press (alternative, anti-apartheid newspapers); the left-commercial anti-apartheid press and the Afrikaans press. According to Harber (Sunday Times, 01/05/05: 19), many of the Afrikaans newspapers were unanimous in their unequivocal support of the ruling party during the apartheid era. An exception was *Vrye Weekblad* (1989), which could be categorised as an anti-apartheid Afrikaans newspaper. The above categorisation was prevalent before the democratisation of the press in the 1990s after which the white monopoly ceased, making way for a wider range of representation. The political and economic restrictions of apartheid hampered black ownership of the media until 1993. The political changes that initiated democracy in South Africa in 1994 ushered in the fifth phase of black empowerment of the media (De Beer, 2002: 90, 91) discussed earlier in this Chapter. While the Black Economic Empowerment of the media is relevant to the thesis as the community newspapers used in the study are all owned by people who are from previously disadvantaged backgrounds in addition, it has created a space for the unlimited 'voices' throughout a diverse South Africa to be heard.

#### *4.3.3.2 Newspapers in post-apartheid South Africa*

In 2006, South Africa had twenty daily and thirteen weekly newspapers, most in English, with 14.5 million purchasing the urban dailies and a 5.5 million community newspaper circulation. With democracy in 1994, South Africa's newspapers were freed from all restrictions with the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996) safeguarding freedom of the media (*The Press in South Africa*, 18/10/ 2006).

In post-apartheid South Africa almost all publications can be members of the many press associations that control and regulate the publishing industry in South Africa. The main body is the Print Media South Africa (PMSA) to which all major newspapers and magazines belong. The PMSA is made up of a number of subsections: the Magazine Publishers' Association; the Community Press Association and the Specialist Press

Association (trade and technical publications) and is concerned with the management of labour relations in the industry and the control of advertising in member publications. The PMSA played a pivotal role in the establishment of other press bodies like the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC)<sup>5</sup>, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), and the South African Press Council. Other organizations include the South African National Editors' Forum (SANEF), the Media Workers' Association of South Africa (MWASA), the Black Editors' Forum and many more (De Beer, 2002: 113-114). The South African Press Association (SAPA), formed in 1938, is the national independent, non-profit news agency operating in the interests of the public, gathering and disseminating news using its own correspondents and foreign news agencies like Reuters and Associated Press (*ibid*).

As far as advertising is concerned, newspapers have unique properties, as compared to other forms of mass communication that affect their ability to effectively reach a specific target audience. These include qualitative characteristics like editorial situation, and method of presentation and quantitative factors like reach, frequency and market coverage. The All Media Product Survey (AMPS) published by South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) sheds light on the most effective manner to reach a particular market and *Adindex* monitors the advertising expenditure of marketers in various print and electronic media. These publications provide an invaluable service in helping marketers choose the most effective media to reach the target market (De Klerk, 2002: 335).

'Adspend' is the total amount of money spent on advertising in the media in a single year. The print media's share of the advertising market declined in South Africa after television was introduced in 1976 but this trend began to reverse after 1994. The total adspend for 1995 showed print media exceeding television by a significant margin (*Marketers' Media Guide*, 1996: 38). This kind of development reveals that with freedom of the press in post-apartheid South Africa, there has been a boom in the print media industry making the study of the influence of this kind of media appropriate. Thus, this research project highlights the fact that the power of print has by no means been

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<sup>4</sup> The Audit Bureau of Circulations provides a biannual report (January-June and July-December) and audited figures on the circulation of member newspapers and magazines that sell advertising.

diminished by advances in the electronic media. The relevance of print media to the learners involved in the project is discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

A newspaper operates like any other business and relies on a tried and tested infrastructure to produce a profitable product. Literally millions of words are processed and must be sorted, selected, checked evaluated, edited, rewritten, typeset, laid out, made up into plates printed and distributed. For any newspaper to run smoothly it has to operate on five levels: management, editorial, advertising, production and distribution. "Putting a newspaper to bed" is very much a team effort and regular conferences are held depending on publication deadlines at which decisions on content and display are taken. Computer technology has revolutionised the printing and publishing industries and by 1996 almost all of South Africa's newspapers were produced on desktop publishing systems (DTPs) (*ibid*: 111).

Present trends in the South African mainstream newspaper industry were foreshadowed in 1993 by Ken Owen (*Sunday Times*, 2/05/93), then editor of the *Sunday Times* who said that the demise of the *Rand Daily Mail* showed that any independent newspaper had to be profitable. Since its closure, many other newspapers had been turned away from their social and political functions and have been made into instruments of profit. They had moved 'down market' avoiding the difficult tasks of good journalism and analysis in favour of lettuce diets and gossip. Owen added that only the *Weekly Mail*, which was controlled by journalists, had made journalistic excellence its aim and allowed its commercial functions to serve that end.

More than a decade after Owen's prediction, the pursuit of profit continues unabated. Readership figures released by the ABC, for the period July to December 2003, in respect of trends in the commercial newspaper industry, showed increased numbers of approximately four million South Africans buying newspapers on a regular basis (*Mail and Guardian*, 27/02/04 to 04/03/04: 17). The largest circulating weekly newspaper in

the country at the time was the Johncom owned *Sunday Times*<sup>6</sup>, selling approximately 506 000 copies a week while Media 24's *Daily Sun* sold an average of 235 386 copies daily. This tabloid newspaper from the Naspers stable has as its target market the lower middle class and is the biggest daily paper in the country. Many of its buyers are people who were not previously newspaper readers. There is also an equally successful Afrikaans equivalent called *Die Son*. In 2003, 160 000 more newspapers were sold every day than the previous year and 100 000 more weekly papers, making South Africa one of the few countries in the world where newspaper sales are increasing (*ibid*).

Figures released in 2005 by the ABC show that the *Daily Sun*'s circulation has increased to 364 000 while *Die Son* went up from 90 000 to 199 000. Moerdyk (*Sunday Times*, 6/03/05) inferred that the statistics showed that 100 000 more South Africans were reading weekly newspapers bringing the total to 2.9 million while daily newspaper readership went up from 1.44 million to 1.48 million. Free community newspapers increased in circulation from 4.3 million to 4.4 million. One must keep in mind, however, that readers do not exercise their choice in the acquisition of community newspapers which are given to them free of charge. The management personnel of the newspaper determine how many copies are to be printed based on contextual factors and the sphere of influence that they wish to establish in a particular community.

However, community newspapers can ensure that the popularity of their publications endure by monitoring and implementing trends within the mainstream newspaper industry. Some Chatsworth community newspapers, for example, are becoming increasingly sensationalist in their content. This will be discussed in the chapters to follow.

Harber (*Sunday Times*, 22/02/04), believes that South Africans are also spoilt for choice in respect of the number of radio stations, television channels and magazines at their disposal therefore they are not as interested in political discourses as they were before

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<sup>6</sup> Avusa, as Johncom is now known, claims that their weekly readership of the *Sunday Times* is 3.8 million with 600 000 reading no other newspaper (Avusa Company Profile, 11/05/08). According to the AMPS figures for January–June 2007, the circulation was 3.56 million which confirmed its status as the biggest newspaper in the country (*Sunday Times Business Times*, 23/09/2007: 1).

1994. Moerdyk (*Sunday Times*, 06/03/05) states that people want voyeurism and soccer. Readers of mass-market newspapers were now more interested in two-headed babies and two-faced politicians. This has resulted in the 'tabloidisation' of newspapers like the *Daily Sun*<sup>7</sup> whose founder, Deon du Plessis, has been quick to realise what a particular end of the market requires. This realisation accounts for its overwhelming popularity and meteoric rise in the South African newspaper market as one of the most read newspapers in the country (*ibid*).

In 2005, Mondli Makhanya, the editor of the *Sunday Times* attributed the popularity of tabloids to celebrity culture, soap operas, and kwaito music and the fact that it was a function of the normalisation of South Africa that people were interested in things beyond politics (*Sunday Times*, 1/05/2005: 18). It is this kind of shift in readership needs that led to the closure in 2004 of *This Day* which like the *Rand Daily Mail* was a good quality, top-end newspaper that did not conform to market changes.

In giving readers what they want, press content, like in the *Daily Sun*, is determined by market forces rather than editorial integrity and credibility. As will be outlined in Chapter 5, community newspapers used in my project also regularly monitor market trends in order to keep the pace with readership patterns and needs.

The most recent development in the newspaper industry in South Africa has been the targeting of the 'living standards measurement'<sup>8</sup> LSM 5 and LSM 6 market with average household incomes in 2005 of R4000 and R6000 respectively and that had a greater disposable income because of the strong economy. This has resulted in the entry of other media companies like the Independent Newspaper group into the tabloid market with a newspaper called the *Daily Voice*. The motivation for this decision is advertising which is the main source of revenue for all newspapers and the eagerness of big companies like financial institutions and car dealerships to use papers like the *Daily Sun* to reach the

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<sup>7</sup> The AMPS survey for January to June 2007 confirms the *Daily Sun* as the largest daily newspaper with a circulation of 4 314 000 (*Sunday Times Business Times*, 23/09/2007: 8).

<sup>8</sup> The South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) uses the scale of Living Standards Measures (LSM) to rank the population from the poorest at 1 to the richest at 10 according to living standards and not race, using criteria like 'urbanisation' and the 'ownership of appliances and cars' (*Sunday Times*, 15/05/05: 5).

lower middle class (*Sunday Times*, 17/07/05: 4). A recent survey by the SAARF reveals an increase in the ranks of the lower middle class, the LSM 5 and LSM 6's spending power to R160 billion-a-year which banks and retailers were focusing on (*Sunday Times*, 15/05/05: 5).

While the *Daily Sun* and other tabloids like it may be criticised for perpetuating stereotypes regarding women and superstitions by academics and others in the field of media, there is a belief in some media circles that the readers of these publications will eventually graduate to more mainstream newspapers. If this happens, then mainstream newspapers will benefit in the long run (*Sunday Times*, 25/09/05).

As mentioned earlier, on 5 June 2007, Avusa launched *The Times*, the country's first interactive multimedia daily newspaper. The tabloid format is a brand extension of the *Sunday Times*, initially delivered free only to all *Sunday Times* subscribers. The newspaper has a circulation of 130 000 and competes for advertising spend aimed at LSM 5-10) (Avusa Company Profile, 11/05/2008)

As far as community newspapers are concerned, in 2002 there are approximately 500 local publications mainly free weekly tabloids, covering local affairs and carrying local advertising, from which they derive their revenue. Some examples of community newspapers operating in KwaZulu-Natal are *Esase Mlazi*, *Eza KwaMashu* and *Esase Claremont* which are isiZulu language freesheets produced by Rockhaven Press and like *Highway Mail* and *South Coast Sun* are Caxton publications (De Beer, 2002: 97).

In 2006, South Africa's three main African language newspapers showing good growth were situated in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), all isiZulu titles, namely *Isolezwe*, *Umafrika* and *Illanga* (*BBC World Service Trust*, 2007: 55). The December 2006 Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) figures showed that *Isolezwe's* circulation had increased to 96 485, *Umafrika's* to 32 978 and the Sunday edition of *Illanga Langesonto* to 70 291. KZN's isiZulu radio station, Ukhozi FM is the largest radio station in the southern hemisphere. There are 4.6 million isiZulu literate adults, many of whom can read English, but who choose to read and listen in isiZulu. This context provides a lucrative market for

community newspapers which has not yet been harnessed (*Sawubona*, September 2007: 136).

The oldest South African community newspaper is *Grocott's Mail*<sup>9</sup> which was established in Grahamstown in 1830 (De Beer, 2002: 97). Today *Grocott's Mail* is a bi-weekly publication owned by Rhodes University that provides a community service as well as a platform for the writing of journalism students at Rhodes. Its survival depends on sales and advertising (*Mail and Guardian*, 27/06 to 3/07/ 2008: 19).

Many community newspapers are independent while others are linked to major press groups like Caxton and CTP Publishers and Printers Limited which has publishing, printing and distribution capabilities. Caxton, which in March 2005 became an associated company of Johncom, has dominant influence in the community newspaper sphere (*Sunday Times Business Times*, 26/06/04: 19). The ABC's latest circulation figures of 4.4 million readers, cited earlier, attest to the power of this medium as a tool for community change.

#### **4.4 Community Newspapers**

##### *4.4.1 The power of community newspapers*

Community newspapers function within the broad discursive field of the media and serve the important purpose of concentrating their coverage on specific areas, localising the news and creating a sense of community awareness. Weekly editions are prepared to cater to the informational needs of readers in the suburbs, townships and surrounding municipalities. Coverage of people is central to the community newspaper, with staffers enjoying the trust of members of these communities. Prominent citizens, the old, youth, organisations and institutions are profiled (Garcia, 1981: 198).

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<sup>9</sup> In September 2008, *Grocott's Mail* won a legal case that it had been embroiled in with the Grahamstown municipality after it had withdrawn advertising from the newspaper for its critical reporting (*Sunday Times*, 21/09/08: 33).

The community newspaper mirrors, on a community level, what the daily and weekly newspapers cover on a provincial or national level. The expanded coverage of these dailies and weeklies into its territory is a challenge with which community newspapers are faced. However, the community newspaper has an appeal of familiarity that the larger newspapers do not. First, unlike mainstream newspapers, they can repeatedly cover a problematic issue until it is solved. The actions of people who serve the public come under scrutiny. In Chatsworth, for example, there have been instances where a few teachers and school principals have been tried and convicted of fraud and sexual abuse because of the constant pressure created by persistent coverage of these cases in the community newspapers.

Second, the people that appear are neighbours, old school friends, the local teachers, councillors, sports people and pastors. There is a sense of identification with and ownership of content. Third, community publications also appeal to businesses that want to advertise in a form of media that is able to reach a particular target market. Owners of smaller businesses may find it cheaper to place an advertisement in a community rather than in a mainstream newspaper. Community newspapers thus aid economic development.

Often the rationale behind the establishment of community newspapers is not just merely a matter of disseminating information to valued members of a community but about recognising the value, in terms of spending power, of those members. Since most community newspapers generate an income only from advertising and are delivered free directly to people's homes, they can present serious competition for the bigger paid-for newspapers as they compete for advertising revenue (O'Sullivan *et al*, 2003: 182).

With the larger daily and weekly newspapers, news of the lives of ordinary people in specific communities is inadequate. Thus neighbourhoods without their own newspapers have limited access to local news. Community newspapers therefore have a vital role to play in keeping people informed at this level. How a successful community newspaper functions is outlined next.

#### 4.4.2 Insights on how a successful community newspaper functions

As a research project that focuses mainly on deconstructing community newspapers, an in-depth knowledge of how such publications operate is essential. The information that follows is vital information as to how a community newspaper is expected to function. As a part-time employee of an Argus group community newspaper in 1988<sup>10</sup>, the *Chatsworth Sun*, I was initiated into the field of community journalism by being handed a copy of what was termed *The Randy Rooster* (Argus Group Community Newspapers, 1988), my guideline to what should and should not appear in the community newspaper. This brutally honest four page document was a blueprint for how a community newspaper should be run. *The Randy Rooster* provides valuable insights into understanding the dynamics that underpin any community newspaper.

Writers were urged to adopt the basic *Randy Rooster* principle: 'If it moves in your hen house, cover it!' In other words, local people and events, no matter how parochial must be given priority. At the same time cognizance had to be given to the fact that the strength of any community newspaper lies in its coverage of local news, therefore, including reports from outside the 'jurisdiction' of a particular publication is a weakening of that strength (*ibid*).

A community newspaper must, in order to fulfill its function, reflect the views of the community it serves, for example, through letters to the editor; reports on sporting, social, charitable and academic activities; support of charitable, social, child-welfare and other community organizations. In addition it must function as a community watchdog without editorial bias. This is done by monitoring the behaviour of politicians and other public figures and institutions (Moss in *NHI Shelterforce Online*, Issue 124, July/ August 2002). In this regard the actions of schools in the Chatsworth area concerning issues like

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<sup>10</sup> As a writer for the newspaper, I compiled the *What's On* column, wrote captions, compiled sport results, especially soccer, investigated and reported on community and social events and wrote a weekly column entitled *Beyond these Brick Walls* which focused mainly on issues that affected women. I left *Chatsworth SUN* after a year (1989) in order to take up a post as teacher of English, fulfilling a contractual obligation to the Department of Education in the former House of Delegates.

corporal punishment, school fees, school violence, and fraud are not averse to scrutiny in the local community newspapers.

As far as community newspapers are concerned, politics is a sensitive area. While political issues cannot be ignored, the newspaper must never enter the political arena on a subjective basis. At the time of elections, all political candidates should be offered equal space in an issue before the election, with an opportunity for each to write their own manifesto using their own by-lines. This will leave the public with no doubt as to whose opinions are being published. Also in highlighting problem issues the community newspaper challenges local politicians to act on solving these problems (*The Randy Rooster*, Argus Group Community Newspapers, 1988).

Names and faces are what community newspapers are all about. First names should be used instead of initials. The more faces in a group picture the better. For example, nine faces in a four-column picture are far more economical than three, three-column, three face pictures. One particular issue of an Argus community newspaper was quoted to have had 700 names, and 200 faces, all local, within forty-eight tabloid pages. The editor should from time to time count the number of faces and names in an issue. If there are less than 150 faces and ten names to a page in a forty-eight page tabloid issue then the matter had to be rectified (*ibid*).

Community newspapers are generally viewed as 'lean operations' that cannot afford to pay the twenty or so reporters actually needed to cover all activities in the community. Also, one roving photographer can take pictures at each of the many social or sporting weekend functions. After all, 'a picture is worth a 1000 words' and no-one will be offended at being ignored. The average number of staff reporters for a fifty-two page tabloid size weekly community newspaper is two. If the paper is above that then they are not making use of the vast pool of 'free' reporters out there. These are members of clubs, societies, and institutions who act as scribes and report on the activities of their organizations. However, once a scribe is 'cultivated' certain rules are considered inviolate:

- never leave out a scribe's copy or one might have to employ somebody to cover what you used to get free;

- never re-write a scribe's copy. This will be too time-consuming and the article is likely to lose its usually colloquial flavour;
- keep the subbing simple, "cross the t's, dot the i's, delete the four-letter words and cross out the last three or four exclamation marks in a row." As long as the article is reasonably professional, after all, it's *their* newspaper (*ibid*).

It is imperative that an editor keeps track of the number of clubs, societies, schools and other organisations in his or her circulation area and ensures that he or she is receiving news from 90% of them. Schools generate a great deal of reader interest, so a community newspaper must be 'heavy' in school news. Statistically, 800 pupils translate into 1600 parents, an untold number of siblings, neighbours, and a host of other relatives. Schools should generally write the news for you. Competition among schools to get their news into the paper will mean a blossoming school news page (*ibid*).

As far as advertising is concerned a community newspaper can never lose sight of the fact that this is their only source of income. Although advertorial with limited reader interest should not take up space that can include more newsworthy items, advertorial cannot be ignored, therefore a compromise could be a page where new businesses, commercial achievements and promotions are given coverage (Moss in *NHI Shelterforce Online*, Issue 124, July/ August 2002).

The contents of *The Randy Rooster* served two purposes during the implementation of the research project described in Chapter 5. First, it broadened the perspective of the respondents involved in the research project as to how community newspapers function. Second, important features of operating a community newspaper outlined in this document were utilised and critiqued during the deconstruction of local community newspapers, proving invaluable during the lesson design and curriculum intervention. In addition, the location of the Chatsworth community newspapers within the structure of the community newspaper industry in South Africa was equally relevant to the research project.

#### 4.4.3 South African community newspapers

As mentioned earlier, the passing of the *Media Diversity and Development Agency Act* on 24 June 2002 aims to shift ownership, control, and access to media in South Africa to the historically disadvantaged. The *Act* empowers the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) as the statutory body mandated to develop community and small-scale media. Rural areas and indigenous languages are prioritized. As defined by the *Act*, 'media development' means "the development of the media environment and infrastructure so that historically disadvantaged communities and persons have access to the media as owners, managers, producers and consumers of media" (*Government Gazette*, 24/06/02: 4). It defines 'diversity', with specific reference to the media as, "access to the widest range of sources of information and opinion, as well as equitable representation within the media in general" (*ibid*).

What about the community newspaper or the 'free sheet' and 'knock and drop' space (*Mail and Guardian*, 12-18/09/03) in South Africa? Hundreds of different community newspaper titles are distributed free of charge in communities throughout South Africa providing access to media that some would otherwise not have. While the quality of content and the level of professionalism of all these newspapers may not be on par with larger metropolitan papers, the smaller community newspapers do not always have the resources, human and technical, to publish high quality editions. Some rural free sheets may have the support of circulation, but not of advertisers (*Mail and Guardian*, 12-18/09/04). The brief of the MDDA is to address such problems in South Africa's rural and underdeveloped areas.

As a function of parliamentary legislation, the MDDA draws its funding from a partnership between government and private media companies like Johncom, Caxton, Media 24 and Independent Newspapers. Initially the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) contributed R7 million and for a period of five years thereafter the private sector will contribute R10 million rand a year (*Mail and Guardian*, 2-7/04/04: 20). In February 2004, the MDDA took a decision to award the first grants, in principle, to eleven projects among them two commercial print operations, a community newspaper and six community radio projects. The community newspaper that had been

chosen provided training on newspaper production for a rotating staff that was constituted of school children (*ibid*). In the 2004/ 2005 financial year the Agency approved R8.7 million in support of fifty-one different media projects around the country. The eventual success of these projects will depend on their commercial sustainability (*BBC World Service Trust, 2007: 54*).

Increased figures in the sale of newspapers do not mean that this is where the 'real' money is. Newspapers in general, including the free community newspapers in South Africa, cover their production costs not with copy sales but through advertising revenue. Big players, controlling commercial newspapers, amongst other stakeholders in the South African media world, like Caxton, Independent Newspapers and Media 24, have also, as key members of the Community Press Association (CPA)<sup>11</sup>, dominated the free sheet market for years. In 1997 the ABC figures revealed a significant growth in the circulation of community newspapers. Caxton showed growth four times that of daily newspapers proving that community newspapers were becoming more important in the South African market (De Beer, 2002: 98).

The need for people to know what is going on in their immediate communities guarantees a niche market for these newspapers, making 'proximity' the most important factor for the local paper. This makes community newspapers the most personal of all types of mass-media as it operates on the first level of mass communication, the local community (*ibid*).

In 2003, Caxton and Independent Newspapers owned 78 of the 166 community newspapers registered with the CPA. Four of the five top advertising revenue<sup>12</sup> earners

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<sup>11</sup>The CPA is an independent organisation that represents the interests of community newspaper publishers and is embraced within the umbrella body, Print Media SA. At the end of 2003 Caxton and Independent Newspapers were poised to exit the CPA. Their withdrawal proposal recognised the need for greater diversity within the body, thus fulfilling the aims of the MDDA. The implications of this are that a huge chunk of membership fees based on newspaper circulation figures would be lost to the CPA (*Mail and Guardian, 12-18/09/04: 21*).

<sup>12</sup> Community Newspapers derive 50% of their advertising revenue from chain stores and retailers and 13 % from the motor vehicle industry; in fact, some local newspapers better the circulation and advertising income of many smaller daily newspapers (Leahy and Voice, 1991: 100-101).

for the period August 2002 to July 2003, as revealed by AC Nielsen's ADEx, belonged to Caxton. These are the *Sandton Chronicle* (R24.6 million), *Fourways Review* (R20.8 million), *Roodepoort Record* (R19.5 million) and, *Randburg Sun* (R18.3 million) (*ibid*).

While the success of these titles can be attributed to the fact that they are aimed at suburban readers on a high LSM level, the majority of whom are among the most affluent in the country, black buying power, which the big media houses have recognised as lucrative revenue potential, must not be underestimated. This has been proved by *Big News* a monthly free sheet that focuses on small businesses and black economic empowerment. In 2004, its eighth year the newspaper was distributed through 1000 agents country-wide, with a national circulation of more than 165 000 and advertising revenue of R250 000 per issue (*Mail and Guardian*, 12–18/09/04: 21).

Apart from advertising, much of the success and popularity of a community newspaper depends on the manner in which it functions and the extent to which its target market feels a sense of ownership of the publication. Despite widespread changes in South Africa since apartheid ended in 1994, the truth is that society is still stratified along racial lines especially in the contexts of mass housing projects and townships that remain so much a part of the reality the majority of South Africans.

#### *4.4.4 Community newspapers for Indian South Africans*

##### *4.4.4.1 An overview*

The community newspapers focused on in my research project all serve the township of Chatsworth which, as a result of apartheid structuring and town planning, is populated predominantly by South Africans of Indian origin, despite the fact that a decade of democracy has passed. This context, however, is not unique to Chatsworth as other townships in KwaZulu-Natal like Umlazi, KwaMashu, Phoenix and Wentworth and those elsewhere in South Africa remain largely homogenous. Consequently the content of these community newspapers has a strong ethnic bias, focusing on all aspects of life among the Indian diaspora in Chatsworth. Therefore, if we had to examine these newspapers

intertextually, they would draw on knowledge and information of other publications of the genre that also have South Africans of Indian origin as their target audience.

Newspapers in general, have long been a feature of Indian community life in South Africa, many of them politically inspired. In a sense, all newspapers that catered for the needs of Indians in South Africa can be labeled community newspapers as they paid attention to one specific community. The first such publication for South African Indians was *The Colonial Indian Times* which was published in Pietermaritzburg in 1901. The second newspaper was *Indian Opinion* established by Mahatma Gandhi on 4 June 1903, ten years after his arrival in South Africa. Renamed *The Opinion*, this newspaper is still circulated periodically as a freesheet and is published by the Gandhi Developmental Trust. It contains few advertisements and the articles focus on Gandhi's experiences in South Africa and on discourses, past and present, which affect Indian South Africans. *The Leader*, a weekly newspaper, was established in 1940 and was initially the mouthpiece of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). It later broadened its outlook articulating the aspirations of all people of colour covering political news as well as items of social, cultural and sporting interest (Arkin *et al*, 1989: 197). Many newspapers, catering for Indians have had only a fleeting existence; however, some like the popular *Graphic*, had endured longer than others but today are no longer in existence.

In 2005, *Post*, celebrated fifty years in existence. It is a weekly newspaper that serves the political and social needs of a niche audience of Indian South Africans, enjoying a varied readership within this audience mainly in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. It sells approximately 50 000 copies a week. *Post* is owned by Independent Newspapers (*Sunday Tribune*, 20/03/05). It is widely considered to be a racy newspaper because of its usually sensationalist front page articles that often focus on crime and sex.

The *Tribune Herald* and the *Sunday Times Extra* are supplements to the *Sunday Tribune* and *Sunday Times* respectively and like *Post* cater specifically for the Indian community who contribute substantially to the viability of these former 'white-owned' Sunday newspapers. Political news features prominently but so do reports that are of general interest to Indians (Arkin *et al*, 1989: 198). Therefore, *Post*, *Sunday Times Extra*, the

*Tribune Herald* and the more popular Chatsworth community newspapers like *The Rising Sun* can all be seen as rival publications competing for news in contested territory.

Chatsworth had six community publications circulating at the start of this study. These were the *Rising Sun* (1993), *Chatsworth Tabloid* (1998), *Chatsworth Express* (2002), *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* (2001) and *Chatsworth Times* (2000). My research later revealed that the *Chatsworth Times* and *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* were part of *The Rising Sun* stable of newspapers, each, however, operating from different premises. When *The Rising Sun* began operating from single premises in September 2004, both these newspapers were terminated so as not to confuse the public (*The Rising Sun* Commemorative Issue, November 2004). However, the existing publications cannot be examined without focusing on how far back the concept of the community newspaper extends in the Chatsworth area. This background contextualises the establishment of the community newspapers used in the research project.

#### 4.4.4.2 *Chatsworth community newspapers: a brief history*

Chatsworth's first community newspaper, the *Chatsworth Sun* dates back to 1 July 1988. It was distributed free to 27 500 homes in the Chatsworth area. This tabloid size, knock and drop newspaper, began circulating a little more than twenty years after the genesis of the township. The *Chatsworth Sun* was produced by Natal Regional Newspapers, a division of the Argus Group, one of the major media enterprises in the era prior to democracy. Natal Regional newspapers (NRN) had forty years of experience in the knock and drop market in so-called white areas, producing newspapers like *Highway Mail*, *South Coast Sun*, *Berea Mail*, *Queensburgh News* and others.

The *Chatsworth Sun* was published by Amanzimtoti Printing and Publishing Company (Pty) Ltd and printed by a Pinetown company, Robprint (Pty) Ltd. On establishment, I had the dubious honour of being one of the three personnel of 'Indian' origin initially employed by the newspaper as a part-time journalist and columnist. The other two were employed as senior reporter and advertising representative. Local freelance photographers and members of the community submitted the photographs. The Editor,

sub-editors, and other writers and photographers were all whites who also worked on other publications in the Natal Regional Newspapers stable, under the banner of SUN Newspapers. Circulating in the latter days of apartheid and backed by essentially white liberal media companies, this newspaper shied away from hard-core political issues of the time, focusing rather on 'soft' news.

The first issue of the *Chatsworth Sun* comprised twenty-four pages, was essentially black and white with the logo against a red background. Some advertisements included splashes of red and yellow. The claim in this issue was that this was 'your' newspaper which needed the help of the community in order to achieve the aim of providing a service to 250 000 people in Durban's largest Indian residential area (*Chatsworth Sun*, 01/07/88: 17). Residents of Chatsworth were encouraged to show their ownership of the newspaper by submitting news on clubs, societies, schools, sports clubs and pictures of a variety of events from weddings to parties. They could place their information or photographs into white boxes with the distinctive red *Chatsworth Sun* logo housed at permanent collection points that had been set up at shopping centres throughout the township (*ibid*). In this way this newspaper began to establish a visible presence in the community.

An overall examination of the first issue revealed a fair balance between news content and advertisements. Ironically, this newspaper began circulating six months prior to the opening of Chatsworth's first shopping mall, the R55 million Chatsworth Centre. This project would have tremendous potential for a newspaper that relied only on revenue gained from advertising. The first issue alluded to this in the form of articles about the imminent opening of the mall as well as advertisements for stores that would soon be conducting business at the Chatsworth Centre (*ibid*). With most of the businesses servicing the Chatsworth area housed at Chatsworth Centre, this shopping mall generated a large portion of the advertising revenue for *Chatsworth Sun* during its years in circulation and remains so for the community newspapers used in this project. When *Chatsworth Sun* ceased operations in 1992 a significant gap in the community newspaper market was created that needed to be filled.

#### 4.4.4.3 An overview of the Chatsworth community newspapers used in the project

Since the closure of *Chatsworth Sun*, the three community newspapers that have survived after many have come and gone over the years are those that were used in the intervention: *The Rising Sun*, the *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express*. Here I provide an outline of the three publications; however, the deconstruction of each newspaper by learners during the Community Newspaper Project will be discussed in Chapter 7.

The closure of *Chatsworth Sun* left a gap in the market for a community newspaper to serve the people of Chatsworth and its burgeoning business sector. This was filled in 1993 by *The Rising Sun*, which was part of a stable that had already established community newspapers in other towns in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) where Indians were resident (*The Rising Sun* Commemorative Issue, November 2004).

I acquired information about *The Rising Sun*<sup>13</sup> from three sources: a questionnaire (please see Annexure B), that was completed by the Managing Editor, an interview (please see the interview schedule, Annexure C) that was conducted with the Managing Editor, who is the Founder and also main shareholder of the publication and, *The Rising Sun* Commemorative Issue (November 2004).

The Interview was held on 15/10/04<sup>14</sup> at *The Rising Sun* offices in a state-of-the-art, three-storey building in Chatsworth's commercial hub, from which all of *The Rising Sun* Community Newspapers (Pty) Ltd. business was conducted. This building, newly-

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<sup>13</sup> The Method Chapter (Chapter 5), describing the research instruments that were used in the Community Newspaper Project, is to follow this Chapter, however, I have decided to use the data elicited from the Questionnaire and Interview for the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun* at this stage. The reason for this is that the data gathered is valuable in supplementing the information on, and providing insight into, the background, production, distribution, and consumption of Chatsworth's foremost community newspaper. Although not conventional, the inclusion of this material at this juncture makes sense in terms of the structure of the thesis.

<sup>14</sup> The research instruments, like the Questionnaire the Interview Schedule for the managing editors of the community newspapers, were designed at the beginning of the Community Newspaper Project. However, two of the three managing editors refused to complete the Questionnaire or be interviewed. As a result, detailed background information about the Chatsworth community newspapers was not available to learners during the classroom intervention. I decided to use the information from the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*, who had agreed to filling in the Questionnaire and being interviewed, only to enhance the Literature Review and the information on community newspapers included in this Chapter. The Questionnaire and Interview with the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun* were therefore completed after the classroom intervention.

constructed in 2004, had appropriately been named, '*House of the Rising Sun*'. The interviewee was from the outset, amiable, accommodating and set a relaxed tone for the interview which lasted approximately one hour. Before the Interview could begin I informed the Managing Editor that he was at liberty not to answer any of the questions if he did not wish to. (Please see Annexure C2 for a reconstruction of the full Interview based on the notes taken).

As far as the Questionnaire was concerned, while the factual questions were answered adequately, it was evident that some of the questions, especially those that were open-ended, were hastily completed.

The responses to the first seven questions of the Questionnaire revealed that the Managing Editor/ Founder was male, between 30-40 years old, had matriculated but had no other formal qualifications other than nineteen years of experience in the community newspaper industry. He was also not a resident of Chatsworth (Annexure B). The entrepreneurial skills of the Founder led to the establishment of *The Rising Sun* Group of newspapers in 1986.

*The Rising Sun* group of newspapers had its beginnings in the town of Tongaat on the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) North Coast in February 1986. With the need for employment after matriculating and realising that a number of businesses in that area required an advertising medium, with limited resources and funds, the Founder of the *Rising Sun*, decided to launch a community newspaper (Annexure C2). The first issue of *The Rising Sun* consisted of eight pages. The print order of 6500 copies was printed by the *Leader* press and distributed door to door by the Founder and three casual employees using his father's vehicle. At the time he was responsible for sales, accounts, and distribution but managed to sustain the newspaper and launch the second in his home town, Umzinto in 1989 (*The Rising Sun* Commemorative Issue, November 2004).

In the years that followed, *The Rising Sun* group established community newspapers in Phoenix, Merebank, Overport, Pietermaritzburg and Port Shepstone. The Chatsworth branch of *The Rising Sun* was first established as a monthly publication before becoming

fortnightly in 1994, and in 1995 firmly establishing itself as a weekly newspaper distributed free to households on Tuesdays (*ibid*).

In his responses to Questions 8 to 13 of the questionnaire (Annexure B) the Managing Editor disclosed that the seven newspapers in the Rising Sun stable had a total circulation of 185 000 a week, at the time. While the day-to-day operations of the newspaper were conducted from offices in the business district of Chatsworth, the printing was done at a printing press in the South Coast town of Umzinto. The newspaper group employed one hundred and thirty personnel, sixty full-time and seventy part-time. Those employed included seven journalists, ten desk-top publishers, four photographers, six computer graphics engineers, fifteen marketing and advertising personnel, ten administrative clerks and three financial personnel. *The Rising Sun* in Chatsworth was a weekly publication.

The management of *The Rising Sun* placed a great deal of emphasis on the distribution of its newspaper. The reason for this is that as a free newspaper, its income is derived from advertising, which is dependent on the number of households the newspaper reaches on a weekly basis. Therefore, such a large investment is made in its distribution network as is revealed in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1: an extract from the interview with the Founder/Co-owner/ Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*.

3. Explain the infrastructure you have in place to handle the distribution of your newspaper, viz. the number of vehicles, personnel etc.
The company has a fleet of forty vehicles. There are eight delivery trucks used for distribution of a total of 160 000 newspapers which is done from Tuesday to Thursday in the different areas with eight personnel assigned to each vehicle. Each delivery truck is equipped with a two- way radio to ensure constant contact. Printing is done by our own company, Rising Sun Printers, which operates as a separate enterprise.

(Annexure C2)

In July 2003, with *The Rising Sun* an established brand in the community, the Highway Mail (Pty) Ltd, which is part of Caxton Community Newspapers, purchased a 45% stake in *The Rising Sun* Community Newspaper Group. The original owners would continue to manage the newspapers (Annexure C2). The merger meant that Caxton, one of the 'big players' in the South African print media industry, profiled earlier in this Chapter, and *The Rising Sun* group would combine their weekly circulation of 131 550 and 112 500 community newspapers respectively, thus enjoying the monopoly of this market in KZN.

The joining of Caxton and *The Rising Sun* ultimately translated into offering advertisers total market coverage in all the areas with a high disposable income (*The Rising Sun*, 27/05/03 - 2/06/03). Caxton's stake in *The Rising Sun* indicates what has been argued earlier, that the fundamental principle behind running any newspaper is the extent to which it is inclined to be a lucrative revenue stream.

In Figure 4.2 below, the founder of *The Rising Sun* explains his motivation for entering into a partnership with Caxton.

Figure 4.2: an extract from the interview with Founder/ Co-owner/ Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*.

7. What was your rationale behind your merger with Caxton?
Independently, the <i>Rising Sun</i> Group could only be taken to certain heights, however by forging links with the 'big players' in the market place, I believe that the company can be taken to new heights. Our partnership with Caxton is now more than a year old and I can say that it has been a good move. I have observed a distinct difference, there are certain systems in place that allow for more efficient administration like monthly management meetings and constant training of staff. Also, <i>The Rising Sun</i> is rated highly when compared to other community newspapers in the country.

(Annexure C2)

The merger, in combining an established newspaper group like *The Rising Sun* with the professionalism brought by Caxton, was intended to further entrench the brand in the communities it is distributed in.

The weekly circulation of *The Rising Sun* in Chatsworth is 45 000 copies with each issue comprising an average of thirty pages. The National Advertising Bureau (NAB) sells advertising space in the community newspaper to national clients like the retailers: Game, Makro, Trade Centre and Pick 'n Pay (response to Question 16 of the Questionnaire, Annexure B, C2), with the advertising inserts from these retail companies making the newspaper quite bulky.

The Interview revealed, corroborating the information provided in the questionnaire, that in a matter of less than two decades, the formation of *The Rising Sun* community newspaper group had not only proved to be a very lucrative financial venture for its founder, but it had made an indelible impact on the communities it serves. The newspaper group funds community projects like the Chatsworth Child Welfare and the Aryan

Benevolent Home, two of the major charitable organisations in Chatsworth catering for the needs of children, and the aged and infirm (Annexure C2). In addition, the newspapers have provided a considerable number of jobs and through advertising in the publication, the many small businesses in Chatsworth and other areas are able to thrive in a competitive space. In competition to *The Rising Sun* is the *Chatsworth Tabloid* which I will outline next.

The *Chatsworth Tabloid* is a publication of Tabloid Newspapers, an independent community newspaper publisher in KwaZulu-Natal. It publishes seven community newspapers distributed free in the greater Durban area, prints a total of 225 000 newspapers weekly and claims that the combined readership of all its newspapers is 1.1 million. Apart from the *Chatsworth Tabloid* which has a circulation of 40 000 per week the other six publications in the Tabloid Newspapers stable are: *Phoenix Tabloid*, *Southern Star* (Merebank, Wentworth, Bluff and Isipingo), *Northern Star* (Umhlanga, Verulum, Mount Edgecombe, Durban North), *The Weekly Gazette* (Overport, Newlands, Reservoir Hills, Sherwood, Westville), *eThekweni Times* (Central Durban) and *Umlazi Times*. Although the target audience for *The Rising Sun* is Indian South Africans, Tabloid Newspapers has widened its market by making inroads into formerly African, white, and coloured residential areas. Tabloid Newspapers main offices are in Overport with satellite offices in Chatsworth and Phoenix (*Chatsworth Tabloid*, 9/02/05).

The *Chatsworth Tabloid* has an average of twenty pages per issue and in 2003/ 2004, when the research project began, did not include advertising sold by the NAB and so it did not include inserts from the large retailers like *The Rising Sun* does and is therefore 'leaner'. However, the 'leanest' of the three community newspapers described in this Chapter is *The Express*.

An average issue of *The Express* ranges from between eight to twelve pages consisting of more advertising than news and it is distributed free to homes in Chatsworth and neighbouring Queensburgh. This independent newspaper was launched in 2002. It operates from a converted residential property on the main street of neighbourhood Unit 3 (*The Express*, Mid-November, 2003). *The Express*, like *Chatsworth Tabloid* does not

include advertising inserts from the major retailers and contains predominantly advertisements from businesses operating locally.

Each of these community newspapers is unique although there are many similarities. In the scrutiny of their distinguishing features during the intervention, much had been deduced by the respondents about each newspaper and their impact and influence on the community.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Chapter 4 has examined the media in general and newspapers in global and local contexts. Particularly significant are the far-reaching changes that have occurred in this sphere of life since South Africa became a democracy in 1994. Even though freedom of expression is entrenched in *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), the media still face many challenges, especially with the many attempts by political forces to gain control of the press and the public broadcaster. It is only when institutions like a free press are upheld that democracy is allowed to prevail and the threat of commercial interests at the expense of credible journalism dissipates. Any political or state interference in this regard is a threat to democracy. Editors need to realise that they preside over an important national institution whose main role is to collect, analyse and disseminate information. The media is guaranteed press freedom so that the public's fundamental right to be educated and informed can be fulfilled (*Sunday Tribune*, 08/05/05: 20).

Generally, readers and audiences do not comprehend the extent of the sub-conscious shaping of their opinions, views, attitudes and actions by the media that can either dispel or affirm myths, prejudices, stereotypes and beliefs. As consumers of media we have to develop the ability to discern the level of control that media should have on our lives.

According to Buckingham (2004), it is only through education that society can respond to the challenges of an increasingly mediated world, keeping pace with the complex technological, cultural and economic changes that are presently reshaping the

contemporary media environment. It is for this reason that many countries are recognising the fact that media education is a key aspect of the school curriculum.

Chapter 5 outlines the research methodology of the classroom-based media education project I conducted in 2004. Thereafter, in subsequent chapters, I describe the project itself, showing how respondents were afforded the opportunity to critique community newspapers during the classroom intervention thus illustrating how media education is complemented by approaches to Critical Literacy pedagogy as outlined in Chapter 3.

## CHAPTER 5

### AN ACTION RESEARCH CASE STUDY

#### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters highlight the contexts and theories for an innovative pedagogy that will assist both learners and educators to meet the challenges of a transforming national curriculum and a rapidly changing world. This Chapter outlines the methodologies used in the research Project that explores the use of an innovative pedagogy utilising media as an example of how transformation may take place at the level of the classroom.

The research Project undertaken was essentially qualitative in nature, informed by selected quantitative methods. One type of qualitative design used is the case study that explores and documents a set of meaningful cases for the study of delimited entities like communities with detailed attention given to phenomena within their everyday contexts (Yin, 1994). The case study is complemented by action research which implies the application of methods of social science with the goal of contributing to theory and knowledge in the field of education thus improving practice in schools (Oja and Smulyan, 1989: 1). The case study and action research methods are therefore examined in greater detail before discussing the ethical considerations. I thereafter summarise the range of qualitative and quantitative research techniques used to collect and analyse data. Finally, I reflect on the constraints to this research Project and the methodological considerations that ensure the integrity of the data presented.

As an action research case study, the characteristics of an individual group were observed in order to understand better how the English Primary Language syllabus can be influenced by Critical Literacy principles using local community newspapers. I have used more than one avenue in order to arrive at conclusions. This is referred to as triangulation (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003: 463), where both qualitative and quantitative techniques work together. The qualitative methods included participant observation, which is at the centre of every case study and constituted each interaction with the respondents. Also incorporated into the qualitative process was the questionnaire and semi-structured interview designed for the managing editors of the community newspapers. The

quantitative methods comprised a questionnaire for the class of respondents to explore newspaper reading habits and an evaluation form that comprised part of the final lesson that was aimed at consolidating the Community Newspaper Project. Examples of these data collection methods and a discussion thereof are outlined in this Chapter.

The harmony between case study, action research, and the predominance of participant observation during the Project was the motivation for these choices of methodology as opposed to any other method of research, for example, experimental research which would have meant setting up experimental and control groups with the former being exposed to manipulated independent variables while the latter are not. However, one of the serious limitations of experimental research is that unlike scientific research, media researchers are unable to exert control over the behaviour of their participants as well as various environmental factors that might influence their conduct in the real world (Jensen, 2002: 225). It must also be emphasized that as a non-probability study, the lack of generalisability is a constraint. I therefore cannot endeavour to draw conclusions about a larger population from the outcomes of this small-scale research project. I begin this chapter by expanding the description of a context for my research, Community Secondary School<sup>1</sup>

## **5.2. Community Secondary School: the setting of the classroom intervention**

The immediate research site of this study is Community Secondary, which is located within the broad research site, the sprawling former 'Indian' suburb of Chatsworth, south of Durban. This school lies parallel to Chatsworth's Higginson's Highway and is easily accessible via train, bus and taxi and so attracts much of its African learner population, who travel long distances, from outside the borders of Chatsworth.

Schools in suburbs such as Chatsworth were attended only by learners from Indian backgrounds during apartheid but many have changed dramatically in their learner compositions soon after the end of segregationist policies that came after the first

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the school has been changed in accordance with the Ethical Research Policy of UKZN.

democratic general election in 1994. The racial integration of schools was discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

As a former House of Delegates (HoD<sup>2</sup>) school, Community Secondary was also once exclusively Indian. However, the Education Management Information Survey (*Emis*) for Community Secondary for 2002, an instrument used by the Department of Education to assess the demographics of schools, including racial composition of learners, indicated that of the learner population of 750, approximately 65% were African and 35% Indian (*Emis*, 2002).

The trend at Community Secondary has been in keeping with the government's plan of freeing South Africa of its racist past through the desegregation of schools, a process which was set into motion through state-driven policies. Jansen's view (*Mail and Guardian*, 13-19/08/04: 1) of urban schools in post-apartheid South Africa is that while racial desegregation of the learner population was a relatively easy task, it was essentially a survival mechanism and not one that aims to adequately address the inequalities of the past, therefore, attaining social integration has been difficult.

Former HoD schools had to racially desegregate as a survival mechanism because many learners from their schools sought enrolment at neighbouring schools or formerly white or ex-Model C schools resulting in a substantial decrease in Indian learner enrolment, a drop in the post-provisioning norms (PPN)<sup>3</sup> of schools and the subsequent loss of teaching staff. Simultaneously the demand for enrolment by African learners from ex-DET schools at ex-HoD schools ensured that the PPNs of many schools were either maintained at existing levels or increased, thus educators could be retained in their teaching positions. Consequently, the transformation of the educator component has been minimal, remaining predominantly Indian.

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<sup>2</sup> In 1983 the Tri-cameral system was introduced by the apartheid government. All public institutions for whites, Indians and Coloureds, including Education, came under the control of separate Houses of Parliament. For example, the House of Delegates (HoD) controlled institutions like Health and Education for Indians (*Reader's Digest*, 1995: 243). This is discussed in Chapter 1.

<sup>3</sup> According to Chapter 2 Section 5 (3)(b) of the *Employment of Educators Act* of 1998, PPN refers to the number of posts allocated to any public school based on the annual learner-teacher ratio at that school.

The medium of instruction at former HoD schools is English and English as a subject is offered as a Primary<sup>4</sup> Language. English is the language chosen for inter-ethnic communication without being the language spoken or understood by the majority of South Africans. More importantly, it is considered to be an international link language, the knowledge of which has economic, political, and educational implications for South Africans (Balfour 2002: 1). Therefore, according to Mda (Chisholm (Ed), 2004: 184), since English is perceived as a global language which is linked to progress, many black parents fear that their children could lack socio-economic access and mobility if they are taught in their home languages.

In view of the fact that isiZulu is the medium of instruction and English is offered at additional language level at ex-DET schools in KwaZulu-Natal, learners from those institutions who have chosen to receive their formal education at ex-HoD schools do so because of the schools' language policies. Balfour (2002: 12) contends that English as a *lingua franca* is not a neutral choice, but a political and strategic one made by learners, parents, educators, educationists, and legislators. This scenario is pertinent to Community Secondary where the majority of learners are isiZulu mother-tongue speakers studying English as a first language.

However, the language policies at most ex-HOD schools, including Community Secondary have changed to some extent in more recent years. While English is the medium of instruction and is still offered as a Home Language subject, Afrikaans and isiZulu are offered as second languages. Prior to 1994, Afrikaans was the only First Additional Language offered at all ex-HOD schools. With the increasing enrolment of learners from ex-DET schools where Afrikaans was taught neither as a home nor an additional language, schools have had no choice but to phase in isiZulu as a First Additional Language.

As township dwellers, whether from Chatsworth or neighbouring Umlazi or Lamontville,

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<sup>4</sup> Since the introduction of the NCS (2003) First or Primary Languages are termed Home Languages, Additional or Second Languages are referred to as First Additional Languages and Third Languages are called Second Additional Languages (DoE, 2003: 11).

the majority of learners are from formerly disadvantaged neighbourhoods of working class or lower-middle class backgrounds. Although Community Secondary services learners from mainly disadvantaged communities, it is not classified as a previously disadvantaged school and so does not receive the necessary financial support from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

This situation is due to the inequitable funding allocated to the school based on its quintile ranking determined by the National Norms and Standards for School Funding put into practice in 2006. The quintile ranking, calculated according to a specific formula, determines the amount of funding a school receives per annum. In 2008, the allocation per learner in Quintile 1 schools was R775 and R129 in Quintile 5<sup>5</sup> schools. Quintile scores are based on the geographic area in which the school is situated and does not factor in other variables like the learner composition and recovery of school fees (Chutgar and Kanjee, 2009: 18, 19).

At the time that this study was conducted, in 2003/2004, learners did not have textbooks of their own because of inadequate educational funding. As far as English Home Language was concerned, it was only at Grade 12 level and only for the Literature component that each learner was given a text book to utilise for the year. For Grades 8, 9, 10 and 11 each teacher keeps a set of Literature texts to use during class time. This changed when the *NCS* was implemented in 2006. The Department of Education allocated the budget for the purchase of textbooks in the literature and language components incrementally for Grade 10 in 2006, Grade 11 in 2007 and Grade 12 in 2008.

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<sup>5</sup> Community Secondary School is in the unfortunate position of being ranked quintile 5 because of its geographical location which is considered not previously disadvantaged and therefore it receives the lowest funding per learner. However, the learner population is drawn from the lower economic areas of the community and from formerly disadvantaged communities outside of Chatsworth but the demographic of the school is not taken into account when the quintile rank is assigned. At the time this Project was initiated in 2003/2004 many could not afford to pay the comparatively low school fee of R500. It is the arduous duty of form teachers to recover school fees and to encourage learners to get their parents to pay up. Annual recovery of school fees averages 60%. This amount is insufficient to cover the total cost of managing and resourcing the school adequately. Educators and learners at this school have to be as creative as possible to get by or do without resources completely. The principal's many representations to the highest officials in the KZN Department of Education have not been successful in lowering the school's quintile ranking to ensure greater funding.

The school also has a fully stocked Library Resource Centre with books that have not been updated for a decade and with no teacher-librarian to take charge as there is no budget for one, neither from the Department of Education, nor the school. In addition, the Library Resource Education period has become obsolete within the framework of the new curriculum in 2006. The library is utilised only on the rare occasion when an educator needs to screen a DVD or a video. Thus, the cycle of intellectual poverty is perpetuated as learners who come from former disadvantaged areas and poor homes are not able to borrow books leave alone any other kinds of media from the school library.

The vast English Primary Language syllabus comprised of the Oral and Writing components, which formed part of the continuous assessment mark, and the Language and Comprehension component (Paper 1) and Literature (Paper 2), which were tested under examination conditions (DoE, 2002). The style and content of the Grade 12 examination papers inform the teaching of texts and texts are taught very much for the purpose of examinations and not for pleasure. As far as the Language and Comprehension component was concerned, each teacher is left to his or her own resources to acquire learner and teacher support materials (LTSMs). It is especially in this area that a teacher has the scope to be creative and ingenious in the teaching of texts. With the introduction of the *NCS* in 2006 this structure has changed somewhat with the introduction of a third paper to test the Writing component under examination conditions, with the first group of matriculants writing this common national paper in 2008 (*NCS, Subject Assessment Guidelines: English Home Language, 2005: 9*).

The general trend is that teachers in the classroom reify texts, with the printed word viewed as omniscient and authoritative. Meaning is unpacked from the text by being dissected, explained, and analysed in a traditional, transmission manner (Luke, 1990: 7) in order to satisfy the requirements of the testing programme and examinations. From my own experience and those of many of my colleagues, greater emphasis is placed on the prescribed literature texts in the classroom than any other component of the English syllabus especially in the FET phase.

Jansen (*Mail and Guardian, 13-19/08/04: 1*), in a paper delivered at University of

Pretoria in July 2004, titled “*Race, Education and Democracy: How far have we come?*” said that the final year of high school (Grade 12) has become nothing more than a high intensity and high-stakes testing environment in which learners spend their time preparing for school-based, ‘mock’ and final matriculation examinations to shield schools from governmental scrutiny and to compete mindlessly for public recognition.

Management and educators at schools are driven by the need to achieve in the senior certificate examination. Pressure in this regard filters down from management at national and provincial level and the ‘hype’ around matriculation results created by the media. Educators in the FET phase are particularly affected by this trend and are dictated to by the demands of the Grade 12 examination even at the beginning of this phase in Grade 10. The stringent demands of the academic curriculum of this phase, was one of the factors that prevented me from completing the Project in the time frames I set down in the scheduled programme of activities, a point to which I return later.

However, the phasing-in of the *NCS* (2003) at Grade 10 level in 2006 and the fact that all public-school learners wrote the first common National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination in 2008 have altered perceptions of the Grade 12 examination in South Africa. The transition from the old to the new will have to begin with changes to pedagogy suggested in the *NCS*. The application of critical pedagogies such as those used in this Project illustrate that it is possible for learners to engage in meaningful educational activities that focus on their own life worlds and in so doing nurture critical thinking skills. The need for this kind of educational experience was highlighted by the *UNESCO Declaration on Media Education* (1982). This is discussed in Chapter 3. It was this kind of prior pedagogical engagement with media by a particular class of learners that motivated the choice of research sample which I shall outline next.

### **5.3 The research sample**

Given the small scale of this research Project and contextual factors based on the school that I taught at, I used non-probability sampling, a combination of purposive and convenience sampling, or what is also referred to as accidental or opportunity sampling (Cohen *et al*, 2001: 103). In purposive sampling, the researcher chooses the cases to be

included in the sample based on prior information of a population and the specific purpose of the research. The choice of the sample is based on personal judgment and the assumption that the knowledge of the population can be used to judge whether or not a particular sample will be representative or that those chosen possess the necessary information about the population (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003: 103-105).

Convenience sampling involves choosing the nearest available individuals to serve as respondents. While this type of sampling may be convenient, it can also be biased but sometimes this is the only choice a researcher has. In such a case the researcher should include information on demographic and other characteristics of the sample that was actually studied (*ibid*: 103). As a convenience sample, I chose the Grade 11A class who were the most appropriate learners to whom I had the easiest access to conduct the research as I was teaching them at the time.

According to Jensen (2002: 239), convenience sampling is sometimes used as a derogatory term for studying those individuals most easily available to a researcher. However, a well-documented convenience sample can generate both valid and reliable insights into a social setting or event. He adds that given the notorious difficulty of gaining entry into certain social arenas, convenience, in the sense of physical and social accessibility, is a legitimate consideration.

An example of a very early study of convenience sampling put to good effect was conducted by Cantril in 1940 which tried to explain a public panic in response to Orson Welles' radio production of *War of the Worlds* (1938). The study used quantitative and qualitative methods as well as convenience samples of respondents who were asked to recollect their experiences of being frightened (*ibid*).

The justification for using purposive sampling in choosing the Grade 11A class is as follows: first, I had previously worked with these learners on a media-related Project

when they were in Grade 10A<sup>6</sup>. Therefore their prior orientation to media discourses through their involvement in that media Project and their access to the community newspapers used in this Project made the Grade 11A class the ideal sample since they were in a more advantageous position in their understanding of the media, than other classes.

Second, having taught this class English in 2002, they were, in my opinion, academically well disposed for the research in a context with significant time limitations. According to the final schedule of marks for 2002, the median for English for the Grade 10A class was 67% which was above the 63% median for the Grade and the highest of the five Grade 10 classes.

However, six learners who were in the Grade 11A in 2003 and 12A in 2004 class were not in the Grade 10 class used for the research conducted in 2002. I was fortunate that I had taught these learners when they were in Grade 9 and had a good rapport with them too and could therefore be assured of their co-operation during the classroom intervention. The six new learners were all isiZulu mother-tongue speakers who lived in townships outside the circulation range of the community newspapers that were used in this study. Arrangements were made to make the relevant newspapers available to these learners. It was interesting to observe the attitudes of learners who are not of 'Indian' origin, to the localised, narrow discourses of these publications, which pertain mainly to the 'Indian diaspora' in South Africa (as was discussed in Chapter 2).

When the research Project began in August 2003 there were, initially, thirty-five learners, twenty-two girls and thirteen boys. Of the thirty-five respondents, twenty-nine included

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<sup>6</sup> This media-related Project was conducted as an assignment for the coursework aspect of this degree in 2002. It involved conducting a survey which aimed at ascertaining the media habits among this class of Grade 10 learners, almost all of whom were resident in Chatsworth. The survey revealed important information regarding 'newspaper' reading habits of learners from this predominantly Indian township showing that the majority were reading only the community newspapers and not any other newspapers. Of the thirty-eight respondents at the time, thirty-six had access to *The Rising Sun*, twenty-seven to *The Chatsworth Tabloid* and twenty-six to the *Chatsworth Times*, all community newspapers or "knock and drop" publications circulated free of charge on a weekly basis, to almost every household in Chatsworth and its surrounding areas.

in the research Project were mother-tongue English speakers of Indian descent while six were African isiZulu mother-tongue speakers proficient in English. The sample group chosen all studied English as a Primary language and Afrikaans as a second language.

Of the girls there were twenty-one Indians and one African; and of the boys eight Indian and five African. However, when the Project continued in 2004, and with the transition from Grade 11 to Grade 12, some learners from other classes had not been promoted from Grade 11 in 2003 to Grade 12 in 2004 resulting in the re-classification of all Grade 12 learners according to subject choices (courses). Of the original thirty-five learners involved in the Project, five, who studied Geography, were placed in another class with other learners who studied Geography because this facilitated the smooth running of the timetable. As this was not a significant change, I continued the Project with the remaining thirty learners who constituted the Grade 12A class in 2004. The research sample thus constituted eighteen girls (seventeen Indian and one African) and twelve boys (seven Indian and five African). Although the five learners who had been removed from 12A completed questionnaires, their responses were excluded from the final data analysis.

It must be noted that as a full-time educator studying as a part-time student there were several restrictions, based on contextual factors, to using any other forms of sampling when conducting the research I had planned. It would have been impractical and improbable under the circumstances to involve other schools or even other educators and learners within my school without imposing substantially on my tuition time with classes not involved in the research Project, thus compromising my professional integrity<sup>7</sup> as an educator. Furthermore, the DoE has ceased to make available to educators extended periods of study-leave and will not allow educators to 'buy-out' replacement educators in order to enable research to occur.

Thus, the types of sampling chosen were strategies most suitable for an action research case-study such as this since the focus was on a particular group of individuals in a single

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<sup>7</sup> The ideal scenario for conducting this research Project would have been a larger sample that involved other schools in the Chatsworth area; however, this would have required that I take extended study leave, to facilitate the process, which the Department of Education no longer grants since 2004 (*Human Resource Management Circular No.7 of 2004, Clause 5.25.9*).

class where the sample and population are identical. Although the parameters for generalisability in these types of samples are negligible, their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use for formative evaluation, institutional feedback and educational policy-making (Cohen *et al*, 2001: 103). A more detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in the Project will follow.

#### **5.4 Research Methodologies appropriate for the research Project**

There are three main features to this essentially qualitative Project, first, is the concept of meaning. Human beings experience events in their lives as meaningful; cultural artifacts and other vehicles of meaning provide people with a sense of identity, a position from which to exercise agency and a means of orienting oneself in social interaction. In the field of media, qualitative research is used to study the textual contents, materiality, scheduling, and social uses of technologically produced media to illustrate how they generate meaning (Jensen, 2002: 236). This was done in this case by using the medium of community newspapers to design lessons in order to understand how these publications shaped the identity of those living in Chatsworth.

The second feature is that meaningful actions should be studied in their naturalistic contexts in which the researcher's lengthy immersion in a whole culture enables him or her to better understand the respondents' perspective on reality in full acquiring what Malinowski (1922) referred to as "the native's perspective" (*ibid*: 236). However, as an Indian South African, living and teaching in the community I researched, the challenge was to prevent my opinions from being imposed on the respondents.

The third feature of qualitative research concerns the role of the researcher as a human interpretive subject who is engaged in a global continuous form of interpretation, essentially, a single researcher aims to understand "meaning in action" (*ibid*: 236). In this regard I chose to employ the associated qualitative methodologies of the case study and action research. Both are flexible methodologies that respond to situations. While the reason for the use of a case study is that it documents the experiences, thoughts and views of the participants about particular situations, and is used extensively in educational

research (Picciano, 2004: 42), the main justification for the use of action research is the improvement of practice (*ibid*, 224). I discuss case study methodology first before outlining action research.

#### 5.4.1 Case study research

Case study research, which is used extensively in educational research, involves investigating, describing, interpreting and reporting the complex unfolding interactions of events, conditions, situations, human relationships and other factors occurring in the present in detail (Picciano, 2004: 224).

What case studies share with other qualitative research is the detailed attention given, first to phenomena within their everyday contexts, and second to their structural or thematic interrelations with other phenomena and contexts (Jensen, 2002: 239). According to Cohen *et al.* (2001: 181), a case study is a single instance of a bounded human system in action, like a class, a school, or a community. Contexts are seen as unique and dynamic, hence a distinguishing feature of case studies is that human systems have a wholeness or integrity to them and are not just a loose connection of traits. In this case it is the Grade 11A/12A class of 2003/2004 at Community Secondary School in the community of Chatsworth engaging with community newspapers in an English Language classroom. Although the main system is the class, the other two systems, the school, the social institution that meets the basic human need of education, and community life, form an essential part of the context being evaluated.

The fact that an in-depth understanding of context was central to the Project made Yin's (1994) definition of case study particularly pertinent:

1. A case study is an empirical inquiry that:
  - Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident
2. The case study inquiry:
  - copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
  - relies on multiple resources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
  - benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (Yin, 1994: 13).

In keeping with Yin's definition, as mentioned previously, different methods of data collection were designed for use in the Project based on the theories of Critical Literacy outlined in Chapter 3. Other dimensions that had to be considered were the variables that would affect the outcomes of the Project: the use of critical pedagogy in a mainstream context, learners' approaches and views to texts from the community newspapers. As a result learners had to, at first, be eased into a Critical Literacy pedagogy using mainstream methods and fairy tales. Lessons had to be designed thoroughly and accurate field notes had to be recorded. These aspects are discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

A case study also emphasises analysis in depth which shows development over a period of time. But, because a Project is usually a single case, like the Community Newspaper Project, it is not directed towards broad generalisations (Best and Kahn, 2003: 249). Thus, one of the main strengths of a case study is observing effects by examining real people in real situations. They function within a paradigm<sup>8</sup> of seeking to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors with much of the critical educational research taking into account the political and ideological contexts within which these actors function. Within this interpretative paradigm case studies tend to use a variety of techniques utilising both qualitative<sup>9</sup> and quantitative<sup>10</sup> research methodology which include:

- observation by the researcher of the physical characteristics, social qualities or behaviour
- interviews with the subject(s) and others involved
- questionnaires, opinionnaires, psychological tests
- recorded data from newspapers, schools, government agencies and other sources (Best and Kahn, 2003: 250).

The Community Newspaper Project conforms to this general view that in case studies, data may be gathered using an assortment of data collection methods like semi-structured interviews, participant observation during structured lessons and documents, which I have used and combined with questionnaires. From the outset, as the researcher, I was also aware of the lack of generalisability given the nature of the Project.

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<sup>8</sup> A paradigm is a frame of reference for a particular study, which also specifies the methods and techniques to be adopted when conducting research (Cohen *et al*, 2001: 181).

<sup>9</sup> Qualitative research refers to a broad category of research that relies on narratives and descriptions to study educational phenomena (Picciano, 2004: 143). As far as this research Project is concerned, this included participant observation and lesson design.

<sup>10</sup> Quantitative research relies on measurements and numerical data to study educational phenomena (*ibid*).

However, case studies are distinguished less by the methodologies that they employ than the subjects or objects of their inquiry. Since they chronicle participants' lived experiences of, and thoughts and feelings, about a situation, it is important for events and situations to be allowed to speak for them rather than to be largely interpreted, evaluated, or judged by the researcher. A case study focuses on individual actors or groups of actors and seeks to understand their perception of events. A case study is therefore very much like a television documentary (Cohen *et al*, 2001: 182). The use of discussion boxes based on the field notes recorded during the Community Newspaper Project is an example of how situations speak for themselves. These discussion boxes appear in Chapters 6 and 7 and provide a narrative of how the Project progressed.

Significance, rather than frequency of events, offers the researcher important perspectives into the real dynamics of situations and people. In this instance, the engagement of learners with critical theories of English education using local community newspapers was studied in order to gain insight into how these theories can operate in the classroom. However, a researcher using case-study methodology must be careful about her subject positioning in interviewing or observing subjects. In this case, as researcher, I had to put aside much of my own prejudices, pre-conceived views on issues and the subjects involved including my past methods of teaching.

I was not content to simply conduct a case study and leave it at that. I therefore decided to extend the Project to include action research in order to utilise the information ascertained from the case study at a local level to inform my practice as an educator who was herself poised to implement the transformed *National Curriculum Statement* (2003) in the classroom using a more critical, democratic form of pedagogy.

#### *5.4.2 Action research: critical reflection on practice*

Action research is a term first used by Kurt Lewin, an American social psychologist, in the early 1940s to describe research that social scientists and practitioners could undertake and use to take action by addressing important social concerns. He believed that an action researcher should study social problems that grew out of the community

which would serve as an impulse for social inquiry and then later applied in the community setting. Stephen Corey (1953) was among the first to use action research in the field of research. He believed that scientific method had never become an important part of educational practice, and that most educational researchers arrived at generalisations with no intention of doing anything with the results of the research. With action research changes in educational practice would be more likely because teachers would be involved in inquiry and the application of findings. Practitioner participation in action research would make teachers more critical and reflective about their own practice (Oja and Smulyan, 1989: 2-9).

At the local level of a school, action research can be adapted to any classroom situation and can be conducted by an individual teacher or a group of teachers. According to Cohen *et al.* (2002), action research is not research that merely attempts to understand and interpret the world but to change it. Thus, as a combination of action and research that is a powerful tool for change and improvement at the local level which can be used in a number of areas that include:

- replacing traditional methods of teaching by discovery methods;
- encouraging more positive attitudes to work or modifying the value systems of learners with regards to some aspects of life;
- promoting the professional development of teachers by improving teaching skills, developing new methods of learning, increasing powers of analysis and accentuating self-awareness (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 226).

This definition encapsulates the two distinctive schools of thought regarding action research, namely the reflective school and the critical school. The former sees action research as the improvement of practice by individuals at a local level, for example, the classroom, while the latter goes beyond the classroom to the wider agenda of changing education, schooling and society (Kemmis, 1997).

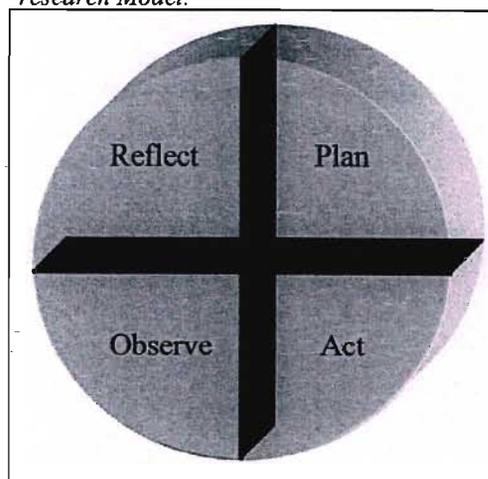
I combined both schools of thought in my Project. I decided to use action research to improve my own teaching skills and to experiment with innovative methods of teaching and learning within my immediate context. Although I was aware that the results could not be generalised from studying just one class, I hoped that it would provide the impetus for further studies on the part of other researchers and so contribute to the broader sphere of education. However, to expect my small-scale Project to have far-reaching educational

and societal change, as espoused by the critical school, would have been a utopian ideal.

In addition, Kemmis (1997) makes reference to two main types of action research. These are practical action research and participatory action research. The main purpose of the former is to improve practice in the short term by implementing an action plan and to inform larger issues. It addresses a specific problem in a classroom or school and can be carried out by an individual or a team. Participatory action research is a collaborative approach that involves a sizable group of people all of whom function as equal partners who are focused intently on the same problem (*ibid*).

Zuber-Skerrit (1996a: 3) advocates the idea of emancipatory action research which is collaborative, critical and self-critical inquiry by practitioners about an issue in their own context which develops through a cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (please see Figure 5.1 on the following page). This process involves strategic planning, implementing the plan, observation and subsequent evaluation, culminating in critical reflection.

*Figure 5.1: an adaptation of the action research Model.*



(Zuber-Skerrit 1996a: 3)

While the Project I embarked on had a practical action research bias and the Zuber-Skerrit (1996) model, adapted in Figure 5.1, advocates participatory action research through the promotion of a collaborative approach, I nevertheless utilised it by simplifying the cyclical features of the model in the implementation of the Project. The

four stages of planning, acting, observation, and reflection illustrated above are outlined in detail in Chapter 6.

My intention was to reflect continuously on my practice and to eventually, through my experiences, influence not only my classroom practice but that of my colleagues away from a Cultural Heritage paradigm to one that promoted Critical Literacy. From my observations in recent years, I realised that in an attempt to see everyone in the same light in the post-apartheid multicultural classroom, cultural idiosyncrasies that impact on learners are overlooked. This pertains to the teaching and learning of English First Language as a subject at KZN schools, where Eurocentric, Cultural Heritage discourses still prevailed with limited consideration given to the social and cultural backgrounds of learners, or to their media habits in the choice of texts for study in the classroom.

Through my engagement with Critical Literacy and the corresponding curriculum changes that were beginning to take place, I decided to experiment with changes to my own classroom practice as a teacher of English and to include the discourses that were part of the life-world of the learners. The media-related Project mentioned earlier in this Chapter provided the momentum for this research Project as it revealed that the majority of learners did not engage much with print media; that in most cases the only newspapers they read were the free community newspapers found in their post-boxes every week.

I hoped that by using Critical Literacy and community newspapers that learners would be more critical of their own media habits and that they would begin to view all texts and indeed all media from a Critical Literacy perspective. At the same time my research into Critical Literacy provided me with theoretical knowledge and skills that I did not encounter previously and orientated me to a new way of teaching English.

This can be achieved when teachers develop more effective ways of practicing their craft with a rich source of ideas, emanating from action research, enriching their teaching techniques. In effect, action research shows practitioners that it is possible to break out of taken-for-granted routines (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003: 579).

Thus, action research is synonymous with Critical Literacy because it is a political

process that involves making changes that will affect others and is seen as an empowering activity (Cohen *et al*, 2002: 229, 231). Indeed, the operative word that unites the various often opposing and controversial views on action research held by researchers is *empowerment* (*ibid*: 233). It is through empowerment that improvement is possible.

The methods of gathering data in action research are very similar to that of case studies. These include observations, interviews, surveys, and analysis of documents. As outlined earlier, during observations it is very important to take field notes to describe what is seen and heard. Also, administering questionnaires and conducting interviews are productive ways of assessing the accuracy of observations. In this Project, however, interviews were intended only for the managing editors of the community newspapers. Among the wide scope of documents that action research allows are lesson plans, departmental policy documents, and journals. It is therefore evident that these methods were more substantive than anecdotal (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003: 576), all of which were used in the Community Newspaper Project, the planning of which will be discussed next.

## **5.5 The planning of the Community Newspaper Project**

### *5.5.1 A preliminary description of activities*

In keeping with the associated methods of research that I employed in this Project, namely case study (Picciano, 2004: 42), and action research (Oja and Smulyan, 1989: 1), Figure 5.2 overleaf, *A preliminary list of activities*, is cognizant of these types of research. Typical case-study methodology that documents the experiences, thoughts and views of respondents in particular situations (Picciano, 2004: 45) and the improvement of educational practice which is the justification for action research are outlined in Figure 5.2. Figure 5.2 together with Figure 5.3, provides a sense of development of how the research Project was conducted.

The outcomes outlined in Frame 1 of Figure 5.2 on the following page were formulated with the knowledge that they were considered to be achievable by learners within the parameters of the small scale of the research Project. These outcomes included an adaptation of three of the seven critical outcomes outlined by the Department of

Education (2003: 2) for the implementation of the new FET curriculum. In addition to the outcomes, four key questions, outlined in Figure 5.2, guided this study from the outset.

Figure 5.2: a preliminary list of activities.

<b>FRAME 1</b>	
Establish Purpose/ Outcomes	<p>The outcomes of this research Project are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to use critical resources to deconstruct, critique, and subvert the taken-for-granted assumptions that underlie compliant readings of the media that one is repeatedly exposed to;</li> <li>• to organise, critically analyse, and interpret the uniqueness of real situations through interaction with critical discourses in to lessons using sources from community newspapers;</li> <li>• to view newspaper texts, not as windows on reality, but as discursive constructs open to challenge and radical renewal (Macken-Horarik in Christie and Misson, 1998: 75);</li> <li>• to manage activities responsibly and effectively, and to create a sense of being involved (DoE, 2003: 2);</li> <li>• to work effectively with others as members of a group (<i>ibid</i>);</li> <li>• to identify and solve problems, and make decisions using critical and creative thinking (<i>ibid</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>FRAME 2</b>	
Ascertain Key Research Questions	<p>The key questions that directed this Project were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can the key concepts of Critical Literacy theories, that form the basis of this research Project, be utilised to inform the lesson design and pedagogy in the English Home Language class in the FET phase?</li> <li>• Do the community publications used in this research Project promote 'a narrow sense of community and ethnocentrism' (Steenveld, 2002: 17) perpetuating a legacy of damaging stereotypes left over by apartheid? <b>OR</b> Do these publications provide an important chronicle of the lives of South African Indians living in the township of Chatsworth, Durban (an important minority group within South Africa's diverse demographic milieu)?</li> <li>• Are community publications simply 'revenue streams' or do they provide social and political resources for critically thinking citizens (Steenveld, 2002: 17)?</li> <li>• How viable are Critical Literacy theories and discourses within the present English Home Language curriculum in the FET phase?</li> </ul>

<b>FRAME 3</b>	
Outline Research methods and Data Collection/ Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitative methods: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.</li> <li>• Qualitative methods: lessons, recording of field notes and observation charts during lessons.</li> <li>• Sources: a wide range of local and international secondary sources; database of community and mainstream newspapers from South Africa and abroad including the first issue of Chatsworth's first community newspaper <i>Chatsworth SUN</i>, which is no longer in circulation; documentary source, <i>The Randy Rooster</i>, a 1980s Argus Community Newspapers blueprint of how a community newspaper should be run.</li> </ul>
<b>FRAME 4</b>	
Plan Classroom Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lessons based on Critical Literacy techniques; texts from Chatsworth's three main community newspapers, other print media publications. The DoE (2003) syllabus requirements for English as a Home language in the FET phase to be considered.</li> <li>• The classroom intervention was divided into phases and segments in order to scaffold learners' understanding of the key concepts.</li> </ul>
<b>FRAME 5</b>	
Design Quantitative and Qualitative instruments and tools for the analysis of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methods of classification and summary sheets.</li> <li>• Lesson plans including individual and group assessment tasks for each stage and phase.</li> <li>• Field notes to be recorded and filed with lesson plans to reinforce findings.</li> <li>• Observation charts.</li> </ul>

The table above is a summary of the overall structure of the Project and incorporates the vision that I had regarding its development. *The Stages of the Project*, the natural progression from the *Preliminary List of Activities*, shows how the fundamentals outlined in Figure 5.2, were used to plan the stages, which will be summarised next.

#### 5.5.2 *The stages of the Project: an ideal scenario*

The structure of this research Project is illustrated in Figure 5.3. It is based on the adaptation of the action research model (Zuber-Skerrit, 1996a: 3) illustrated in this Chapter. The four stages of planning, acting, observation and reflection are shown in the stages of the Project. Stage 1 is planning which is associated with the preliminary tasks set out in Figure 5.2. Stage 2 comprises both acting and observation of the action research cycle while Stages 3 and 4 demonstrate reflection. Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this thesis

discuss much of what is listed in Stage 1 (Planning). Figure 5.3 illustrates the ideal scenario anticipated at the outset. Although the demarcation of the stages, the activities and objectives remained relatively the same, the time frames indicated were extremely idealistic and could therefore not be strictly adhered to. Time frames were therefore adjusted to suit various contextual factors discussed further in this Chapter and in Chapters 6 and 7.

Figure 5.3: a schedule of the stages of the Project: an ideal scenario.

TIME FRAMES	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES
July, 2003 <b>STAGE 1</b> Planning, Permission and Preparation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-Seek permission from principal and relevant management personnel at school to use the Grade 11A class to conduct research.</li> <li>2- Establish a database of various kinds of local and international community and other genre of newspapers.</li> <li>3- Collation of further theoretical material in respect of critical literacy discourses, media and the newspaper genre.</li> <li>4- Preparation of classroom activities/lessons using specific parts of the community newspapers, other sources and Critical Literacy theories.</li> <li>5- Design of questionnaires and semi – structured interviews.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-To commence classroom intervention with the Grade 11A during the Library Resource Education sessions.</li> <li>2-To be used in comparative deconstruction of newspapers.</li> <li>3-To be utilised in writing Literature Review and designing lessons, providing a framework within which to work.</li> <li>4- To be used during curriculum intervention.</li> <li>5- To gauge more about respondents, their newspaper reading habits and attitudes to local community newspapers and to ascertain more information on the community newspapers used in the study.</li> </ol>
August, 2003 <b>STAGE 2</b> Implementation of the Research Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Curriculum intervention: Lessons conducted in phases: <i>Orientation; Deconstruction (Interrogating Texts); Analysis of Sources from Community Newspapers (Theme: Beauty Contests); Consolidation.</i> Phases further divided into segments (please see Fig. 5.1). Observations charts, field notes recorded.</li> <li>2- Completion of questionnaires by managing editors of the three major Chatsworth community newspapers to completed before the semi- structured interview is conducted with them. Information elicited to be used during the classroom intervention and in writing of the literature review.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-To assess and analyse quantitative and qualitative data and to make inferences and draw comparisons.</li> </ol>
October, 2003 <b>STAGE 3</b> Evaluation of Research	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Develop relevant instruments for the analysis of data, for example, summary sheets. Journal kept with field notes, observation charts and responses to lessons.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- To establish findings.</li> <li>2- To encourage critical engagement with all kinds of media texts used in everyday interaction.</li> </ol>

November, 2003 <b>STAGE 4</b> Conclusion	1- Analysis of data, evaluation of questionnaires, tasks and activities. 2- Final de-briefing with learners.	1- To establish findings. 2- To encourage critical engagement with all kinds of media texts used in everyday interaction.
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The first step of Stage 1 (please see Figure 5.3) required that I meet with the principal of my school as well as the Head of Department for Language, Literature and Communication (LLC) at the start of the third term on 22/07/2003 to seek permission to conduct the research. This was done in writing with a letter from my supervisor which outlined the research Project that I planned to conduct with learners. I pointed out that the Project would not encroach on learners' academic programme but will enhance their critical skills in relation to the analysis of texts which was essential the study of English. I was granted written permission on 25/07/2003 by the principal to conduct the research until the end of the fourth term.

The motivation for using the Grade 11A class in the research Project was outlined earlier in this Chapter. However, the problem was that in 2003 I did not teach the learners from 11A English, but LRE (Library Resource Education), for which the time allocation was one session in a nine day timetable cycle. The second half of the year was a demanding time for educators to complete syllabi before the final examination and as far as the 11A class was concerned I was unable to acquire any sessions from any of their other teachers.

Taking the September tests, the Spring holiday and final examination into account, I anticipated only six sessions that I could use starting on 01/08/2003 and extending to 29/10/2003. This meant that I could complete just Phase 1 of the Curriculum Intervention (please see Figure 6.1 of Chapter 6) in 2003. This presented a problem which I could only fully address at the beginning of 2004. The fact that the Project could not be completed in 2003 also affected Stages 3 and 4 (please see Figure 5.3) as these were obviously dependent on the completion of Stage 2.

As already mentioned, one of the classes that I was allocated to teach English to in 2004 was the Grade 12A class, the 11A class that had graduated from 2003. Although five learners who were part of the 11A class were moved to another class, I could still

complete the research Project with the remaining thirty learners that constituted the Grade 12A class without having to start again with a new sample.

On 28/01/2004, I secured written permission from the principal once again to complete Stage 2 of the Project (please see Figure 5.3 above) with learners in the Grade 12A class before the end of the first term. However, this would prove to be quite a challenge as I could not compromise the completion of the syllabus with a Grade 12 class in any way. Fortunately, I was able to carefully integrate the content of the classroom intervention of the Project with the language aspect of the English syllabus as will be illustrated in Chapter 6.

As explained in Chapter 4, access to the managing editors of the community newspapers was a challenge with only one Managing Editor completing the questionnaire and agreeing to an interview. The information regarding the Chatsworth community newspapers could therefore, not to be used during the classroom intervention, as I had originally intended, but was used in writing the Literature Review and Chapter 4.

All the instruments for data collection (two questionnaires and a semi-structured interview schedule; observation schedules and a journal for recording field notes), data analysis (summary sheets, please see Annexure E), and the lesson design (Critical Literacy lesson plans, please see Annexure D1-9) had been completed for the facilitation of Stages 2 and 3 of the Project.

The delays experienced affected all stages of the Project. Although the first three stages of the Project were completed by the end of 2004, Stage 4 of the Project was not completed timeously due to several constraints that pertained to me as the researcher. The first step of Stage 1, establishing official access to the research group is elucidated further.

## **5.6 Access to the research group**

As already outlined, in July 2003, I made representations in writing to the relevant management personnel at my school to seek permission to embark on the community

newspaper research Project. I was granted permission to conduct the research Project and was assured the co-operation from the Language Literacy and Communication department, especially since the Project had the potential to inform the pedagogy of English as a Primary Language at Community Secondary School.

The research Project was 'slotted' into my personal teaching timetable and timeframes of the school, so as not to encroach on the teaching time of other subject teachers. At the commencement of the Project in 2003, the timetable followed a nine-day cycle with sixty-three minute sessions. At the time I taught Grade 11A Library Resource Education (LRE) for only one session in a nine-day cycle. Thus, due to the limitations regarding time in 2003 it was only possible to complete two segments of the classroom intervention. Since it was my intention, for reasons mentioned earlier, to use this particular class as a research sample, it meant that the intervention had to be continued in the Grade 12 year in 2004. I had requested that I teach Grade 12A English in 2004 to facilitate easier access to the respondents. Since there were no timetable clashes, I was allocated Grade 12A. At the start of the school year in 2004 the time-table format was changed from a nine-day to a seven-day cycle with the school day consisting of six sessions of fifty-two minutes each.

Once again, the demands of the Grade 12 syllabus, especially in English, but also in other subjects, made access to the learners for the specific purpose of my research increasingly difficult. Conveniently, because of the overlap between the lesson design of the classroom intervention and the Language and Comprehension dimension of the syllabus, I was able to complete a fair number of tasks to be able to draw important conclusions. A more in-depth discussion of how the Project was mediated with the sample can be found in Chapters 6 and 7.

As already mentioned, as far as access to the managing editors is concerned, two of the three that I had intended to interview were reluctant to complete the questionnaire or grant me an interview. From an ethical point of view I had to respect their decision not to participate.

I discuss this in more detail next as the Community Newspaper Project could not commence without certain ethical considerations being taken into account.

### **5.7 Ethical considerations**

The University of KwaZulu-Natal had no ethical clearance policy at the time of my embarking on the Project in 2003. Written consent from the learner respondents was not a requirement, although permission to work with learners was acquired from the school at which the Project was conducted<sup>11</sup>. Respondents were informed verbally that they were under no obligation to complete the questionnaires or participate in the research Project, that their anonymity would be ensured and that responses would be treated in a confidential manner. This information was included in all the questionnaires (please see Annexure A, B).

I did not impose the mandatory participation in the Project on learners but informed them that in keeping with the ethics of research, I had to have their verbal permission to participate. I reiterated the idea that there was no compulsion to complete any of the tasks, that this Project was not for any marks, and that they could withdraw at any stage. I also told them that all information was confidential and that pseudonyms would be used to ensure this when writing the thesis. Respondents were informed that even the name of the school would be changed to Community Secondary. Nevertheless, I encouraged them to participate not only as it would benefit them in their analysis of texts in the Language component during tests and examinations, but that it would nurture critical thinking in their engagement with media, an exercise that would be personally fulfilling. I asked learners to indicate by show of hands if they were willing to participate.

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<sup>11</sup> All learners agreed. I expressed my gratitude to them for agreeing to be part of a Project that would change the way they viewed the media that they were bombarded with. As far as seeking consent from the school was concerned, a letter dated 21/07/03 from my supervisor outlined the Project and asked permission from the principal to pursue research with the Grade 11 class that I taught at the time. Written permission was granted in a letter dated 25/07/2003. When the need arose to complete the research with the same class in 2004, written permission was again granted in a letter dated 28/01/2004. Since there was no Ethical Clearance policy at the time of my embarking on the degree at UKZN, I had to apply for Ethical Clearance retrospectively. My request for Ethical Clearance was approved on 17/10/2008 (Please see Appendix G).

In approaching the managing editors of the Chatsworth community newspapers, a letter was sent to each of them, preceded by a telephone call outlining the nature of the Project and requesting that they complete a questionnaire and agree to be interviewed by me. Only one of the three managing editors that I approached consented to being interviewed and having the questionnaire filled in. During the interview, the editor was informed that he was under no obligation to answer all the questions, a right that he chose to exercise. This was discussed in Chapter 4.

My prior interaction with the respondents in 2002 and my knowledge of them as generally confident and outspoken, together with the fact that I enjoyed a strong rapport with the learners, dispelled my concern that their behaviour during the intervention might be contrived and artificial if they were aware of being monitored as part of a research Project. To ensure that the element of being observed or judged was not highlighted so that learners behaved and responded as they normally did in the natural environment of the classroom, I recorded field notes during the intervention in the form of jottings as unobtrusively as possible. These brief key words and phrases were written in a small notebook that would simply help me remember things when writing detailed notes afterwards (Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein, 1997: 73).

However, six African learners who were part of the Grade 11A class were not taught by me in 2002. At the risk of appearing patronising, I called the learners aside after the first lesson at the start of the Project and informed them that their opinions and input, about a community they interfaced with mainly at school, would be highly valued. Their interaction with a class of predominantly Indian learners, an Indian facilitator/ researcher, interacting with content that was essentially about Indians (the community newspaper) positioned them as important commentators on issues that arose during the intervention. When controversial issues pertaining to ethnicity, race, and stereotyping arose, I had to be as objective as possible.

Since all stages of the research Project could not be completed in Grade 11 and had to be carried over to the Grade 12 year, I had to ensure that the research Project did not encroach on teaching time that had to be used for the completion of the syllabus. My

approach had to be grounded in the reality of the time given the high premium placed on good matriculation results and the strict time constraints. I therefore integrated the Critical Literacy tasks with the syllabus as far as possible, especially the Comprehension and Language component. However, I could not lose sight of the fact that my first priority was my responsibility to the learners as their Grade 12 English teacher and not as researcher. These ethical considerations became evident in the process of data collection which is outlined below.

### **5.8 Data collection for the Community Newspaper Project**

One research method is differentiated from another by means of the tools used in order to gather data. Having outlined the field of theoretical interest and determined the forms of sampling to be used, choices had to be made regarding the methods to be used in interacting with the field. These choices refer to the instruments and procedures of data collection. The forms of data collection, as outlined earlier in this Chapter, included both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods revealed important findings about the sample that would guide and evaluate the research. These included the Questionnaire and Evaluation Form for Learners. The qualitative methods took the form of field notes which provided a record of the activities throughout the curriculum intervention as well as the opinions, responses, prejudices, and attitudes of the respondents during this interaction. A valuable contribution to the thesis was the information about the production, distribution, and other dynamics of operating a community newspaper that was elicited from the questionnaire completed by and the interview conducted with the founder/ Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*. Additionally, as a primary source, I used copies of the *Chatsworth SUN* newspaper to provide a historical perspective and to draw comparisons with the community newspapers in circulation. Also, modern technologies like the internet and specific Critical Literacy websites yielded valuable information and ideas for the lesson design.

#### *5.8.1 The questionnaires and semi-structured interview*

Two questionnaires and a semi-structured interview schedule were designed in order to

elicit important background information from the research sample as well as the managing editors of the major community newspapers operating in the Chatsworth area. In drawing up the questionnaires and interview schedules, care was taken to ensure that questions were short, simple, and comprehensible and thus not difficult to complete. Instructions were clear, unambiguous and precise in order to maintain the interest and co-operation of the respondents (Preece, 1994: 108). They were also designed in such a manner so as to plan for the data analysis stage making it possible for evaluation using summary sheets to be completed with ease (*ibid*: 112). However, since the Questionnaire was completed by and the interview conducted with only one Managing Editor of a community newspaper, all the instruments of data analysis applied only to the Questionnaire for Learners. A summary sheet was therefore completed for the analysis of the Questionnaire for Learners only (please see Annexure E). The different kinds of questions used in both the surveys are illustrated below.

The initial questions were closed questions that had a limited number of options for reply and a corresponding coding frame or labeling device. Closed questions like nominal scales (please see Figure 5.4), asking ‘Yes’ and ‘No’, or dichotomous questions, where the numbers or codes are arbitrary and are just labeling devices, were used to establish facts like age, gender and place of residence. The closed questions were useful in that they compelled respondents to provide specific answers thus acting as funneling or sorting devices (*ibid*: 250).

*Figure 5.4: an example of nominal scales from Questionnaire 2.*

7] Are you a resident of Chatsworth?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 2
10.1] Is your newspaper a weekly production?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> 1	No <input type="checkbox"/> 2

Ordinal scales were utilised to rate and rank items and to distinguish order, for example, rank-order questions (please see Figure 5.5) which identified options from which respondents could choose in order of priority. This was followed by open-ended questions that required respondents to justify their replies to the rank-order questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2001: 253).

Figure 5.5: an example of a rank-order question from Questionnaire 1.

7] Which of the following community newspapers do you read regularly and which do you look at occasionally? Tick all that apply to you.			
	<b>Regularly</b>		<b>Occasionally</b>
1. <i>The Rising Sun</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1		<input type="checkbox"/> 1
2. <i>The Chatsworth Tabloid</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2		<input type="checkbox"/> 2
3. <i>Chatsworth Sun Shopper</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 3		<input type="checkbox"/> 3
4. <i>The Express</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5		<input type="checkbox"/> 5

The Likert<sup>12</sup> (1932) Scale, (please see Figure 5.6) provides a range of responses to a given question or statement to which respondents indicate their degree of preference for different items.

Figure 5.6: an example of a Likert Scale from Questionnaire 1.

10.6] The quality of a mainstream newspaper differs greatly from that of a community newspaper. Choose only one option.	
1. Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
2. Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
3. Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
4. Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Figure 5.7: an example of an open-ended question from Questionnaire 1.

10.1] State the section of the community newspaper that you find most interesting and give a brief reason for your response.
10.7] Provide reasons for your response to 10.6
10.10] In your opinion, how can community newspapers make a greater contribution to the upliftment of the community?

<sup>12</sup> Named after Rensis Likert (1932), a respected academic researcher, this scale used in questionnaires provides three to seven options for respondents to choose from in order to indicate levels of preference (Picciano, 2004: 24).

The small scale of the research also made the use of open-ended questions (please see Figure 5.7) an attractive window of opportunity, inviting honest and candid personal comment. These usually followed closed questions. Sufficient space was provided below the open-ended questions for the free expression of ideas (*ibid*: 256). Open questions place fewer restrictions on the expression of opinion but they are more difficult to analyse (Preece, 1994: 109).

#### *5.8.1.1 The Questionnaire for Learners*

This Questionnaire for Learners, (please refer to Annexure A: Questionnaire 1) was designed to ascertain the media habits of the respondents, with specific reference to community newspapers. This was completed at the early stages of the intervention to inform the design and implementation of classroom activities. Towards the conclusion of the first lesson, learners were allowed to complete the questionnaire at home where there were no time constraints. The sample used had been informed as to why the research was being conducted and were told that there was no obligation to fill in the questionnaire; that they would not be judged by their comments and opinions and should therefore feel free to respond as honestly as possible. Also, strict confidentiality would be maintained. I provided guidance prior to the process of completing the questionnaire and as a result learners handled the questions with little difficulty and were willing to participate from the outset.

The Questionnaire for Learners was made up of seven pages and ten questions, some further broken down into sub-questions. Closed, factual questions were used to obtain personal information like name, residential address and parents'/ guardians' occupations. Banded questions were asked to gather further personal details like age; dichotomous questions enquired about parents and gender and some aspects of their newspaper reading habits. Other types of questions were multiple-choice, rank-order and open-ended questions and Likert Scales which focused on the newspaper reading habits of the sample and were outlined earlier in this Chapter.

### 5.8.1.2 The Questionnaire and Semi-structured Interview for the Managing Editors

The Questionnaire for the managing editors (please refer to Annexure B: Questionnaire 2) was a precursor to the semi-structured interviews that were planned to be conducted with the managing editors of the three major community newspapers in Chatsworth, *The Rising Sun*, *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *Chatsworth Express*. An interview schedule (please refer to Annexure C) was drawn up for this purpose. The Questionnaire and Interview with the managing editors were intended to elicit information regarding the history, ownership, production, distribution and other dynamics related to community newspapers in Chatsworth. In keeping with ethical considerations, the name of the person completing the questionnaire and being interviewed was not revealed.

The Questionnaire consisted of five pages and comprised of twenty-one questions with some further divided into sub-questions. Here too, factual questions were used to gather personal information like name and experience in field. Banded questions (please see Figure 5.8) were used to ascertain age and qualifications while dichotomous questions focused on gender and place of residence and as a funneling question for other administrative aspects of running a newspaper. A comprehensive factual question was included to elicit information about newspaper personnel. A number of open-ended questions were also included with sufficient space given for free responses.

Figure 5.8: an example of banded questions from Questionnaire 2.

4. Age: 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 30-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 40-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 50-60 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 60+ <input type="checkbox"/> 5
5. Formal Qualifications: Matric <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Post-Matric <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Post-Graduate <input type="checkbox"/> 3

The Questionnaire for the managing editors was supplemented by the semi-structured or standardised open-ended interview (Cohen *et al*, 2001: 271) (please refer to Annexure C) in order to gather further data.

The Semi-structured Interview was a free-ranging account; nevertheless, a schedule was prepared to give direction to the interview. The Interview can be considered to be an extension of the survey for the managing editors of the community newspapers as it was intended to complement the information elicited from the Questionnaire. The Interview (please see Annexure C2) may have been an appropriate way to ascertain a perspective of

a particular genre of media, in this case, but the interview statements become sources of information only through analysis and interpretation, although there has been the suggestion that a highly competent interview may stand fully interpreted when it ends (Kvale, 1996: 189). That claim can be made about the interview with the Founder and Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun* which was used to provide in-depth information about the newspaper in Chapter 4. According to Gunter (2002: 215) face-to-face interviews represent the most efficient form of survey administration as data collection and analysis can sometimes be done simultaneously.

The Interview for the managing editors consisted of six broad questions aimed at all the editors. A further five questions were designed specifically for the Founder/ Managing Editor of the largest of the community newspapers circulating in Chatsworth, *The Rising Sun*. The questions specifically with *The Rising Sun* in mind were designed after researching the background to the newspaper, and observing the reporting of developments in the media like the purchase of Caxton's stake in *The Rising Sun* stable and their planned exit from the Community Press Association (CPA). In drawing up the interview schedule, I tried not to duplicate the questions asked in the Questionnaire although some overlap was unavoidable. Had all three editors been interviewed, they would have been asked the first six questions in the same order, increasing the comparability of responses and facilitating the organisation and analysis of data. However, the fact that there was only one respondent in this regard, the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*, altered the method of data analysis.

The responses were merely recorded, using shorthand and abbreviations on the Interview Schedule. In order to ensure that the respondent was at ease, the Interview was not electronically recorded. Notes, taken as accurately as possible, were then transcribed, analysed and used in the writing of the Literature Review (please see Figure 5.9 and Annexure C1 and 2) and Chapter 4.

Figure 5.9: an extract from the Interview Schedule for managing editors.

**Interview Schedule**

1. Please provide a brief history of your newspaper.
2. Who owns the newspaper? Give a brief overview of how the newspaper is funded.

Although time-consuming to design, administer and analyse, the research components outlined above were intended primarily to elicit background information on the sample of learners and their newspaper reading habits, the managing editors and their community newspapers. Also important was the evaluation by learners at the conclusion of the Community Newspaper Project. This evaluation was integrated into the lesson design and is outlined next.

### 5.8.1.3 The Evaluation Form for Learners

In order to consolidate the Community Newspaper Project, learners completed an Evaluation Form which constituted part of the final lesson plan (please see Annexure D9 for the full Evaluation Form). The Evaluation Form consisted of seven scaled questions and one multiple-choice question designed to evaluate the Community Newspaper Project. A full description of the Evaluation Form and the analysis thereof will follow in Chapter 7 and 8 respectively. Figure 5.10 below is an example of a scaled question from the Evaluation Form.

Figure 5.10: an extract from the Evaluation Form for Learners.

6] The research Project has changed my attitude to Chatsworth community newspapers.				
1.Strongly agree 2.Tend to agree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4.Tend to disagree 5. Strongly disagree				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Annexure D6)

### 5.8.2 Participant observation during the lesson intervention

Case study research and action research are synonymous with the promotion of critical discourses. The qualitative aspects of such research, though difficult to analyse, were valuable in gauging the effectiveness of a pedagogy that combines Critical Literacy theories and media. Since the greater part of the intervention was made up of lessons designed to empower participants through research involvement one of the main instruments of qualitative research, participant observation constituted the key form of data collection on which conclusions would be based.

Observation is the continuous and long-term presence, normally of one researcher, and generally in one delimited locale. An observer is able to emphatically become the central instrument of research relying on several sensory registers and on diverse media information. Documentation is crucial for the ongoing collection and analysis of data and for transparency in respect of the steps from an initial observation to a later conclusion. What observation accomplishes is 'thick description' which implies a detailed analysis of a setting in order to establish the implications of people do or say (Jensen, 2003: 242). As mentioned earlier, in the Community Newspaper Project, discussion boxes have been created from field notes to present a clear sense of the development of the Project and to contribute to a 'thick description' of the context.

Observation studies have continued to face special problems of documentation; however, hand-written field notes are the natural focus, the writing of which has few consensual procedures. In the past few decades, more attention has been given to the methodical documentation of field records. Jensen (2002: 243) cites Burgess (1982) as distinguishing three kinds of field notes:

1. Substantive notes, which capture representations of the scene under study;
2. Logistical notes, which add information about the circumstances under which these data are gathered;
3. Reflexive notes which initiate the process of analysis and theorising on the basis of observations and other data.

In my field notes I focused on the substance (what) and the logistics (how) first and reserved the main reflexive activity (why) for a later stage in the research process. Field notes must not be seen as self-contained representations but as working documents (Jensen, 2002: 243).

I chose to write notes rather than to use a dictaphone or other recording device as I found that the writing also stimulated thought. I believed that the presence of a recording device would prevent uninhibited responses from respondents. Thus, learners' interesting and relevant verbal responses during discussions were recorded in a journal, which was kept to document observations during the lessons and tasks. Sometimes cursory notes were

made which were later elaborated on with fuller accounts<sup>13</sup>. As already explained, the responses and notes were used to formulate discussion boxes that provided a better sense of the narrative.

I followed guidelines developed by Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein (1997: 73) on how field notes should be kept by recording the date, time, place of observation; page numbers to maintain order; specific facts, numbers, details of the contextual factors at the time; personal responses and reflections and specific words, idiosyncrasies, summaries of conversations and insider language. Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein (1997) also suggest that the four major parts of field notes, namely, jottings, description, analysis and reflection be kept distinct from one another when writing. These four parts were used as headings when devising the observation chart to structure the process of recording field notes (please see Figure 5.11). Since the space was not sufficient on the chart, separate pages were attached and the headings highlighted according to the colours outlined in the Observation Chart, for example, “Jottings” was highlighted in pink. The recording of field notes in this manner made the process of data analysis uncomplicated.

*Figure 5.11: headings from the Observation Chart.*

<b>Observation Chart</b>					
Date/Day <sup>14</sup>	Phase/Segment	Jottings	Description	Analysis	Reflection
Time/Session	Lesson No.	Pink	Blue	Green	Yellow

As far as the respondents are concerned, written responses to tasks and sources and creative efforts were filed and subsequently analysed after each encounter with the research sample. Learners also kept a media portfolio in which copies of newspapers, notes, worksheets and other relevant sources were filed for their own use.

The researcher is integrally involved in case-study investigations. In the ‘natural’ environment of the school classroom it is difficult for the researcher not to act as participant. Therefore, most studies in a natural setting are unstructured participant

<sup>13</sup> In keeping with present research protocol at the University of KwaZulu- Natal the research data which is constituted mainly of questionnaires, observation charts and interviews records will be stored at the School of Languages, Literacies and Media Education in the Faculty of Education for a period of five years.

<sup>14</sup> This ‘Day’ does not refer to the days of the week but rather to the day according to the timetable, for example, Day 1, Day 2, through to Day 7).

observation studies (Bailey, 1978). In the Community Newspaper Project, my role as participant observer was as a facilitator. I designed lessons and tasks within a Critical Literacy framework in the English Primary Language classroom using community newspapers. In observation studies, investigators are able to discern ongoing behaviour as it occurs and are able to make appropriate notes about its salient features. Bayat's (2003) thesis is an example of a local researcher who has used this approach in her Leaflet action research Project which was also conducted in the context of the English Primary Language classroom at a KwaZulu-Natal school.

Lessons were prepared on lesson plan forms (please see Annexure D1-9) adapted from the template contained in the *Educator Guide to Phase in OBE into FET* (DoE, 2002: 49). It must be noted that the lesson plan format used here followed the exemplar provided prior to the introduction of the *NCS* (2003). Lesson 'Objectives' which I used in the planning of lessons at the time of the Project have been replaced with 'Learner Outcomes' and Assessment Standards with the implementation of the *NCS* in the FET phase in 2006. I modified the lesson plans retrospectively to include Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards for English Home Language to make them more relevant in accordance with the *National Curriculum Statement for English Home Language* (DoE, 2003). Figure 5.12, is an extract from Lesson Plan 6 which incorporated all four Learning Outcomes. The corresponding Assessment Standards are also indicated.

Figure 5.12: an extract from Lesson Plan 6.

Learner Outcomes	Assessment Standards
1. Listening and Speaking	1.1 Learn about and share ideas.
2. Reading and Viewing	1.4 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others.
3. Writing and Presenting	1.5 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.
4. Language	2. 1 Scan texts for supporting details.
	2.2 Summarise main and supporting ideas.
	3. Locate, select, organise and integrate information.
	4.1 Develop editing skills.
	4.2 Develop Critical Language Awareness: analyse how implicit and explicit messages, values and attitudes reflect the position of the speaker.

(Annexure D6)

In general, case study observations take place over an extended period of time. As a result researchers can develop more intimate and informal relationships with those they are observing, generally in more natural environments than those in which experiments and surveys are conducted (Bailey, 1978). Nevertheless, conducting the Project was not smooth sailing as there were a number of constraints and limitations that were encountered.

### **5.9 Constraints and limitations associated with the Community Newspaper Project**

One of the limitations mentioned at the outset of this Chapter is that while the findings of the Project can be used as an impetus for further research, the decision to use a small, manageable sample meant that conclusions drawn cannot be generalisable to the wider population.

As far as the learners involved in the Project were concerned, one of the main challenges arose from the fact that Critical Literacy discourses at the level of English teaching are still not the dominant discourses in the classroom. Having not yet acquired the necessary discursive space and institutional power, Critical Literacy can be termed as ‘emergent’ because it is not generally viewed as what counts as commonsense about literacy. In other words, it has not yet attained the status of orthodoxy. In order to gain more ground Critical Literacy will have to evolve out of other more ‘commonsense’ forms of mainstream literacy (West, 1990: 83).

Therefore, Critical Literacy was dependent on learners' prior engagement with mainstream literacy practices. It is only as such that Critical Literacy can be made accessible to all learners (Macken-Horarik, 1998: 78).

With learners at Community Secondary having no prior engagement with Critical Literacy, the mainstream discourses pertaining to the pedagogy of English as a primary language at KwaZulu-Natal schools was used as a point of departure to analyse the texts before learners were invited to critique them. Thus, one of the aspects to direct this study was the *KZN English Primary Language Syllabus for the Senior Secondary Phase* (2003).

In addition to introducing a new pedagogy to learners, another factor militating against the completion of the Project, as indicated earlier in this Chapter was the limited interaction with the research sample in 2003. The reality was that the desire for good matriculation results by most secondary schools manifests itself long before learners reach Grade 12. In the Grade 11 year, pressure was placed on both learners and educators to complete the extensive syllabi in many subjects by the end of the Third Term as Grade 12 work commenced in the Fourth Term, (during October) in certain subjects. As a result time from other subject teachers for purposes of my research was not viable. Time after school and weekends too was out of the question as learners were involved in extra tuition in various subjects. Also, lunch breaks could not be used, as the majority of the class was made up of prefects who had to report to duty points during that time. These contextual factors meant that at the outset I had to cope with just the one LRE period every nine school days and the subsequent deferment of the Project to 2004.

As far as access to the editors of the three main community newspapers circulating in Chatsworth was concerned the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun* was the most approachable and accommodating. Telephonic arrangements were made to have the questionnaire completed and the interview conducted. I was treated in a professional manner, with respect and my research was afforded the seriousness it deserved during all my interactions with the editor and his staff. However, I encountered difficulty with the Managing Editors of *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express* who failed to respond to my persistent efforts for them to contribute to the research Project. In keeping with the principles of research, from an ethical point of view, the managing editors were under no obligation to assist with the research and could not be coerced into filling in the questionnaires or granting me an interview (Cohen *et al*, 2001: 245). Since the absence of data from the two editors would not have a significant impact on the progress of the Project, I decided that the information that I had gathered about *The Rising Sun* was sufficient to illustrate how a Chatsworth community newspaper operated.

Despite the delays caused by various factors mentioned above, the curriculum intervention was administered as efficiently as possible.

## 5.10 Reflections

This Chapter has highlighted in detail the research methodology that was employed in the mediation between myself as researcher and the various other role players in the Community Newspaper Project. In Chapters 6 and 7, the application in the field of the method and instruments will be illustrated in a narrative style that is intended to show how the classroom intervention developed. The data collected through questionnaires, interviews, observations and lesson tasks during the classroom intervention were evaluated and analysed in order to present this narrative and later in Chapter 8 to draw conclusions, establish findings, and encourage further engagement with critical discourses and the media.

The analysis of learner questionnaires was completed prior to the classroom intervention so as to direct the design of the lessons. The relevant research instruments for quantitative data analysis were developed for the assessment, evaluation, and analysis of questionnaires and interviews. These include summary sheets that were simultaneously prepared with the surveys for the analysis of specific responses. While the summary sheets were vital in the analysis of Questionnaire 1 for the Learners, given that only one of three expected responses was retrieved from the managing editors, the use of a summary sheet for Questionnaire 2 was not necessary.

As far as the analysis of qualitative data is concerned, field notes and the content analysis of responses to lessons and classroom activities were elaborated on in detail after each lesson. This was a vital process in capturing the setting, views, nuances, idiosyncrasies and other variables that formed a unique part of each lesson. These notes and reflections would contribute to the rich descriptions in Chapters 6 and 7 which provide an in-depth discussion of the Project design.

The main challenge of this Project for me as a researcher has been mediating the ideal and the reality especially in completing specific tasks within the projected periods. In Figure 5.3 I refer to *an ideal scenario* specifically regarding the dates of the Project. Adhering to the time frames outlined in Figure 5.3 was not possible. The classroom

intervention alone was conducted over a period, from August 2003 to March 2004. In theory also, many lessons were designed with a series of activities intended to be completed within a lesson; however, the reality was rather different and certain tasks had to be excluded. As a researcher, I had to use my judgment to leave out tasks that would not affect the realisation of the objectives of the Project in any way. Such issues will be included in the discussion in subsequent chapters. While the classroom intervention is elucidated in detail in Chapters 6 and 7, data analysis and reporting findings will be covered in Chapter 8.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE BEGINNING OF THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PROJECT

#### 6.1 Introduction

This Chapter describes the practical application of the methodology outlined in Chapter 5 and the execution of the Critical Literacy theories and ideas discussed in Chapter 3. In this Chapter and in Chapter 7, I illustrate how design and implementation occurred at every level of the action research case study in phases and segments. By the time I began the research Project I had already secured a database of various kinds of local and international newspapers that would assist learners with Phase 2 of the Curriculum Intervention (please see Figure 6.1) and had designed and printed the questionnaires for learners as well as managing editors. In addition, I had reached an advanced stage with regard to research of the various Critical Literacy theories that formed the theoretical basis of the Project. These were used to structure the different lessons that would comprise the Curriculum Intervention. Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, focus on Stage 2, *The Implementation of the Research Project* (please see Figure 5.3 in Chapter 5), and are based on the ‘Jottings’ and ‘Description’ recorded on the Observation Chart while Chapter 8 focuses on the ‘Analysis’ and ‘Reflections’ aspects of the Chart.

Chapter 5 demonstrated how some of the design features unfolded in the preparation for the Community Newspaper Project. The *Preliminary Plan of Activities* (please see Figure 5.2) served as a precursor to the first step, *The Implementation of the Stages of the Project*. The implementation of the Project in phases and segments (please see Figure 6.1 on the following page) illustrates the step-by-step development of the classroom intervention of the Community Newspaper Project using Critical Literacy principles. The activities and tasks that respondents were expected to complete were concentrated at this stage of the Project. In this Chapter, I examine Phase 1 of *Phases and segments of the Community Newspaper Project* (please see Figure 6.1). This phase was divided into four segments, entitled: Setting the Scene: A Rationale; Understanding Critical Literacy; Fairy tales, and Consolidation, which were spread over six sessions during the latter half of 2003.

## 6.2 The Implementation of the Curriculum Intervention in Phases and Segments

Here I outline the Community Newspaper Project which comprised the first part of Stage 2 of Figure 5.3 illustrated in Chapter 5 and forms the core of the research Project. This was undertaken in four phases and further broken down into segments as pointed out in Figure 6.1 below.

*Figure 6.1: phases and segments of the Community Newspaper Project.*

<b>Phase 1: Orientation</b>
Segment 1: Setting the Scene: A Rationale
Segment 2: Understanding Critical Literacy
Segment 3: Fairy Tales
<b>Phase 2: Deconstruction (Interrogating Texts)</b>
Segment 1: International and local newspapers
Segment 2: Community newspapers: using Fairclough's 3-D model for Critical Discourse Analysis
(i) Discourse as text
(ii) Discursive practice: text production, text distribution, text consumption
(iii) Social practice: examining social and cultural contexts
<b>Phase 3: Analysis of Sources from Community Newspapers (Theme: Beauty Contests)</b>
Segment 1: Beauty Contests in general
Segment 2: Miss India South Africa
Segment 3: Community Newspaper Pageants for young girls
<b>Phase 4: Consolidation</b>

The theoretical framework and policy for English as a First Language<sup>1</sup> as outlined by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, and also discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, informed the pedagogical aspects of this study.

Lesson plans, based on a format contained in a DoE document entitled *Phasing in OBE into the FET Band: Managing Transition: Languages: (2002-2005)* (2002), were compiled for each segment of each phase (please see Annexure D 1-9 for full lesson plans and attached sources). Relevant resources and worksheets for each phase were prepared in advance to supplement the lesson plans. Figure 6.2 (please see Annexure D2)

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<sup>1</sup> The terminology used to refer to First Languages offered at schools has recently evolved. First languages, also referred to as Primary Languages, have, since the implementation of the NCS in 2005, been termed Home Languages. The focus of this study is therefore English Home Language. In addition to Home Languages, the Languages Learning Field is made up of First Additional Languages (Second languages) and Second Additional Languages (Third Languages) (DoE, 2003: *NCS Grades 10-12: Languages: 9-11*).

below is an extract from Lesson Plan 2 outlining all the resources used for that lesson. This and other lessons are described in detail later in this chapter.

Figure 6.2: an extract from Lesson Plan 2.

<b>Resources</b>
1. Media files
2. Worksheet: Foundations of Critical Literacy
3. List of Texts for 'Out of the Box' game: <i>Get Rich or Die Trying</i> (Fifty Cent, 2003) <i>English in Context</i> (Hendry et al, 2000) <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> (Lee, 2000) <i>Accents</i> (Chapman and Voss, 1994) <i>Nokia 2100</i> cellular phone <i>Macbeth</i> (Shakespeare, Stratford Series, 1991) Simba Sweet Chilli Fritos chips packet <i>Kelloggs Corn Flakes</i> box <i>Mail and Guardian</i> (25-31 July 2003) <i>Constitution of the Republic of S.A.</i> (1996) <i>The Rising Sun</i> (July 8-14/03) <i>Car Magazine</i> (July 2003) <i>Coca Cola</i> can

(Annexure D2)

As discussed in Chapter 5, field notes were recorded and observation charts (please see Figure 5.11) were completed during these sessions. Where written activities were completed by the learners during the lessons these were collected and evaluated after each lesson with the intention of drawing inferences. 'Jottings' were recorded during the lessons while the 'Description', 'Analysis' and 'Reflections' were written immediately after each lesson. In reporting interactions between myself as facilitator and the respondents I used discussion boxes. Phase 1, and the various segments of which it is comprised, is described first.

### 6.2.1 Phase 1: Orientation to the Community Newspaper Project

This phase, which began at the beginning of August 2003, contained three segments: Segment 1: Setting the Scene: A Rationale, Segment 2: Understanding Critical Literacy, Segment 3: Fairy Tales. These segments were aimed at contextualising the Project and introducing learners to Critical Literacy theories and concepts. As already mentioned, I had only six sessions to complete this phase since I taught this class Library Resource Education (LRE) only once in a nine-day timetable cycle (explained in Chapter 5). The projected date for the last segment of this phase was 29/10/03, about a week before the

final examination was scheduled to commence.

#### *6.2.1.1 Segment 1: setting the scene: a rationale*

Segment 1 of Phase 1 commenced on 01/08/2003 during the period allocated for LRE on Day Nine of the timetable. LRE was a non-examinable subject conducted in the school's library and not in my teacher-based room where all my English lessons are taught. It was a session during which learners could borrow books for projects, assignments or for leisure reading or use reference books for research. Since the introduction of the *NCS* in 2005 this subject has been excluded from the curriculum.

Learners in the Grade 11A class had been prepared, in the weeks prior to the official commencement of the Project, as to the possibility of my conducting a research assignment similar to the media project I did with them when they were in Grade 10 (mentioned in Chapter 5), this time specifically on community newspapers. Many had expressed their willingness to participate in something different and exciting. When Grade 11A learners were informed that, just as in 2002, they had been chosen by me to participate in a media education project focusing on new and exciting methodology that would make the teaching and learning of English more meaningful, they expressed their excitement at the prospect of further engagement with media.

To begin with, the sample, as cited in Chapter 5, was made up of thirty-five learners. Initially, I had to ensure that the six African learners who were in the Grade 11A class in 2003, but had not been included in the 2002 project, were sufficiently orientated as far as media was concerned because I believed that this group of learners had a vital role to play in providing an alternative perspective on matters pertaining to Indians during the intervention. In this regard, I supplied copies of the Chatsworth community newspapers which were made available every week.

Segment 1 was made up of one lesson (please see Figure 6.3 below and Annexure D1 for the full lesson plan). The teacher and learner activities are listed in the extract below and a detailed description incorporating these activities will follow.

Figure 6.3: an extract from Lesson Plan 1.

	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learner's Activities</b>
1.	Introduce learners to Project.	1. Listen.
2.	Describe setting – Chatsworth.	2. Contribute to discussion.
3.	Discuss community media in Chatsworth. Discuss present pedagogy – invite learners to shift the focus.	3. Help set the ground rules for the Project.
4.	Negotiate ground rules including how groups are to be formed.	4. Negotiate with other learners regarding the formation of groups.
5.	Guide learners through questionnaire.	5. Complete questionnaire.

(Annexure D1)

Given the limited period in which we had to complete Phase 1 of the Project, the need for us to “get started” immediately, was emphasised. To provide respondents with the rationale for the Project, the classroom intervention began by utilising conventional pedagogy and methods, as Critical Literacy is dependent on students’ prior engagement with mainstream literacy practices, and, that within the school situation there is no way into Critical Literacy practices but through the mainstream (Macken-Horarik, 1998: 75). This was relevant mainly to the first two segments.

The majority of learners were reminded of the media project that I did with them the previous year to ascertain their media habits which revealed that many had access to community newspapers and that it was that fact which provided the impetus for the Project using Critical Literacy theories to work with community newspapers. Respondents, who were likely not to have heard of Critical Literacy theories before, were told that they were relatively new concepts in post-apartheid South Africa, but that they were already established theories in countries like England, USA, Australia, and Canada. These theories would be explained to them at a later stage. I drew a diagram on the chalkboard with Critical Literacy on one hand and community newspapers and media on the other to show the different aspects of the Project and how they would be linked. I explained that the Project would last the rest of the year and in all likelihood would continue into 2004 (Annexure F, 1/08/03: 1).

Next, I examined context, placing the Project within the framework of the South African ‘miracle’ that happened in 1994, which we needed to affirm in order to build the idea of democracy in action by being critical; that passive acceptance embodied apartheid

education and that the South African education system was in a historical period of transition of which we, as educators and learners, were part (*ibid*). The specific context of the school and Chatsworth was then examined. The following discussion box is based on the annotations from the field notes<sup>2</sup> and observation charts for 1/08/03:

Figure 6.4: Discussion Box 1 showing a conversation on context.

T-Let's look at Chatsworth. What do we know about this place?  
L1-It was a banana plantation.  
T-Yes, it was made up of a number of farms before people were relocated there as a result of the *Group Areas Act*.  
L2-Houses are close together.  
T- Yes, an example of apartheid town planning, like many other townships in South Africa. Streets are narrow, cobbled (paved) intended as footpaths, not for use by vehicles.  
L3-Rich and poor live together.  
L4-Rich in the main building and poor in the outhouses.  
T-Yes, some areas are more affluent than others. Also progress is noted as many have extended their original council houses to include granny flats while others remain poor.  
L5 - (African learner) - Mainly Indians.  
T-Yes, the largest settlement of Indians outside India and the races are not entirely mixed, like other townships in South Africa after apartheid ended, but there are parts of Chatsworth that are partly integrated: the Bayview area which has a large Zanzibari, community, the Bottlebrush area near Moorton and Crossmoor.

(Annexure F, 01/08/2003:1)

Within the framework of the discussion on context it was explained to learners that people living in Chatsworth or any other township in South Africa are not insulated from the media, that they live in a world bombarded by media: television, radio, magazines, information on cellular phones, billboards, internet and newspapers including community newspapers that are brought to our homes free of charge. Figure 6.5 provides an example of the discourse on community newspapers.

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<sup>2</sup> I did not want to take a recording device into the classroom as I believed that this would prevent learners from expressing themselves freely. I therefore tried to make as much notes as I could in my own form of creative shorthand and transcribed them fully after the lessons. This did become cumbersome and distracting at times.

Figure 6.5: Discussion Box 2 showing a conversation on Chatsworth community newspapers.

T- Why would someone take the trouble to print this newspaper and distribute it free of charge to the community?  
L1- “ 'Cos it's not for nothing!”  
T- What do you mean?  
L1-You told us last year when we did the other Project that newspapers make their money from the adverts in the newspapers and not from the actual cost of the newspaper.  
T-You have a good memory. All newspapers, including community newspapers, make their money from advertising space that is sold.  
L2-You're right, Ma'm, newspapers have more adverts than news!  
T-Very True. Now a full page advertisement for a large Sunday newspaper could cost tens of thousands of rands. I'll be telling you more about this from my own experiences as a journalist and columnist for Chatsworth's first community newspaper called *Chatsworth Sun* which was run by Argus Newspapers, a company that in my day also ran newspapers like *The Daily News* and *Sunday Tribune*. This company has been amalgamated into what is now called Independent Newspapers. When *Chatsworth Sun* closed there was a gap in the market for other community newspapers to be established and so you have newspapers like *The Rising Sun*, *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express*. All this we will discuss in greater detail when we deconstruct or analyse different kinds of newspapers.

(Annexure F, 01/08/2003: 2)

I thereafter invited learners to examine the manner in which English, in fact all their lessons, have been conducted with them over the years, even by me, in a largely teacher-centred manner. Figure 6.6, Discussion Box 3 (Annexure F, 01/08/2003: 2) was constructed from comments that were extracted from field notes.

Figure 6.6: Discussion Box 3 showing a conversation on the manner in which English is generally taught.

T - Let's examine the way in which your lessons, especially English are taught.  
L1- The teacher is the boss.  
L2- Teachers talk and tell you to do certain things and you have to listen.  
L3- Worksheets are handed out and you have to complete the exercises.  
L4- There are a lot of notes, especially in Literature. The teacher talks and explains and we take down notes.  
L5- We do get a chance to express our views and opinions, but we would like to do this more often. Teachers are always in a hurry to complete the syllabus.  
T- All of you as a class are, almost ten years after democracy began, part of a system that is being phased out. You have escaped Outcomes Based Education (OBE) but one of the things about the new OBE curriculum is that it is learner-centred? Since we are going to experiment with Critical Literacy theories which are mainly learner-centred, how do we shift the focus to the learner in this Project? (No response from learners.)  
T- The answer is mainly through group work.  
L6- Like the Grade 7's. My sister in Grade 7 says they do mainly group work.  
T- Yes, that's because your sister is following a new curriculum which is learner-centred. The teacher has to become a facilitator, that means you will be given various tasks and I will simply guide you through the process of completing those tasks... sometimes I'll make certain suggestions but essentially you will examine, discuss, question and debate amongst yourselves in groups ... and there are no right or wrong answers. The first two segments of this Project (this lesson and the next) are largely teacher-centred but when we begin Segment 3, we move to learner-centred lessons.

(Annexure F, 01/08/2003: 2)

Learners were then encouraged to try a simple exercise, in shifting the focus from the teacher to the learner, that entailed negotiating ground rules for the Project since time was at a premium. I emphasised that being organised would allow the Project to 'run smoothly'. The following were negotiated between myself and learners:

- learners were to report promptly to class,
- during group-work sessions learners agreed not to talk about unnecessary or unrelated matters,
- report-back sessions after group-work sessions should not exceed five minutes,
- written work, when given, should be submitted on time,
- Each learner would keep a media folder in which resource materials as well as samples of newspapers, particularly community newspapers, and notes would have to be filed. This could be any folder or file not in use. They need not have to purchase a new file (Annexure F, 01/08/2003: 3).

One learner enquired if this meant that there would be homework which precipitated a chorus of questions from others. The general view was that they already had a substantial amount of homework in other subjects and that if they were given more homework this would burden them further. Learners were given the assurance that most of the activities,

group or individual, should be completed during class time, although that would not always be possible as some lessons may not be concluded in a single session requiring the tasks to be completed at home, for example, filling in the questionnaire (the design of which was explained in Chapter 5).

I added that that they would have a reasonable time frame to complete the questionnaire as it was only due during the next session and that I would do my best not to increase their curricular workload. The learners seemed satisfied with my explanation. I went on to say that the discussion was a good start for teacher and learners to be able to negotiate certain aspects of classroom management so that “learner-centredness” could be achieved and that we needed to extend our negotiating skills to the composition of the groups for the Project. The class would have to be seated in their groups for the next lesson, the composition of which they were given *carte blanche* to decide.

I demonstrated to learners how the formation of groups, in itself, was a learner-centred activity. There were thirty-five learners, twenty-nine Indian and six African isiZulu speakers. Learners were free to constitute the groups in a manner they saw fit after adhering to the two non-negotiable factors, namely, that each group had to have an African isiZulu speaking learner and groups had to be formed with specified numbers (five groups of six and one group of five). The groups could be composed of friends, every fifth learner on the register, or they could pick numbers randomly out of a jar. I said that the method they chose really did not matter as long as it was democratically decided. Learners could enlist the assistance of their form teacher in this regard. The inclusion of an African isiZulu speaking learner in each group was to ensure that there were no homogenous groups. African learners would also have greater access to Chatsworth community newspapers from other group members over and above the ones they were receiving from me. Most important was that the African learners would be able to provide a fresh, independent perspective to each group on discourses pertaining mainly to the Indian community of Chatsworth.

Before the conclusion of the lesson I distributed the questionnaires (please see Annexure A), the design of which is described in Chapter 5, to learners. Although there was no set

ethical clearance policy of the University of KwaZulu-Natal at the time of embarking on the Project, respondents were, in accordance with ethical research practice of the time, informed of their choices when completing the Questionnaire for Learners. These included the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality, the fact that learners would not in any way be discriminated against for their responses, that respondents could withdraw from the Project at any time and choose not to complete the questionnaire if they so wished. No learner indicated that they did not want to participate. I thereafter guided respondents through the questions and told them to complete the questionnaire at home and that I would collect them the next time they had LRE, which gave them ample time, about two weeks to complete it. I required the questionnaires to provide me with guidelines for the planning of Phases 2 and 3.

#### *6.2.1.2 Segment 2: understanding Critical Literacy*

The next time I saw the 11A class was on 14/08/03, two weeks later, as two weekends fell within the nine-day cycle, a factor that I had little control over since, in 2003, I saw learners only once in a nine-day cycle. Segment 2 constituted two sessions outlined in Lesson Plans 2 and 3 (please see Annexure D2 and D3). Figure 6.7 below is an extract from Lesson Plan 2 which delineates the teacher and learner activities for Session 1 of Segment 1. The attainment of the objectives of the lesson was dependent on the completion of the activities listed below, a detailed account of which will follow:

Figure 6.7: an extract from Lesson Plan 2.

Teacher's Activities	Learner's Activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange learners in groups.</li> <li>2. Collect completed questionnaires.</li> <li>3. Discussion on 'What is a text?' using 'Out of the Box' game.</li> <li>4. Discuss: Foundations of Critical Literacy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding characteristics and features of different text types ;</li> <li>• framing and asking questions and clarifying values;</li> <li>• respecting opinions and beliefs (Please see Figure 1 below).</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Explain the concept of binary oppositions.</li> <li>6. Discuss values using the <i>Constitution</i> (1996) and the front page headline of <i>The Rising Sun</i>, "Hospital Sends AIDS Patient Home to Die" – <i>Claim</i> (July 8-14/03).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contribute to discussion.</li> <li>2. Form groups.</li> <li>3. Make brief, meaningful notes.</li> <li>4. Help formulate binary oppositions.</li> <li>5. Use texts provided to grasp basic concepts of Critical Literacy.</li> </ol>

(Annexure D2)

When the class entered the library I asked learners to sit in their newly formed groups. Since the tables in the Library were already arranged in such a manner that learners could be seated in groups of six, I had no need to re-arrange furniture at that stage<sup>3</sup>. Learners took about five minutes to settle. I had made visits to the 11A form room during the course of the week to remind learners to have their questionnaires completed and for the groups to be formed. In this regard I enlisted the assistance of the form teacher of the class.

Two learners who were absent<sup>4</sup> for the day were catered for in groups. I enquired what criterion was used to form the groups, and as anticipated of a group of seventeen-year-olds, I was told 'friends'. I had no problem with the manner in which the groups were formed and was pleased to observe that each of the isiZulu learners, who did not have access to the Chatsworth community newspapers, were catered for and the gender balance seemed fair considering that there were fewer boys to start with. I expressed my

<sup>3</sup> Although to start with I did not have to re-arrange the library, when the Project resumed in 2004 during English lessons that were conducted in my classroom I had to re-organise the space in a democratic manner in keeping with Critical Literacy practices. As a teacher who tried to embrace the curriculum changes that began with the introduction of OBE, the desks in my classroom were already arranged in a "U" shape that easily suited the differing curriculum needs of the grades that I taught. However, for the purposes of the curriculum intervention during Term 1 of 2004, the desks were rearranged to allow for group work.

<sup>4</sup> The outstanding questionnaires were retrieved from learners when they returned to school.

gratitude to learners for forming their groups in such a problem-free manner and for completing the questionnaires which I collected from all those who were present.

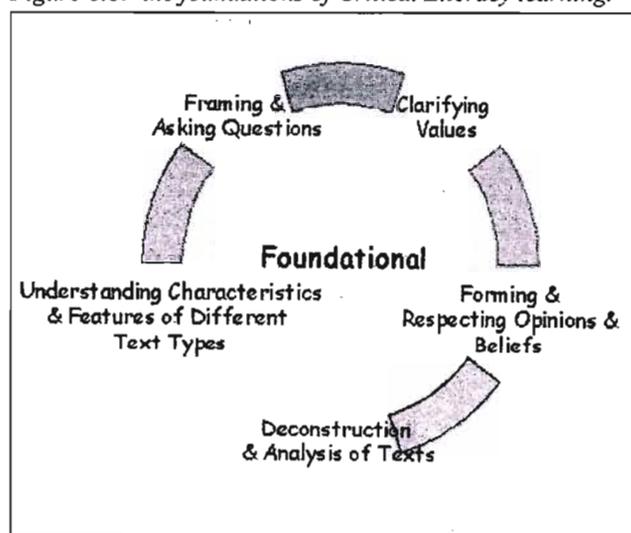
Respondents were asked for their views on completing the questionnaire and the following were some of the responses:

- L1-Similar to the last time.
- L2-Gave me a better idea of newspapers.
- L3-Didn't like the questions where I had to write long answers.
- L4-I was forced to think (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 4).

Learners were told that they would receive feedback regarding their responses at the beginning of Phase 2 on the Deconstruction of the newspapers.

With the groups settled, I moved on to the task of signposting Critical Literacy and its related theories, which were contextualised with Figure 6.8 (Broomhall, 2002: 2) below being used as a point of departure. In order to mediate the various concepts to the age group various resources were taken into the classroom to get learners to visualise and concretise these concepts (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 4).

Figure 6.8: the foundations of Critical Literacy learning.



(Broomhall, 2002: 2)

Figure 6.8 above, (copies were given to each learner), was used to illustrate the foundational tenets of Critical Literacy learning to the class. The discussion of the starting point on the cycle: “Understanding Characteristics and Features of Different Text Types” focused on brief and uncomplicated explanations of the concepts of *text* and

*genre* using a simple game I had designed called ‘Out of the Box’, which entailed placing different kinds of texts into a box that was usually filled with reams of duplicating paper. The basis of the game was that I was able to predict the way learners thought and would ultimately respond.

The texts included copies of the texts that Grade 11 learners were studying that year: *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Lee, 1960), *Macbeth* (Shakespeare, Stratford Series, 1991), *Accents* (Chapman and Voss, 1994), and *English in Context: Book 5* (Hendry *et al*, 2000). In addition, I made a selection of contemporary texts that I thought would peak the interest of a group of teenagers. Much thought had gone into choosing the other texts which were part of the daily reality of learners and also a source of interest to various groups within the class. I knew that some of the boys in the class were passionate about cars, hence the copy of *Car Magazine* (July, 2003), equally popular among boys and girls was American Rap artist ‘50 Cent’ and his debut album at the time *Get Rich Or Die Trying* (G-Unit Records, 2003). One of the few brands of soft drink that was sold in the school’s tuck-shop was *Coca-Cola* because learners would rarely purchase anything else. Also, during the lunch breaks learners could be observed carrying packets of a popular snack, *Simba Sweet Chilli Fritos* chips. Among other texts I also included a copy of the *Mail and Guardian* (25-31 July 2003) as I knew that many learners did not have access to this respected newspaper and I wanted learners to be exposed to it. In understanding ‘text’ and the fact that it was not restricted to the medium of print, learners simultaneously worked with the concept of ‘genre’ which is central to Critical Literacy.

The class was told that we were going to play a simple game called, ‘Out of the Box’. I explained the ambiguity of the name of the game at the outset: Texts would literally be taken ‘Out of the Box’ and in order to understand what texts were, one had to think ‘Out of the Box’, in other words, one had to think laterally<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Lateral thinking’ is a term that was coined by Edward de Bono in 1967. Lateral thinking is about reasoning that is not immediately obvious and about generating ideas that do not use only step-by-step logic. A person can use lateral thinking when they want to move from one known idea to creating new ideas (de Bono, 1990).

Discussion Box 4 (please see Figure 6.9 below) and Discussion Box 5 (please see Figure 6.10 on the following page) illustrate how learners extended their understanding of text and genre.

Figure 6.9: Discussion Box 4 showing a conversation on text.

- T- What is a text? What does the word text mean. How can we define 'text'?
- L1- A book.
- L2- A text book.
- L3- *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Lee, 1960), (I took the novel out of the box and held it up).
- L4- *Macbeth* (Shakespeare, Stratford Series, 1991) (I did the same with this text).
- L5- *English in Context* (Hendry et al, 2000) (I picked that text out of the box too- laughter at the synchronicity of the learners' comments and my actions) (Silence).
- T- Why did you stop? We were doing so well with our 'Out of the Box' game.
- L6- Our poetry book (to which I reacted by holding up *Accents* (Chapman and Voss, 1994).
- L7- Newspapers and magazines (I raised the two newspapers and the magazine mentioned above). (Silence again).
- T- This box still has more texts. What other genre or kinds of texts are in the box?
- L3- We give up Ma'm, show us.  
(I hold up the compact disc *Get Rich Or Die Trying* (50 Cent, G-Unit Records, 2003), to the excitement of most of the class, especially the boys. A group starts to sing a chorus from one of the tracks off the album, *In da Club*).
- T- Thank you for that wonderful rendition (referring to the group that started singing) but can we move on now? This is a text people (holding up the compact disc) and all the other music you may listen to and the movies you watch.
- L4- Then, Ma'm, why can't we study '50 Cent' instead of Shakespeare?
- T- Well, Karthi, you still have to study Shakespeare but nothing stops us from studying the lyrics of a '50 Cent' track in the Language and Comprehension component of the syllabus. In fact you could examine aspects of any one of these kinds of texts (I proceeded to pick my *Nokia 2100* cellphone, a packet of *Simba Sweet Chilli Fritos* chips, a can of *Coca-Cola*, an empty *Kellogg's Corn Flakes* box, out of the box). We could take a text message from the cellphone, the labels of the chips packet, *Coca-Cola* can and corn flakes box and study them as texts. Even signs, photographs, works of art, can all qualify as texts. The list is actually quite endless. I'm sure that now you understand that a text is much more than a textbook or a newspaper.
- L3- Ma'm, what else is in the box?
- T- The box is almost empty. There is just one other text that we are going to use just now.

(Annexure F, 14/08/03: 5)

After discussing 'text' the discussion progressed to examining the concept of genre, with their prescribed literary texts used as a point of departure learners were able to perceive

the genre that different kinds of conventional texts fell into. The categorisation became blurred when it came to deciding what genre the cans, chips packet and corn flakes box belonged to.

Figure 6.10: Discussion Box 5 showing a conversation on genre.

T- Earlier, I used the word GENRE (I write the word on the chalkboard), does anyone know what the word means?  
(silence)  
L8- I think you said it was 'kind'.  
T- Yes. It means 'kind' or 'category' or type. If we have to look at your prescribed Literature texts, what 'kind' of text or 'genre' is *To Kill a Mockingbird*?  
L8- It's a novel.  
T- Correct. Now what genre is this? I raise the copy of *Macbeth*?  
(no response) You see the genre written in your Literature tests and examination papers.  
L8- Is it Shakespeare?  
T- I suppose you could say that, but the genre is Drama. What other genres do you study in Literature? In other words what other sections make up your Literature syllabus?  
L9- Poetry and Short Stories.  
T- That's right. Now I think you seem to be getting 'genre'. (I raise the newspapers) What genre is this?  
Learners- (in chorus) Newspaper.  
T- Yes, but specifically 'print media'. Let's look at both the newspapers (I raise the *Mail and Guardian* (25-31 July 2003) newspaper, and *The Rising Sun* (July 18-14, 2003, with the front pages facing the learners), Each newspaper falls within a specific newspaper genre. Does anyone know?  
L8- *The Rising Sun* is a community newspaper.  
T- Correct, and the other?  
L8- Not sure.  
T- Anyone (no response). Well, it is a weekly mainstream newspaper. In other words appealing to a wider readership, not just a specific community. You will work with the different mainstream and community newspaper when you start analysing newspapers in detail. Even the newspaper itself can be divided into sub-genres.  
L9- Horoscopes.  
L3- Sports.  
L1- Cartoons.  
T- Yes. I think now you have the idea of what genre is. What about the cans, chips packet and corn flakes box? What genre could we place them in?

(Annexure F, 14/08/03: 6)

The exploration of the concepts of 'text' and 'genre', the first foundation, through the

'Out of the Box' game, proved to be a successful idea<sup>6</sup>. The texts that I packed into the box were not randomly selected. I pre-empted the initial responses of the learners in the selection of their prescribed textbooks for the year and felt like a magician as learners called out the titles of texts and I drew them out of the box. This was a source of amusement for learners as the class was able to have fun and learn about texts at the same time. An analysis of these discourses on 'text' and 'genre' is undertaken in Chapter 8.

The second aspect of Broomhall's (2002) 'Foundations of Critical Literacy Learning', "Framing and Asking Questions" highlighted the formulation of relevant questions on specific texts which is the essence of schooling, as they are used as assessment tools to establish learners' understanding of various knowledge systems. These questions are usually framed and asked by examiners and teachers, however, since Critical Literacy is a learner-centred theory, learners needed to ask pertinent questions in order to deconstruct texts to assist understanding (*ibid*).

'Clarifying Values' was examined by using the highest law of the land, *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), and the example of binary oppositions (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 7) to illustrate that each individual has a set of values or principles that he or she will try to uphold and live by. I retrieved *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996) out of the box and commented that it was the text that embodied all the fundamental values that governed the everyday lives of all South Africans. I then read the fourth point contained in the *Preamble to the Constitution*: "We the people of South Africa, ...Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity" (*The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996: 1) (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 7). This was, in my opinion, an important opportunity for me to address the diversity of the sample and their different cultural values and beliefs that they would bring to the analysis of the texts from the community newspapers and the values that those texts exemplified.

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<sup>6</sup> Thorough preparation went a long way to ensuring a successful lesson. Having all the resources ready for the lesson before learners arrived indicated a well-prepared teacher and researcher and so the message was involuntarily conveyed that I was serious about the Project and so learners too had to approach it with the seriousness it deserved.

To explore that idea, I called on learners to look around at their friends in the class in order to affirm the different values inherent in South African society and to contribute to a list of binary oppositions which I drew on the chalkboard in two columns. Binary oppositions (please see Figure 6.11 below) formed part of the structure of meaning-making where differences are organised according to systematic oppositions (Branston and Stafford, 2002: 37).

Figure 6.11: binary oppositions to show differences among classmates.

Indian	African
Hindi	Tamil
Christian	Hindu
isiZulu	English
Girls	Boys
fair- skinned	dark- skinned
Tall	short
Moslem	Hindu

(Annexure F, 14/08/03: 7)

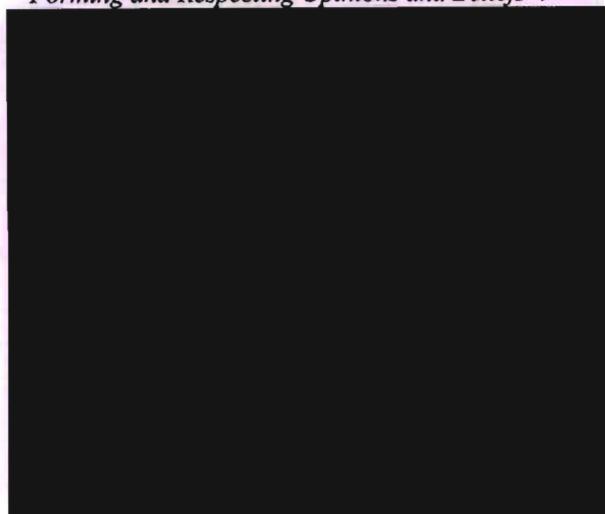
The example of the binary opposition of a ‘Moslem’ and ‘Hindu’ learner was then used to show how each of us embodies specific values, for example, a Moslem learner may not eat pork because it is believed to be ‘haraam’ (against the teachings of Islam) while a Hindu learner may not eat beef as the cow is considered to be sacred, or, may not eat meat at all as some Hindus are vegetarian. An analogy was then drawn between a person and a text, that just as every individual contains several values that make him or her unique, so too do texts contain values since they are constructed by people (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 7). To illustrate this further, a brief discussion was conducted on the front page headline of *The Rising Sun* (July 8-14/03), “Hospital Sends AIDS Patient Home to Die” – Claim (Please see Figure 6.12 and Annexure D2). Basically, what learners had to see was that the newspaper claimed, without actually quoting the *Constitution* (1996) that the poor treatment of the patient was in violation of the basic values embodied in the *Constitution* (1996). This headline, I indicated to the class, contained the first set of values included in Chapter 1 of *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), Founding Provisions:

1. The Republic of South Africa is one, sovereign, democratic state founded on the following values:
  - (a) ‘Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms’ (1996:3).

*The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996) advocates that every individual has the human right to dignity. Excerpts from the article (please see Figure 6.12) illustrated how the patient's constitutional rights may have been violated by the hospital's alleged (since the word 'Claim' indicated that it was a version of events that had not been corroborated as the article contained no comment from the hospital authorities) non-adherence to the above values:

'...the sickly patient was sleeping on the floor with a single blanket and shivering with cold and pain.' (violation of human dignity)  
'... she saw Indian patients being given priority.'  
(violation of the right to equality) (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 7).

Figure 6.12: headline of article used to discuss:  
"Forming and Respecting Opinions and Beliefs".



(*The Rising Sun*, 8-14/07/03)

If the claims made in the article were indeed true, then the newspaper can be commended because the article was written by an 'Indian' reporter, appeared in an 'Indian' community newspaper and did not aim to protect the interests of fellow 'Indians' who allegedly violated the values of *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), but instead exposed their actions (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 7).

To follow from this, learners were asked to engage in a simple empathy exercise of pretending to respond from the point of view of the doctor referred to in the article in order to understand "Forming and Respecting Opinions and Beliefs". Learners had to respect the opinions and beliefs of others contained in the text. To explain this I once

again used the article, “Hospital Sends AIDS Patient Home to Die” – Claim (*The Rising Sun*, 8-14/07/03).

Imagine that YOU are the doctor referred to in the article and you believe that you had good reason to justify why you sent the AIDS patient away: the hospital was overcrowded and it was your expert opinion that nothing more could be done for the patient who had full-blown AIDS. Your personal opinion is that the article is sensationalist and does not take into account the poor conditions and shortage of beds at the hospital. At the same time, however, you respected the views of those quoted in the article (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 7, 8).

By placing themselves in the shoes of the doctor, and positioning the doctor as respecting the beliefs of those interviewed, which were contrary to their own, learners could grasp the fourth stage of the cycle. With all the activities listed in Figure 6.7 meaningfully concluded, I was able to quickly revise the main concepts of ‘text’, ‘genre’, ‘values’ and ‘opinions and beliefs’ before the lesson ended (*ibid*).

Lesson Plan 3 outlines the second session of Segment 2 which was conducted on 27/08/03 and focused on the final stage of the Critical Literacy learning cycle (please see Lesson Plan 3, Annexure D3), ‘The Deconstruction and Analysis of Texts’, and included an introduction to Critical Literacy theories that would be used to deconstruct texts. Learners were requested to make points on what each theory meant so that they could use the information at a later stage. Figure 6.13 below is an extract from Lesson Plan 3 that shows the teacher and learner activities. It was during this lesson that the main theories of Critical Literacy were explained in greater detail but in a manner that would be accessible enough to teenagers. Here again the level of efficacy of the completion of the activities listed below would ensure the accomplishment of the objectives of the lesson.

Figure 6.13: an extract from Lesson Plan 3.

Teacher’s Activities	Learner’s Activities
1. Explain: Intertextuality, Reader Response Theory, Critical Language Awareness, Critical Discourse Analysis. 2. Use everyday experiences to illustrate how language and power work: in school, the home, and among friends.	1. Listen. 2. Contribute to discussion. 3. Make brief, meaningful notes.

(Annexure D3)

First, Intertextuality was summarised by telling learners that they needed to resist a passive reading of texts and understand that there is never a single or correct way to read a text, since each reader brings with him or her different expectations, interests, opinions and prior reading experiences (Allen, 2000: 07). Barthes' (1997a: 159) metaphor of a text being like a piece of fabric which is woven from the *already written* and the *already read*, was appropriated to the learners by alluding to a local South African television soap opera, *Isidingo* with which, by show of hands, all the learners were familiar. I declared to learners that if I was watching an episode of *Isidingo* for the very first time, it really would not make much sense unless I had watched previous episodes. My knowledge of the setting, characters, plot of previous episodes would therefore form part of the intertextual link that would allow me to understand that particular episode fully. A reader or viewer attaches meaning that stems from his or her prior experiences and knowledge of texts. A text is therefore like a chain where many different ideas are linked. In illustrating Intertextuality to learners, *Isidingo*, as an example, demonstrated how knowledge of previous episodes informed present understanding. Learners were thus able to see that texts did not operate in isolation but formed part of an intertextual chain (Annexure F, 27/08/03: 8).

Second, Reader Response Theory was explained in a very simple manner: that the reader is an active participant in the ideas of a text and a reader's initial interaction with a text is a private moment with meanings internally experienced within the mind of that reader. Vandergrift's (1987: 1) idea was used to enlighten learners that Reader Response Theory encourages them to share their own meanings and to listen to the meanings of others in the class and to acknowledge the responses that others may suggest about the same text. Learners were made to understand that interpretations of a text will differ from person to person, that each 'reader' will have his or her own 'response' (Annexure F, 27/08/03: 8).

Third, Critical Language Awareness (CLA) was clarified as the practice of the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995); that Discourse: meaning discussions on ideas that people interact with in everyday life; was conveyed through language. It is important, especially for children, to be taught how to engage critically with language in order to become active citizens in a democratic society. Learners had discovered earlier,

in the 'Out of the Box' activity, Phillips and Jorgenson's (2002: 61-62) idea that CDA encompasses not only written and spoken language, but includes all kinds of texts like visual images, signs, sound and computer texts and that the scope of the texts that could be analysed was extensive (Annexure F, 27/08/03: 8).

CDA focuses on social interaction and the understanding of how language is connected to relations of power while Critical Language Awareness illustrates the relationship between language and power using examples. This relationship is not obvious but it centres around unequal relations of power based on the values of a particular society where there are 'top dogs' and 'underdogs' based on gender, class, race, age or cleverness. For example, during the apartheid era whites were 'top dogs' and blacks 'underdogs' (Janks, 1993: iii).

Whilst it might seem that a great deal of information was imparted by the teacher in a fairly didactic manner, this may be explained by what I described in Chapter 3, where the use of conventional approaches to pedagogy would be used as a transition to Critical Literacy approaches.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Critical Language Awareness (CLA) were dealt with by superimposing the word 'discussion' for 'Discourse' and explaining that this is always done through the medium of written and spoken language, sometimes even body language. This simplified the concept for learners. Subsequently, CLA, which is the practical application of CDA, and its examination of the relationship between language and power, was easier to understand. As facilitator of the Project I viewed learners' understanding of the relationship between language and power as crucial and so I used examples from their most immediate contexts starting with everyday interaction with teachers and parents. Figure 6.14 is one of three discussion boxes that reconstructed the significant interaction between myself and respondents on language and power.

Figure 6.14: Discussion Box 6 showing a conversation about language usage.

T-Let's examine the power relations between YOU and ME. You refer to me as Ma'm or Ms. Pather. I can call you by your first name, surname and I can even insult you because of the power I have as a teacher. You don't call me by my first name and you know that if you insult me or any other teacher then you will be reprimanded or punished. Can you think of other situations where this applies?  
L1-Our parents - we respect them, we don't call them by their first names.  
L2-Our aunts and uncles.  
L3- My pastor; older people in the community.

(Annexure F, 27/08/03: 9)

Learners were enlightened to the fact that when people speak or write they have choices about how they use their words. Many of the choices are social choices, with every society having conventions that govern people's language, in different contexts because of the power relations inherent in that situation (Janks, 1993: iii).

Figure 6.15: Discussion Box 7 showing a conversation about language and power.

T- In the classroom you use formal language but informal language with your friends- slang- which sometimes sounds like another language. For example, Karthi, if after this lesson Blessing asks you where you are going this afternoon? You will say, "Hey man, I'm vying straight possie coz my ballie is coming early from graf!" (laughter) Now, if I had to ask you that question, your response will be: "I am going straight home because my father will be home early from work."  
L1(Girl learner) - But Ma'm, I don't think that the girls speak that way. We do use slang but not in the way that the boys use it.  
T- You're quite right, you are more likely to hear boys speak in this manner. Why do you think this is so?  
L1-'Cos girls have to be 'prim and proper'.  
T- A woman is viewed negatively if the language she uses is not acceptable by the standards of society about how women are expected to behave, yet this does not apply to males. Girls are generally brought up to be feminine, that is what society expects, which leads to passive interaction in most contexts, with males dominating. It is only when these power relations change that gender equality will exist.  
L2- Not all girls are 'prim and proper', some girls can take any boy on when it comes to talking slang.  
T- Exactly, those girls are taking boys on in their own territory. They are saying to boys: I'm your equal. Also, we can't generalise about girls as gender roles have changed over the years like language has changed. For example, in *To Kill a Mockingbird* the words 'negro' and 'nigger' are used. You have learnt that these are derogatory terms that made Black people feel like they were the 'underdog'. 'Negro' is no longer in use instead the 'politically correct' or acceptable term to use is 'African-American'.  
L3- Ma'm but what about 'Niggas with Attitude'!  
L4- On T.V. and in rap songs they say, 'What's up, Nigga'!  
T- These may not be used in a demeaning way but some people may have a problem with the use of the word. Today, certain words are no longer politically correct in order to create a balance in power relations through the use of language -'bantu' (outdated and racist) 'crippled' (differently-abled), 'deaf and dumb' (deaf).

(Annexure F, 27/08/03: 9)

Power relations and their influence on language were discussed with reference to the examples cited in Figure 6.15. First, the discussion focused on the manner in which language positions males and females differently<sup>7</sup>. In addition, the use of derogatory language in entrenching power relations among different races and cultures was discussed. This is an area where language has evolved in line with political changes over the years, both in South Africa and abroad. Language has been used by one race group to assert power over the other. Of particular interest was the evolution of the word 'nigger' to 'nigga', and its use in African-American rap music. In the discourse that ensued, with mainly the African boys expressing their views, it was believed that when an African-American or a fellow Black person uses the term 'nigga' it is not considered derogatory as it affirmed 'Black pride', however, if a white person used the term, depending on the context, it was likely to be construed as offensive. If the term was exchanged between friends of different races then it was fine, but if a white person addressed a Black person who was a stranger as a 'nigga' then this could be considered to be condescending (*ibid*).

I thereafter went on to show how the connection between language and power could also apply to body language and imposition of one set of cultural beliefs on another. I related a story from personal experience (please see Figure 6.16 below):

Figure 6.16: Discussion Box 8 showing a conversation about cultural beliefs.

T- In my early years as a teacher I encountered African learners for the first time in my class and on one particular occasion I reprimanded an African learner for reporting late to class and remembered telling him: 'Look at me when I talk to you!' The learner continued to look at the floor. It was only later that I discovered that I had insulted the learner, as it is disrespectful in Zulu culture to look at an adult in the eye when speaking to him or her. I had imposed a western cultural belief: that in order to show respect, you needed to look at an adult when speaking to him or her, on a learner whose culture practiced the opposite.  
L- Yes Ma'm in my Zulu culture it's also disrespectful to speak to an elder in English.

(Annexure F, 27/08/03: 10)

In addition to the above discussions on language and power, some of the Critical Literacy models that were applied to the deconstruction of texts used in this Project were mentioned. These included Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model (please see Annexure

<sup>7</sup> Balfour (2003) cites studies that suggest that boys' and men's talk deploys syntax, vocabulary and meaning in ways that are qualitatively different to the way girls' and women's talk is deployed.

D6), Luke and Freebody's Four Dimensional Model (please see Annexure D4), positioning, disrupting the text and finding alternate endings, all of which are discussed in Chapter 3 and practically applied in Phase 1, Segment 3 to be discussed next. Learners were informed that the deconstruction and analysis of newspapers would begin in Phase 2 (Annexure F, 27/08/03: 10).

6.2.1.3 Segment 3: the use of fairy tales in transition to a Critical Literacy approach to texts

This segment consisted of three sessions and the activities to be concluded by teacher and learners are listed in an extract from Lesson Plan 4 (please see Figure 6.17). All activities were eventually concluded satisfactorily, however, the Four Resources Model (Luke and Freebody, 1997), was initially difficult for some learners to grasp and because of time constraints some questions were forfeited. This will be discussed further in this Chapter and Chapters 7 and 8. An explanation of the manner in which the activities were completed follows Figure 6.17 below.

Figure 6.17: an extract from Lesson Plan 4.

Teacher's Activities	Learner's Activities
1. Discuss 'stories' and 'positioning' using, 'It was one of those days...' 2. Discuss Eurocentric fairy tales and African/ Indian Tales listed below. 3. Examine gender positioning by Eurocentric fairy tales. 4. Read the three versions of the <i>Three Little Pigs</i> . 5. Discuss <i>Four Resources Model</i> (please see Figure 1 of Annexure D4), Venn Diagram (please see Figure 2 of Annexure D4) and Worksheet (please see Figure 3 of Annexure D4) and explain how to use each instrument to analyse the stories.	1. Listen. 2. Contribute to group and class discussions. 3. Contribute to group task based on <i>Four Resources Model</i> 4. Complete worksheet based on the three versions of the <i>Three Little Pigs</i> . 5. Contribute to drawing the group Venn Diagram.

(Annexure D4)

In Session 1 on 09/09/03, in order not to bombard learners with too much theory, I decided that the easiest way for them to grasp how the Critical Literacy theories worked was to implement ideas from lesson plans based on fairy tales devised by the International Reading Association (IRA) (Henry, 2002: 1-6). This method was also used

to good effect by Bayat (2003)<sup>8</sup>. Although the content was unrelated to newspapers, learners would apply the Critical Literacy skills like ‘positioning’ and ‘point of view’ they would acquire, to the investigation of community newspapers. The fairy tales also served the purpose of preparing students for the stories they would encounter, not only when working with the community newspapers, but in the world outside school.

As a point of departure I used Misson’s idea, (Christie and Misson (eds), 1998: 105-107) (mentioned in Chapter 3) that our lives are bound up in stories. Stories in the newspaper, stories on the bus or taxi to school, stories on television, stories learners tell as to why they don’t have their homework to hand in and so on. Stories project to us aspects of the society we live in, they transmit culture and ideology. I focused on how texts position readers and how we are given a sense of self through such positioning, the self being created through the texts we are exposed to which are made out of discourses. In other words, our identity is constituted by the discourses we participate in and the subject positions we assume (Annexure F, 09/09/03: 10).

In addressing the way texts position us the following two questions were asked. The first question was, ‘What is the text assuming that we know and/or value?’ This question addresses the need for ‘confirmation’. Misson (1998) used the example: ‘It was one of those days when....’. These opening words of a story assume common knowledge and experience between the writer and the reader. It invites the reader to contribute to the text using her own experience. ‘It was one of those days when thunder lurks around and you know it’s going to break the clouds wide open by the time nightfall comes’. An alternate option was: ‘It was one of those days when you knew from the moment you got up that the shit was sure as hell going to hit the fan’. I used these examples and asked learners to write down one example of how they would conclude the sentences (Annexure F, 09/09/03: 10). The following are some of the responses that were elicited:

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<sup>8</sup> Ayesha Bayat completed a research project towards her Master’s degree at the School of Language, Literacies, Media and Drama Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2003. Her Leaflet Action Research Project involved learners engaging with Genre Theory in the design of health leaflets for doctors’ waiting rooms.

- It was one of those days when everything began normally but little did I know that my life would change forever.
- It was one of those days when I didn't want to get up.
- It was one of those days that seemed like I got up from the wrong side of the bed.
- It was one of those days when everything seemed to go wrong.
- It was one of those days when I felt alive, like the first day of spring after a long and cold winter.
- It was one of those days when I pulled the covers back over my head.
- It was one of those days I would rather forget (*ibid*).

It soon became evident that in each case the reader was positioned in a different way of seeing the world, giving him, or her, the opportunity to identify with what the writer of each opening line was saying.

The second question was, 'What kind of 'experience' is the text offering us and what is its purpose in putting us through that experience?' Two of the ways that this is done is through our involvement with various characters through observation, identification and attraction and the anticipation of certain outcomes by the end of the story (*ibid*). This directed learners to an understanding of 'experience' through the expectation of how the story would end. After learners completed this first task and saw how readers were positioned differently by each opening line, to reinforce this idea, I went on to elicit the kind of fairy tales that they had encountered in their early school days.

To allow learners to understand this better, and to introduce the theme of Segment 3, I asked the class what fairy tales they were exposed to in their pre-school and primary school years. Learners enthusiastically named European fairy tales that included the following:

- *Jack and the Beanstalk*
- *Little Red Riding Hood*
- *Cinderella*
- *Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*
- *Sleeping Beauty*
- *The Three Little Pigs* (Annexure F, 09/09/03: 11)

Next, I examined the convention of writing that defined these stories as fairy tales. Figure 6.18 is a reconstruction of the conversation from which the idea of gender positioning emerged and was briefly discussed (*ibid*).

Figure 6.18: Discussion Box 9: a conversation on gender positioning by fairy tales.

T- How do all these fairy tales begin?  
L- (Loud chorus) 'Once upon a time...'  
T- How do these fairytales end?  
L- '...happily ever after' (was the uproarious response that the class seemed to relish.)  
T- Now these are what we call conventions: 'It was one of those days...', 'Once upon a time...', '...and they lived happily ever after.' Most of these stories work like this: a damsel (young woman) is in distress, a knight in shining armour or a Prince Charming (young man) comes to the rescue and they live happily ever after.

(Annexure F, 09/09/03: 11)

It is through 'confirmation' and 'experience' that texts work to draw us into specific subject positions so that we become immersed in the world that they are showing which the text-user is expected to believe and enjoy. Similarly, most Eurocentric fairy tales discussed in Figure 6.18 above, begins with 'Once upon a time ...' which immediately signifies entry into the imaginary, fantasy world of fairy tales, a particular narrative genre with specific conventions (need for confirmation) which, through involvement, observation and identification (need for experience), we anticipate that the outcome will involve good triumphing over evil and all the good characters 'living happily ever after'. The fairy tales that learners had access to as little children were the European fairy tales that created a perception that these were the only fairy tales available. Fairy tales mainly from *Aesop's Fables*<sup>9</sup>, the brothers Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm, whose stories were translated from German to English in 1823 and Hans Christian Anderson, the Danish writer, whose tales were translated into English in 1823 (Hunt, *Microsoft Encarta Standard*, 2003). Discussion Box 10 (please see Figure 6.19) contains a discussion on the kinds of stories that learners were exposed to and the contexts in which this was done.

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<sup>9</sup> The ancient Greek writer who lived from 620 to 560 BC whose work was paraphrased over the years and translated from French into English in 1484 (Hunt, *Microsoft Encarta Standard*, 2003).

Figure 6.19: Discussion Box 10: a conversation on stories read as young children.

T- The fairy tales that you had access to as young children were European, with mainly white characters. Did you encounter any other kinds of fairy tales in your early years like Indian fairy tales and African fairy tales? Andile were there no African stories that you were exposed to when you were in primary school?  
L1- I attended an Indian primary school but my grandmother used to tell me African stories like the story of the 'Zim Zim' (Affirmation from other African learners who seemed to identify with what Andile said).  
T- Yes, Zinhle?  
L2- Ma'm, I also went to an Indian primary school and we read stories about Diwal and Rama and Sita (other learners who were in the same school demonstrated sign: of agreement).

(Annexure F, 09/09/03: 11)

Other learners said that they were exposed to religious stories either by their parents or grandparents or at church, Madressa (Islamic religious classes usually conducted in the afternoons) or at temples. At this point I introduced texts containing African and Indian stories which I took to class to point out that there were stories available that could have provided other perspectives, further to the Eurocentric that may have been closely related to their own realities. Stories like *Madiba Magic: Nelson Mandela's Favourite Stories for Children* (Madi, 2002), *Time for Telling: a Collection of Stories from around the World* (Medlicott, 1992) and *Indian Stories* (Hull, 1994) (Annexure F, 09/09/03: 11).

The introduction of these texts and a brief discussion of the kinds of stories they contained was intended to illustrate to learners the type of education that they had received as children, prompting them to examine what was included and what was left out of syllabi of the past and possible reasons why this had been done. The stories were essentially Eurocentric. Was this a deliberate move by apartheid curriculum planners to impose western culture on other cultural groups? This I posed as a rhetorical question intended to make learners think about the educational choices that were made for them (*ibid*). The task that had been planned for learners in the session to follow was intended to make them subvert their conventional ideas of what constituted a fairytale.

The second session of this lesson was conducted on 16/10/03. Knowing that learners would not complete the group work in a single session, I made arrangements for learners' to report early to class, during the break preceding the session, and for them to remain during the afternoon registration which followed the session. Work with the three

versions of *The Three Little Pigs*, the second of the three lesson segment, only began five weeks later as a result of the September tests, the spring break<sup>10</sup> and the fact that I would only see them on Day 9 of the cycle, nine school days after the beginning of the term on 06/10/03. However, starting with a new, fresh aspect, the actual deconstruction of the stories, ensured that continuity was not affected. Nevertheless, a brief revision of the previous segment was necessary.

The attention of learners was drawn to the fact that in order to work with new texts, they had to draw on other texts in a more complex manner and that this engagement with their past knowledge of fairy tales was 'Intertextuality at work' (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 12). Subsequently, we examined new ways of viewing popular fairy tales using Intertextuality (our prior knowledge) which provided the impetus for the discussion on traditional European fairy tales like *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Harbour, 1993). These stories were discussed to illustrate how they have influenced our lives, and shaped the way we think, especially about our gender roles. The idea of the beautiful damsel in distress as a fragile, helpless woman who a 'Knight in shining armour', or a strong, brave and handsome 'Prince Charming', will one day rescue her and they will 'live happily ever after', was discussed.

This fantasy idea that is instilled in young minds creates unrealistic expectations of men and marriage, for example, reference to a 'fairy tale' wedding and the notion that beauty must conform to a specific feminine image of being thin and fair-skinned, for example: 'mirror, mirror on the wall who's the fairest of them all' (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 12). From an early age, young girls begin to measure their worth through male acceptance and with fairytales, girls develop vanity, shallowness and the idea that beauty surpasses intelligence (*Sunday Tribune*, 05/08/07). These ideas on how this kind of thinking, perpetuated by the media, influences the behaviour of the different genders were examined in Phase 3. My intention was to show that the ideas imbibed from fairy tales are part of the reality of their lives in the sexist bias represented in certain kinds of media like community newspapers.

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<sup>10</sup> 29/09/2003 to 05/10/2003.

After concluding the introduction to the segment on ‘Fairy tales’ I began the process of illustrating to learners how some of the aspects of Critical Literacy analysis are applied by using the story of *The Three Little Pigs* (Hall *et al*, 2002). Learners’ prior knowledge of the plot of the original story was activated before I read a modern retelling of *The Three Little Pigs* (Muir, 1993) and *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig* (Trivizas, 1993) (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 12). In Muir’s (1993) version of the story he tells of the saga of three little pigs who left home to pursue their talents in a rock band; what the other animals of the forest thought of their ear-splitting music and how the amiable Bean Bag Wolfy (not the Big Bad Wolf) eventually joins the band, fulfilling a life-long desire to be a rock star. This adaptation provided a good example of positioning. For example, while the original story may have positioned the reader as ‘anti-Wolf’, this tale positions the reader as “pro-Wolf and dispels the stereotype of the big, bad wolf also perpetuated in stories like *Little Red Riding Hood*. In *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig* (1993), the author had also adapted the original story by using Critical Literacy methodology like role reversal, casting three little wolves that were intimidated and harassed by a Big Bad Pig.

Learners had to briefly analyse all three stories in their groups using Luke and Freebody’s (1997) updated version of the Four Resources Model (please see Figure 6.20) which was used by the groups as a guideline to steer the discussion of the texts.

*Figure 6.20: an adaptation of the Four Resources Model.*

<b>Developing Resources as a Code Breaker</b>
How do I crack this text?
How does it work?
What are the patterns and conventions that are repeated?
<b>Developing Resources as a Text Participant</b>
How are the ideas represented in the text connected?
What cultural values are contained in this text?
What are the cultural meanings that can be constructed from this text?
Are boys and girls positioned differently by each text?
<b>Developing Resources as a Text User</b>
How is this text shaped by who will use it?
What is my response to this text here and now?
How will different people view this text?

Developing Resources as Text Analyst and Critic
What is this text trying to do to me?
In whose interests was this text written?
What kind of person wrote this text?
What is absent (not included) in the text?

Luke and Freebody (1997)

Thereafter, each learner had to complete an individual worksheet (please see Figure 6.21 below) based loosely on work done by Martino (1997: 10) which was aimed at placing each of the stories into perspective (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 12).

Figure 6.21: an example of a completed worksheet on 'The Three Little Pigs'.

Statements about Texts	Texts			Relevant references to the texts
	1	2	3	
1. This text is different to the one told to me as a child.	N	Y	Y	T 2: Wolf is a 'softie' and a 'good guy'; T 3: role reversal.
2. The language used in this text is suitable for primary school learners between 5-8 years old.	Y	N	Y	T 2: Suited to older readers, more difficult words eg. Commodious (p24); Contains wit suited to adults.
3. This text disrupts the original story and presents a different perspective.	N	Y	Y	T 2: Wolf-dismisses stereotype of being big, bad. T3: Pig is bad, wolves-victims.
4. This text uses role reversal.	N	Y	Y	T2: Wolf- not sly and cunning, gentle. T3: Pig-wily, wolves-sweet, innocent.
5. This text provides an in-depth insight into the characters.	N	Y	Y	T2: Insight is shown into 'Wolfy' T3: Explores transformation of pig.
6. This text conveys humour through the words and illustrations.	N	Y	Y	T2: Most hilarious. T3: Role reversal creates humour.
7. This text is skillfully constructed and represents the creative and technical expertise of the writer and illustrator.	Y	Y	Y	T1: Classic, iconic. T2: Most creative of the three (detail). T3: Well written and illustrated.
8. This text shows development of the plot by employing a specific convention of writing.	Y	Y	Y	Development of the narrative of a fairytale is employed in all three, the convention: 'Once upon a time...'
9. This text challenges conventional ways of viewing texts and thus encourages critical thinking.	N	Y	Y	T2: Challenges all aspects from names of pigs to nature of the wolf and British society. T3: Role reversal
10. This text favours reconciliation as an alternative ending.	N	Y	Y	T2: 'Wolfy' and pigs form a band. T3: Pig and wolves become friends.
<b>KEY:</b> Text 1 - Original story of <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> (2002) Text 2 - Frank Muir's retelling of <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> (1993) Text 3 - <i>The Three Wolves and the Big Bad Pig</i> (1993)				

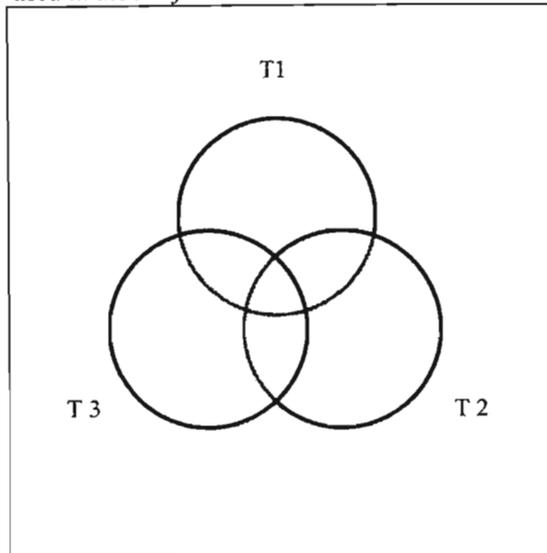
(Annexure F, 29/10/03: 15)

Finally, a group Venn<sup>11</sup> Diagram (please see Figure 6.22) (Henry, 2002: 4) comparing and contrasting the three versions of the popular tale had to be completed. The Venn

<sup>11</sup> Venn Diagrams represent ways of grouping objects or elements. The intersection of the diagrams consists of common elements. These diagrams are named after the nineteenth-century British logician Jon Venn (*Microsoft Encarta Standard*, 2003).

Diagram entailed searching for the common features of the three stories (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 12).

Figure 6.22: an example of a group Venn Diagram used in the Project.



**KEY:** T1 - Text 1 - Original story of *The Three Little Pigs* (2002)  
T2 - Text 2 - Frank Muir's retelling of *The Three Little Pigs* (1993)  
T3 - Text 3 - *The Three Wolves and the Big Bad Pig* (1993)

While I preferred that groups rotate their leaders during each segment, learners were told that this was not mandatory and that groups should do what was agreed upon by all members. During the group discussion the elected scribe of each group had to take notes on each aspect to use during the report-back. Before learners could begin, the analysis of the three versions of the *Three Little Pigs* began; the Four Resources Model, the worksheet and the Venn Diagram were explained to learners clarifying doubts that they had about specific questions.

While the first two tasks, I anticipated, would be grasped easily by learners, I decided that some of the questions in the Four Resources Model required some explanation. Those questions that were explained were not discussed in detail during the group report-back sessions. In explaining the Four Resources Model (please see Figure 6.20), I selected the following questions expecting that they would be difficult for learners to understand: 'How do I crack this text?' As far as this question was concerned, learners were told that

they needed to view the text as a code that they had to break in order to understand it fully. What did they have to do to understand the text fully; for example, what words or expressions did they require clarification on? With reference to the question, *What are the patterns and conventions that are repeated?* the problem was more about not understanding the lexis, namely, 'patterns' and 'conventions'. Here learners were reminded of the earlier discussion. This meant simply that certain ideas were repeated in the text, for example in *The Three Little Pigs*, each of the stories followed a pattern, that each time a house or structure was built, each time there was an attempt to blow it down or have it destroyed. Also, the 'Once upon a time ...' convention was common to all three stories and to fairytales in general as discussed previously (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 13).

Learners seemed to have a narrow vision of what culture meant with reference to the questions, *What cultural values are contained in this text?* and *What are the cultural meanings that can be constructed from this text?* They believed that it had more to do with ethnic culture, like 'Indian culture' and 'African culture' where cultural symbols were more distinct and identifiable. Culture and cultural values, they were told, extended to the customs, way of life, traditions, background and language of any society. In the fairytales they were analysing, the culture was unquestionably British. Frank Muir's retelling of *The Three Little Pigs* (1993) was used as an example: The cultural values included the names of the pigs because they were born on a Christian holy day, Good Friday: 'Hot', 'Cross' and 'Bun', taken from the word 'hot-cross bun' eaten by Christians during Easter. Cultural meanings were contained in the allusion to the resident cat at a 'posh', British school which tells us that the kind of school one attends in Britain ensures respect and even social mobility, The mention of the teacosy with the sequined message, 'Gang Easy Wi' the tea leaves, d'ye Ken?' indicates a British enunciation not easy to comprehend. In addition 'pop' culture is highlighted by the fact that the pigs aspire towards forming a rock band. This is eventually realised when the pigs join the wolf to form the band, 'Bean Bag Wolfy and the Pork Scratchings' (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 13). After this explanation, learners were told to keep the responses to the questions as succinct and to the point as possible.

An example from Text 2 was Bean Bag Wolfy trying to make a scary face and becoming terrified of his own reflection in the mirror, which illustrated that he was trying to be what he was not. Learners were able to observe how this contributed to the overall construction of the character of the wolf in Text 2 as ‘not really a bad guy’, simultaneously allowing them to see how the concept of stereotype operated.

When the group work began, I saw the need at the outset to direct each group and went from group to group guiding them. It seemed more feasible for learners to complete the individual worksheets during the group discussion and then go on to the Venn Diagram and Four Resources Model. Some questions in the Four Resources Model (1997) were challenging for a few learners while others found the wording of the group worksheet difficult to understand, Questions 3, 7, 9 and 10 (please see Figure 6.21) in particular.

Groups were encouraged to use different colours to designate the different stories on the Venn Diagram and to draw the diagrams on large flip-chart paper provided for them. Learners were told to use key words and not full sentences to show the similarities. The subsequent discussion, involving the entire class, drew on the information gathered during the three activities that learners had engaged in (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 14).

It also emerged during the group work sessions, that despite my earlier explanations most learners found it difficult to grasp some of the questions in the Four Resources Model. For example, *How do I crack this?* was still a problem for some learners to understand. It was only when I used the example of trying to ‘crack’ a poem that those learners understood. I told them that in order to ‘crack’ a poem one has to unravel the figures of speech and use other ‘tools’ to understand it. Fairy tales were quite simple to ‘crack’ because they followed a predictable structure where good usually triumphs over evil. After I went around to groups explaining problem questions and simplifying the vocabulary that they understood (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 13). Those learners that had no problem comprehending also assisted their peers. Attempts to facilitate understanding were generally successful judging from the good discussions on each of the four resources.

Session 3, the report-back session, the last for 2003, was conducted on 29/10/03 just before the final examination was due to commence on 10/11/03. The first task, the *Completed Worksheet on 'The Three Little Pigs'* (please see Figure 6.21), is a summary of the responses that emerged during the classroom discussion. Reporting on this task was not done group by group; instead the focus was on the questions contained in the worksheet and groups 'fed' into that discussion. This task served the purpose of directing the respondents' knowledge of the three texts. Different aspects, including the illustrations were examined. The responses to the 'Statements about Texts' of the worksheet (please see Figure 6.21) could be used to complete the second task, the group Venn Diagrams, which simply required that the similarities among the three stories had to be written onto the appropriate spaces on the diagram.

The group drawings of the Venn Diagrams showed that all groups, with the exception of one, took my advice and used different colours to represent the different texts. Thus, similarities and differences could be clearly distinguished making interpretation of the diagrams during the presentation session very simple. It was pointed out to learners that this kind of diagram, if presented in such a manner, could be a valuable study tool in summarising and categorising information in all subjects (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 16). The following emerged from an analysis of the Venn Diagrams that groups presented. The characteristics that were common to all three texts were:

- Each story personified animals.
- Three houses were built each time.
- There are attempts to destroy each of the three houses.
- The first two houses were always destroyed but the third was indestructible.
- The three pigs/wolves were sent into the forest by their mother albeit for different reasons (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 15).

The feature that was common to Texts 1 and 3 only was that they showed the wolf and three pigs, while Text 2 cast a pig and three wolves. The common aspects of Texts 2 and 3 only, favoured reconciliation in the end and used the ideas of role reversal, with Text 2 showing the pig as evil and Text 3 portraying the wolf as a harmless 'gentlewolf'. In highlighting the similarities, differences between stories also emerged (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 15).

An analysis of the Four Resources Model (1997) (please see Figure 6.20), was not

reported question by question, instead questions were condensed to provide an overall picture of the resource that was to be developed or only specific questions were addressed (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 15). The discussion centred first on 'Developing Resources as a Code Breaker'. Groups arrived at similar conclusions: one story was the traditional fairy tale and the other two were subversions of that tale. Although all three stories had some similarities, it was how they were different to Text 1 that set them apart and so they had to be 'cracked' separately. Text 1 was used as a point of reference to show how the other texts differed from it and in what ways (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 16). With the different explanations given to learners by me, regarding the fact that different kinds of texts have to be 'cracked' generally in different ways, and the kind of discussion that emerged around this topic, I believe that learners had a reasonable understanding of this resource (*ibid*).

In the discussion pertaining to: 'Developing Resources as a Text Participant', the question: *What are the cultural meanings that can be constructed from this text?* had already been addressed, however, learners added that in Text 3, the pigs played 'croquet', 'battledore' and 'shuttlecock', all of which were British games, unfamiliar to the learners at Community Secondary School, thus constructing a British version of reality (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 16). Only two learners had heard of 'shuttlecock' and 'croquet'. I therefore asked the following question of learners: *How does it make you feel when you hear these words?*

- Lost.
- It makes me want to know the meanings.
- At that point I don't understand what is being said.
- Like a break in transmission when you are watching television (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 16).

Most texts contain words relating to a particular culture that tend to alienate the reader from the text. This became more apparent when the cultural terms in community newspapers were analysed.

The question that elicited a fair amount of discussion was: *Are boys and girls positioned differently by the text?* Perhaps the reason for this was that girls outnumbered boys in the composition of the sample. Many learners focused only on the characters in the text and

not on themselves as readers and how they would react to the text. Nevertheless an interesting discussion ensued (please see Figure 6.23) (*ibid*).

Figure 6.23: Discussion Box 11 on gender positioning in fairy tales.

**Group 1 spokesperson-** In Texts 1 and 3, except for the mother all other characters are males. In Text 2 there is the mother, Bun, one of the three pigs, and the cat.  
**Teacher-** What roles do these three characters play? Let's hear from another group.  
**Group 2 spokesperson-** Well the mother is caring, the three pigs don't have to leave home forever like in the other stories. She sends them far away, into the forest, to practice in their band because she can't tolerate the noise they make. Bun is cleverer than her two brothers. Even the cat is seen as clever and the other animals, like the wolf listen to her even though what she says is not right.  
**Teacher-** Text 2 is seen as affirming women since 'Bun', the female pig, was portrayed as intelligent while her brothers, 'Hot', and 'Cross', are quarrelsome and bad-tempered respectively. Now remember that the question is, *Are boys and girls positioned differently by the text?* not in the text. So, this view of 'Bun' positions, especially female readers, as being able to identify with her character. The story also highlights essential gender differences that may make some males disagree with the way the male pigs are portrayed. Do girls and boys see the texts in different ways?

(Annexure F, 29/10/03:16)

Learners' initial misinterpretation of the question (please see Figure 6.20), was eventually corrected by me and they were able to perceive that the way boys and girls were constructed or portrayed in a text will determine whether the reader can identify with the characters or not. In general, especially in the traditional fairy tales, the interaction between gender groups is understood in terms of the language used by writers that reinforce the behavioural patterns of characters aimed at perpetuating the notion of patriarchal power. In the case of Text 2, Frank Muir's retelling of *The Three Little Pigs* (1993), the author positions the genders differently<sup>12</sup> and deploys language in a manner that dispels the idea of patriarchal hegemony. Gender positioning was also an important feature in the analysis of texts related to beauty contests from the community newspapers.

The discussion of the third resource, 'Developing Resources as a Text User' revealed that only Texts 1 and 3 were suited to young children, however, Text 2 was definitely for

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<sup>12</sup> Subject positioning, specifically gender positioning, has been explored in many literary studies like Wing (1997) and Balfour (1999). Wing (1997) analyses the relationship between boys' and girls' language, gender roles and classroom behaviour and Balfour (1999) uses CLA and gender in the reading and interpretation of texts. Balfour (2003) makes the point that linguistic accounts of the use and acquisition of language presupposes that the complexity of language, as a means of positioning, is always made most evident in the interaction between people. Gender differences and identity are constructed, re-inforced, maintained and policed through language (*ibid*).

older readers because of the its difficult vocabulary in places, the satire that it employed and the aspirations of the pigs to be rock stars which is more suited to teenagers. However, learners agreed that it was one of the most hilarious and entertaining stories they had read in a long time, one that would have a broad appeal. Learners were informed that when texts are constructed by authors they are done with specific audiences in mind (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 16). The language and content will eventually reveal this. The community newspapers too were constructed for people living in specific geographical locations.

The dialogue on 'Developing Resources as a Text Analyst and Critic' focused on the intention of the writers of Texts 2 and 3 to make us have fun with the idea of role reversal which made learners see the taken for granted perspectives differently, as the Pig in Text 3 was the 'bad guy' and the 'cute and cuddly' wolves his victims. Then, in Text 2 the idea of pigs wanting to start a band provides a different, more contemporary perspective and the wolf, although he follows the pattern of destroying the first two houses and attempting to destroy the third, does not do so with malicious intent as he is devoid of true wickedness (*ibid*). Even his name 'Bean Bag Wolfy' has a softer 'ring' to it. Another example from Text 2 was Bean Bag Wolfy trying to make a scary face and becoming terrified of his own reflection in the mirror, which illustrated that he was trying to be what he was not. Learners were able to observe how this contributed to the overall construction of the character of the wolf in Text 2 as 'not really a bad guy', simultaneously allowing them to see how the concept of stereotype operated. Therefore, the concept of the stereotype of the wolf as the 'bad guy' is dispelled by both Texts 2 and 3 (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 16).

I consistently drew comparisons between the relevance of each resource and community newspapers, from gender bias to stereotyping to how cultural identity is transmitted through the use of vocabulary. This analysis was particularly important in that it prepared learners for working with the concept of stereotype when deconstructing texts from the community newspapers.

As this was the last time that I would engage with the Grade 11A class in 2003 as far as

the Community Newspaper Project was concerned at the end of this session, I collected all the media files in the hope that the Project would continue with the same group of learners in 2004. Next, I reflect on Phase 1 of the Project.

### **6.3 Reflections**

This first phase of the curriculum intervention orientated learners in respect of texts and Critical Literacy theories like Critical Discourse Analysis, Intertextuality and Critical Language Awareness. A conventional pedagogy was used to mediate these theories to seventeen-year-old learners, some of whom were not mother-tongue English speakers. The use of their own experiences in reflecting on how language and power operates provided valuable insight into learners' everyday social interactions. The use of fairy tales helped learners interface with Critical Literacy theories and texts in a fun manner.

With hindsight perhaps, I had been too ambitious in the planning of activities. Upon reflection, the number of tasks should have been reduced to allow for more time to be devoted to each. Here, more time should have been spent with the Four Resources Model to ensure greater comprehensibility of that concept. Nevertheless, despite the problems encountered by some learners during the group-work session, the outcome was satisfactory. The ability to work with and deconstruct texts was a skill that learners acquired from interrogating fairytales which was applied to the analysis of newspaper texts in the later phases.

As the Project progressed I noticed an ease with the idea of group work, not only on the part of learners, but with me as the researcher. The notion of group dynamics became easier for us, learners and educator, to become accustomed to. Also, most learners approached the tasks with a greater level of maturity with the resumption of the Community Newspaper Project in 2004 and a sense of familiarity in working with texts in the completion of the planned phases: Phase 2: Deconstruction (Interrogating Texts), Phase 3: Analysis of Sources from Community Newspapers (Theme: Beauty Contests), and Phase 4: Consolidation of *Phases and Segments of the Project*. These subsequent phases are discussed in Chapter 7 which will follow.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE FRUITION OF THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PROJECT

#### 7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 delineated Phase 1 of *Phases and Segments of the Project (Interrogating Texts)* in detail. Chapter 7 covers Phase 2, *Deconstruction (Interrogating Texts)* which examines both local and international newspapers; Phase 3, *Analysis of sources from community newspapers (Theme: Beauty Contests)* and Phase 4, *Consolidation*. Phases 2 and 3 illustrate the deconstruction of newspapers in general to the deconstruction of specific texts from three community newspapers that circulate in the Chatsworth area, south of Durban.

As already stated, the completion of the questionnaires and interviews by the managing editors of the community newspapers did not materialise in a manner that I had expected because only one of the three managing editors completed the questionnaire and granted me an interview. I therefore decided that information from the various issues of the community newspapers as well as the research material that I had collated on how community newspapers were run, would be sufficient for learners to use during Phase 2 (please see Figure 6.1 of Chapter 6) which involved deconstruction of newspapers. The information elicited from the questionnaire completed by and the interview with the managing editor of *The Rising Sun* was used in the writing of the Literature Review and is included in the analysis in Chapter 8. The work of established Critical Literacy practitioners like Fairclough (1992), Janks (1993), Luke and Freebody (1997) was modified and trialled to suit the context of newspapers and community newspapers.

In Phase 3, *Analysis of sources from community newspapers* (please see Figure 6.1 of Chapter 6), the theme of Beauty Contests and the manner in which they are presented in Chatsworth community newspapers, is analysed. Finally, I briefly discuss Phase 4, the process of *Consolidation* (please see Figure 6.1 of Chapter 6) of the Project at the level of the classroom intervention.

## **7.2 Phase 2: The deconstruction of mainstream and community newspapers**

Phase 2 began at the beginning of 2004 with the Grade 11A class of 2003 having graduated to Grade 12 and becoming 12A. As mentioned earlier, my request to teach English to the Grade 12A class in 2004 was granted and I was fortunate that the timetable worked in this regard. The sample had been reduced to thirty with five Indian learners removed to join another class. The reasons for this are outlined in the previous chapter. The questionnaires of those learners were not included in drawing up the findings. The School had also decided to change the timetable cycle from a nine-day cycle with sixty-three minute sessions to a seven-day cycle of fifty-two minute sessions.

During the deconstruction of these texts learners continued to work in groups with five Indian learners and one African learner per group. Groups were 'swopped' around to cater for the five learners that had left the Grade 12A class with five groups of six eventually being formed. This was done with as little disruption as possible as learners were told at a prior English lesson that they needed to reconstitute the groups before the Project commenced.

Originally intended to be completed in two fifty-two minute sessions, the process began to take longer than anticipated because of the demands of the conventional syllabus. Therefore, it was decided that each group deconstruct the international newspaper given to them at the outset, one local mainstream newspaper and one community newspaper, all of which had to be different for each group in order to ensure that none were left out. Eventually, Phase 2 took three sessions to complete.

The underlying premise of this phase was that any text that has been constructed and produced can, in the reception process, be de-constructed. A text that has been put together can be deconstructed, unpicked. Critical Discourse Analysis teaches the unmaking of texts in order to help learners become resistant readers (Kress, 1985) by understanding whose interests the publications serve. This phase involved a comparative deconstruction of various national and international newspapers (Segment 1) and the different community newspapers (Segment 2) from the database that I had established.

### 7.2.1 Segment 1: international and local newspapers

This segment, divided into two sessions, began on 29/01/2004, almost three months after the end of Phase 1. I was relieved that I was able to teach this class English for the year and so have access to the Grade 12A learners to complete the Project. Apart from the fact that five learners had been placed in another class, there were no other changes. This time the lessons were not conducted in the Library but in my classroom where I arranged the desks permanently in a group formation (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 17). However, it was a rather ‘cramped’ arrangement as I had to have adequate furniture to accommodate the large numbers in the other classes I taught. Media files were returned to learners many with copies of newspapers dating to the latter half of 2003. In addition, I had accessed a selection of British as well as South African mainstream newspapers to use during the deconstruction process. Groups were given only one international newspaper as copies of those were limited.

#### 7.2.1.1 Part A: introduction and group work: interrogating newspapers in general

Figure 7.1 below is an extract from Lesson Plan 5 (please see Annexure D5) which took place on 29/01/04 that lists all the activities that teacher and learners have to complete. As with the preceding lessons, the achievement of the objectives is largely dependent on the completion of these activities. A description of how these activities proceeded follows.

Figure 7.1: an extract from Lesson Plan 5.

<b>Teacher’s Activities</b>	<b>Learners’ Activities</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discuss briefly the results of the questionnaire (Annexure A) completed the previous year.</li><li>2. Discuss CDA, Genre, Reader Response Theory and Intertextuality.</li><li>3. Provide background to newspapers in general and to community newspapers specifically.</li><li>4. Assess groups using group assessment sheet (please see Figure 2 of Annexure D5).</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Listen.</li><li>2. Contribute to class and group discussions.</li><li>3. Complete group worksheets (please see Figure 1 of Annexure D5).</li><li>4. Use completed worksheet to contribute to report-back session.</li></ol>

(Annexure D5)

Much of the first part of the lesson was teacher-centred. At the outset media files were returned to learners. The findings of the Questionnaire for Learners, completed the previous year regarding their newspaper reading habits (please see Annexure A), were discussed briefly at the beginning of the lesson. The information revealing the learners’ newspaper reading habits and opinions of their local newspapers was simplified and presented to them

orally (the findings are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8).

- *The Rising Sun* and *Chatsworth Tabloid* were each read by 20 learners on a regular basis.
- The most frequently read mainstream newspapers were the *Sunday Times* (11), *Sunday Tribune* (13), the *Daily News* (12) and *POST* (8).
- This meant that less than half the class read mainstream newspapers (and mainly weekly newspapers) on a regular basis.
- Most learners read the front page first followed by the Sport section and Horoscopes.
- The majority felt that community newspapers were important because it kept them 'up-to-date' with local news.
- Most learners agreed that the community newspaper was instrumental in shaping the views and opinions of residents on various issues affecting the community and that it had an important role to play.
- In comparing mainstream newspapers to community newspapers the majority said that mainstream newspapers were of a superior quality.
- Many believed that just by providing a free newspaper to the people, the community newspapers were giving back but that more could be done by producing better quality newspapers and organising more charity events for the people of Chatsworth (Annexure F, 29/01/04:17).

The attention of learners was drawn to the fact that the majority of the class read mainstream Sunday newspapers only. The community newspapers were read more regularly by learners considering that most had access to at least two community newspapers per week. As a result, these publications had a relatively strong sub-conscious influence, shaping their identity as a people who belonged to a specific homogenous community (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 17).

The work covered in the previous segments relating to the theories inherent in CDA: Genre Theory (Kress, 1995), Reader Response Theory (Iser, 1974), Intertextuality and Critical Language Awareness were recapitulated so that learners could apply them to Segments 2 and 3, during the deconstruction process. The tasks that learners engaged in at this level drew from Fairclough's (1993) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and aimed at conscientising learners about their engagement with these publications.

In the design of the Community Newspaper Project in Chapter 6, I demonstrated how Reader Response Theory has filtered through at various points in the intervention, taking into account a learner's personal response to a text, focusing on relevance to a learner's life. It was used with other critical approaches allowing for creativity, reflective thinking, and providing genuine engagement between the text and the learner and aimed at increased 'self-knowledge', where students gain awareness of their own involvement with the text.

Since the Project focused on local newspapers, the context of newspapers in general had to be

examined in order to highlight the similarities and differences among a range of local and international publications. One of the most immediate and ‘close-to-life’ examples of news consumption is the local newspaper that provides news, events, and values of a particular community. For most people, the local newspaper is likely to be the single most important source of news and information within their area. These newspapers have an important relationship with the communities they serve recording symbolic events, decisions and official accounts produced by the local establishment in the state, business and formal voluntary sectors. These include the courts, police, schools, community clubs and charitable organizations and political parties (O’Sullivan *et al*, 2003: 181-183).

Ideally, I would have preferred to include a dimension to the Project where learners would conduct their own research in which they draw up a profile of a local newspaper examining the issues outlined in this Chapter. However, learners’ would not have been able to carry out such research in their Grade 12 year because of restrictions on time.

During the session on 29/01/04, the appointed group leader and scribe recorded specific aspects of the deconstruction process and later completed a worksheet with group members. It must be noted that groups operated democratically (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 18).

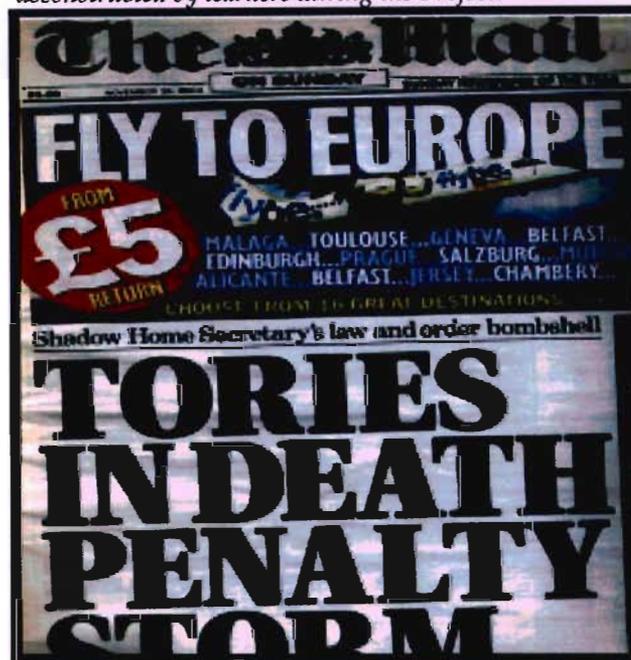
In deconstructing the newspapers, international, national, regional and local publications were used (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 18). The mainstream newspapers were mainly those collected from the latter period of 2003 and included, amongst others, British newspapers like *The Mail* (16/11/2003), *The Sunday Telegraph* (2/11/2003), *The Independent on Sunday* (9/11/2003) and *Metro* (1/06/03, 29/09/03, 19/11/2003) (please see Figures 7.2 and 7.3 for extracts from the front pages of a sample of the British newspapers that were deconstructed). The South African newspapers available for analysis were the *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Tribune*, *Daily News*, *POST*, *Mercury*, *Mail and Guardian*, *Daily Sun* dating from August 2003 to January 2004 as well as issues of the community newspapers for the same period: *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03, 11-17/11/03, 20-26/01/04), *Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04), *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* (15/01/04) and *The Express* (mid- November 2003, mid-January 2004).

Figure 7.2 : an extract of a front page of a British newspaper deconstructed by learners during the Project.



(Metro, 19/11/03).

Figure 7.3: an extract of a front page of a British newspaper deconstructed by learners during the Project.



(The Mail, 16/11/03).

The profiles of mainstream South African and community newspapers were provided to the groups based on information contained in Chapter 4. The profiles included information about the present ownership, circulation and other publications in the stable of newspapers. The table on the following page (please see Figure 7.4) illustrates these important details about the relevant newspapers. In addition, I interacted with the groups, supplementing information

on specific publications if they needed it, and directing the discussion to specific aspects of analysis (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 18). This segment on the deconstruction process made learners aware of the fact that the press is made up of profit-making organisations that sell audiences to advertisers by achieving the highest possible readerships for the lowest possible financial outlay (Fairclough, 1995: 42, 43). The effects of this are that newspapers will not want to run stories that could offend advertisers who might withdraw their advertising.

Figure 7.4: background information of some relevant mainstream newspapers.

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Circulation<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Sister publications</b>
<i>Daily Sun</i>	Naspers	535386	<i>Sondag Son</i>
<i>Sunday Tribune</i>	Independent Newspapers	99525	<i>Daily News POST</i>
<i>Sunday Times</i>	Johncom	530 000	<i>The Sowetan</i>

Respondents were also made aware of the possibility that a reporter's original text is filtered through a hierarchy, including copy-editor, sub-editor, layout-editor and editor-in-chief, making it possible to reject, interfere with, cut and distort the original text in line with editorial policy. Pressure to interfere with the news may come from government but just as important are independent commercial interests (Goatly, 2000: 249). Learners were also informed that because newspaper texts passed through so many individuals they reflected a multiplicity of voices since they were products of an 'intertextual chain' (*ibid*: 169). In addition, it was important for learners to understand that the press uses a visual channel, its language is written and it draws upon technologies of photographic reproduction, graphic design, and printing, and, that as a frozen modality it is thus less personal than electronic media (Fairclough, 1995: 38).

During the task of deconstructing newspapers each group was provided with one British newspaper, as these were in short supply. The selection of other newspapers was the prerogative of the group. Groups were told to analyse three newspapers each from a different category, namely, one British newspaper, one South African mainstream newspaper and one community newspaper. I guided learners especially regarding the selection of community newspapers ensuring that not all groups chose the same community newspaper. As the lesson progressed I realised that the time would not be sufficient to analyse three newspapers. Since

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<sup>1</sup> Circulation is based on ABC figures for the period July to December 2003.

groups had commenced with a deconstruction of the British newspapers, they were told to complete that activity but that only one subsequent newspaper would need to be analysed. The two groups that had selected the *Sunday Tribune* (16/11/2003) and *Sunday Times* (16/11/2003) respectively, as mainstream newspapers, were asked to deconstruct those newspapers only and not the community newspapers. The remaining three groups would each analyse community newspapers, one analysed *The Rising Sun* (20-26/01/04), one the *Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04) and one the *Chatsworth Sun Shopper*<sup>2</sup> (15/01/04) and *The Express* (mid-January 2004) as these two community newspapers had fewer pages (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 18) . The decision to choose those two kinds of newspapers was based on the results of the Questionnaire for Learners, learners read Sunday newspapers and community newspapers most frequently.

Each newspaper had to be analysed in terms of its ownership, front page and masthead, size, thickness, content, advertising supplements, other supplements and overall quality. In addition, groups had to complete group worksheets for each of the newspapers that was deconstructed (please see Figure 7.5<sup>3</sup> overleaf and Annexure D5). Among other details the worksheet examined aspects of the production of the newspaper, the various sub-sections within it, pictures and advertising. The motivation for constructing the worksheet by integrating the main aspects of Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional model: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice in an unobtrusive manner, was to allow learners to engage with CDA without being hindered by too much theory. The worksheet, and the scrutiny of the similarities, differences, interesting or distinguishing features of the various publications formed the basis of the group presentations that would follow (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 18). This exercise served to structure, consolidate and direct the subsequent discussions.

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<sup>2</sup> It was revealed during the interview with the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun* that *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* was part of his stable of newspapers, but that it was discontinued. The reason was that the use of, *Chatsworth Sun* in its title was not identifiable as part of *The Rising Sun* brand and thus caused confusion in the market place.

<sup>3</sup> In the construction of the worksheet, I integrated the main aspects of Fairclough's (1992) three dimensional model, textual analysis, discursive practice and social practice, which were used in no particular order. Information gathered at this level assisted learner when the model was used to deconstruct the community newspapers.

Figure 7.5: an extract from a completed worksheet used in the general deconstruction of newspapers based on *The Rising Sun*.

Advertising	Analysis
1. What is the approximate ratio of advertising versus copy?	Ratio of 3:1 (more advertisements)
2. What kinds of products are advertised in this newspaper? Can the choice of advertising be linked to the target market of this publication?	Food, Eastern goods, clothes, services. Yes, to working and middle class Indians.
3. Did this newspaper contain any advertising inserts and/or supplements? If so what were they?	Yes – For retailers like Shoprite-Checkers, Game, Furniture City.
4. What can be said about the age, gender, class and race of the people in the advertisements?	Not many people in advertisements; where there are, they are mainly young, Indian women.
5. Are there stereotypes, ideas, lifestyles and desires common to the advertisements contained in this newspaper?	Mostly bargains, savings, sales of food, household items and services.

(Annexure D 5)

### 7.2.1.2 Part B: report-back on the interrogation of newspapers in general

During the group report-back session on 30/01/04, group leaders made their presentations in the order that they had analysed the newspapers (please see Figure 7. 6 below). Each group completed their presentations first before the general class discussion on the newspapers in specific categories.

Figure 7.6: group deconstruction of international and local newspapers.

	British newspapers	S.A. Sunday and Community
Group 1	<i>The Sunday Telegraph</i> (2/11/2003)	<i>Sunday Tribune</i> (16/11/2003)
Group 2	<i>The Independent on Sunday</i> (9/11/2003)	<i>Sunday Times</i> (16/11/2003)
Group 3	<i>The Mail</i> (16/11/2003)	<i>The Rising Sun</i> (20-26/01/04)
Group 4	<i>Metro</i> (1/06/03)	<i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (21/01/04)
Group 5	<i>Metro</i> (19/11/2003)	<i>Chatsworth Sun Shopper</i> (15/01/04) and <i>The Express</i> (mid-January 2004)

At the end of the report-back, each group was assessed by me in the form of a rating scale (please see Figure 7.7) based on the groups' overall level of analysis, understanding and the quality of presentation. Here I used an example for the assessment of group presentations contained in the *Language Literacy and Communication: English Primary Language: Common Tasks for Assessment: (CTA) Grade 9 Teachers' Guide* (DoE, 2003) as a guideline. I had found this assessment sheet designed by the National Department of Education to be a useful tool in assessing Grade 9 learners during their group sessions for the CTA's in the previous year and so had decided to incorporate it into the lesson design.

During the report-back sessions the group spokesperson was given only five minutes. Groups were selected by me to present according to their level of preparedness. The presentations

provided greater insight into the composition of most of the newspapers analysed in the deconstruction process and healthy discussions ensued.

Figure 7.7: a completed group assessment sheet for the deconstruction of newspapers.

<b>Group Assessment sheet for Deconstruction of Newspapers</b>					
<b>Group Members' Names: Zinhle, Karthi, Anneline, Keshnie and Cassandra<sup>4</sup></b>					
<b>Specific Outcomes: Learners access, process and analyse information from a variety of newspapers; Learners use appropriate communication strategies and presentation skills.</b>					
	Not Achieved 1/5	Partially Achieved 2/5	Achieved 3/5	Outstanding 4-5/5	Total 20
Demonstrates a clear understanding of the conditions of production, reception, socio-historical context and power relations that shape each newspaper.			3		5
Demonstrates a clear understanding of the link between the processes of production and reception; the relations between producer and reader and the ideal reader of each newspaper.			3		5
Demonstrates an understanding of the overall construction of the newspaper as a text and the sub-genres that constitute each publication.			3		5
Uses the skills necessary to deliver an interesting and insightful presentation.				4	5

(adapted from DoE, 2003)

Discussion boxes 12, 13 and 14 (please see Figures 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10 below) contain portions of the class discussion after the report-back session which drew on the information presented by the different groups comparing British Sunday newspapers and their South African equivalents. South African Sunday newspapers the *Sunday Times* (16/11/2003), the *Sunday Tribune* (16/11/2003) and British Sunday newspapers *The Mail* (16/11/2003), *The Sunday Telegraph* (2/11/2003), *The Independent on Sunday* (9/11/2003) were compared.

<sup>4</sup> Names have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

Figure 7.8: Discussion Box 12: a comparison between South African Sunday newspapers.

- T- Let's compare the two South African newspapers first.  
L1- They are similar to each other in size, bulk, advertising, news content and the supplements (*Sunday Times Lifestyle* and *Sunday Tribune's SM Magazine* are similar and so are the *Extra* and *Herald* are for Indian readers).  
L2- But I think the *Sunday Times* (16/11/2003) is better, it is more colourful and has a nice magazine.  
L3- The *Sunday Tribune* (16/11/2003) has more news about KwaZulu-Natal.

(Annexure F: 30/01/04: 18)

After a brief analysis of the South African Sunday newspapers the discussion focused on the British Sunday newspapers eventually resulting in interesting comparisons being made. Discussion Box 13 (please see Figure 7.9 below) represents the discourse that transpired.

Figure 7.9: Discussion Box 13: a conversation on British Sunday newspapers.

- T- What about the British Sunday newspapers?  
L1- I think *The Sunday Telegraph* (2/11/2003) is the best.  
L2- No, *The Independent on Sunday* (9/11/2003) looks classy. I think it's for rich and intelligent people. The articles are so long and there are hardly any pictures and less advertising than other papers.  
T- Did you notice that the British newspapers don't have advertising inserts like the South African papers.  
L3- *The Mail* (16/11/2003) is like a gossip newspaper.  
T- That is why it's called a tabloid and the size is smaller. Also, the headlines take up more space than the articles. It is sensationalist, it contained many stories that covered scandals, for example, 'Blair faces relationship smear in aide's divorce' in reference to the British Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair.  
L4- And that picture – Ma'm, that is bad! [referring to a picture of a man covering a woman's breasts with his hands in *The Mail* (16/11/2003)]  
T- Do you think that it's fine to publish a picture like that in a newspaper?  
L4- I think that it's embarrassing, especially if your parents are around.  
L5- Like when you're watching T.V. with your parents and a love scene comes on- it's very uncomfortable.  
T- What about the look of the British newspapers compared to the South African newspapers?  
L6- The British newspapers are narrow compared to the South African Sunday papers.  
T- Yes, although they are also broadsheets, their width is smaller.  
L7- The paper seems so smooth and of a better quality than the South African papers.  
T- Did you also notice the way they are bound? The British newspapers are more compact.

(Annexure F, 30/01/04: 19)

Learners seemed to have enjoyed deconstructing the British newspapers and therefore completed a more detailed examination thereof. An analysis of the discussions regarding these newspapers as well as the preceding discourse and the one that follows on community newspapers (please see Figure 7.10) was undertaken in Chapter 8.

Figure 7.10: Discussion Box 14: a brief conversation on community newspapers.

- T- Let's examine the community newspapers quickly.
- L1- *The Rising Sun* (26/01/04) is the thickest.
- T- Even if you remove the advertising inserts, the newspaper still has more pages than the other community newspapers, although quite a bit of it is still advertising.
- L2- Ma'm, *The Rising Sun* has more adverts than any of the other newspapers, even the overseas ones.
- T- What does that tell you?
- L3- *The Rising Sun* owners are very rich.
- T- You may be right. Remember what I told you earlier, newspaper companies don't make their money from the price of a newspaper but from advertising. What about the other community newspapers?
- L4- *The Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04) has sixteen pages and *The Express* (mid-January 2004) and *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* (15/01/04) have only eight pages of mainly advertising.

(Annexure F: 30/01/04: 19)

In general the above examination revealed pertinent information about the Chatsworth community newspapers. *The Rising Sun* included a substantial amount of community news but the sum of advertising contained in the newspaper was greater with advertising broadsheets from large national retailers like the hyper and superstores being inserted every week. For example, issues of *The Rising Sun* that were deconstructed in detail at a later stage, excluding the advertising inserts, ranged from twenty-two pages for some issues, for example, Vol. 18 No. 44 (11-17/11/03) to fifty-two pages in Vol. 18 No. 41 (21-27/10/03). *The Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04) had just a few advertising inserts mainly from local businesses and consisted of an average of sixteen pages. *The Express* (mid-January 2004) contained no advertising inserts and was made up consistently of just eight pages, most of which was advertising for mainly Chatsworth businesses and service providers.

The general deconstruction based on the activities completed in Segment 1, graduated to a more detailed analysis using Fairclough's CDA model in Segment 2.

### 7.2.2 Segment 2: using Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model for Critical Discourse Analysis to interrogate community newspapers

#### 7.2.2.2 Part A: introduction and group work: interrogation of community newspapers

In this two session segment, Fairclough's (1992(b): 73) Critical Discourse Analysis model was used to deconstruct the three most popular community newspapers: *The Rising Sun*, *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express* which learners familiarised themselves with after completing the questionnaire (please see Annexure A) and the previous segment on the

deconstruction of newspapers. The first session of the lesson was conducted on 20/02/04. Figure 7.11 is an extract from Lesson Plan 6 providing a list of activities that the teacher and learners had to complete meaningfully in order for the objectives to be achieved. In the time that was available not all tasks that had been designed were completed, however, as researcher I ensured that learners understood fully the three dimensions of CDA: Discourse as Text, Discursive Practice, and Social Practice. Therefore, those tasks that were attempted were significant in facilitating understanding of CDA.

Figure 7.11: an extract from Lesson Plan 6.

Teacher's Activities	Learners' Activities
1. Discuss CDA specifically in relation to: 2. Discourse as Text, Discursive Practice and Social Practice. 3. Mediate Fairclough's 3-D model of CDA to learners as simply as possible (please see Figure 1 of Annexure D6). 4. Provide learners with worksheets for each dimension in deconstructing community newspapers (please see Figures 2, 3, 4 of Annexure D6).	1. Listen. 2. Contribute to class and group discussions. 3. Use Figures 1-4 to interrogate community newspapers. 4. Use completed CDA Model and worksheets to contribute to report-back sessions.

(Annexure D6)

After deconstructing newspapers in general and the similarities and differences between mainstream and community newspapers, learners went on to use Fairclough's (1992b: 73) Three Dimensional Model for Critical Discourse Analysis (please see Figure 7.12) to deconstruct specific aspects of the Chatsworth community newspapers. This segment was completed in two sessions although one more would have been preferred but with the mainstream syllabus to complete and the first controlled test due to commence on 23/03/04, I had to complete the Project as soon as possible without compromising the syllabus coverage or the findings of the Project.

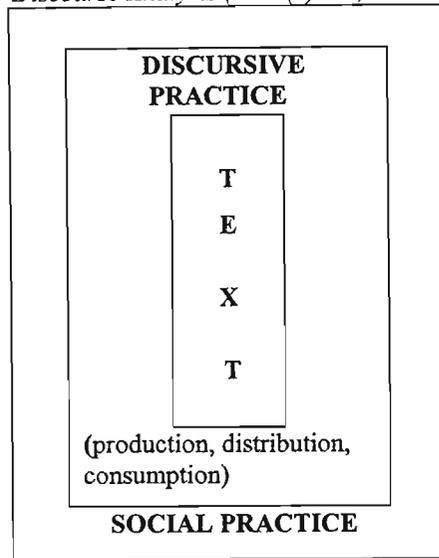
Only the three most popular newspapers were chosen based on claims in respect of circulation figures and the learner survey conducted at the outset which revealed that almost all the respondents had access to two of the three newspapers, *The Rising Sun* and *Chatsworth Tabloid*. The third, newspaper, though relatively new but growing in popularity, was *The Express*. Each group deconstructed only one newspaper. I ensured that groups varied their selection and that the analysis covered all three newspapers. It was in this phase and the next that the opinions and the voices of the isiZulu speaking learners of the discourses pertaining to a predominantly Indian community assumed particular significance.

As mentioned earlier, CDA and its incorporation of various Critical Literacy theories were mediated to learners in a more technical manner at this level. Critical Language Awareness is the application of CDA, therefore Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model (1992) was used in the deconstruction of texts (please see Figure 7.12). As far as intertextuality is concerned, the act of reading thrusts us into a network of textual relations. To interpret a text and to discover its meanings is to outline those relations. A text can therefore be seen as a link in an *Intertextual* chain. A social context and a text affect each other which in turn structure the language that is used (Allen, 2000: 3). For example, one will use formal language structures in writing a business letter as opposed to informal language usage in constructing a letter to a close friend.

Genre Theory also offers insights concerning this model since the best way to understand various genres of texts is to closely examine text consumption (which is part of the CDA model illustrated in Figure 7.12 overleaf. Kress (1995: 64, 65) argues that the key issue in genre is how learners from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds interact with language in a text. He adds that in a multicultural society, the values, meanings and structures inherent in texts are not shared by all members of society; therefore text construction must become an explicit part of the curriculum. In this segment we see how learners of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds 'de-construct' rather than construct texts.

Iser (1974) suggests that texts contain gaps, blanks that affect the reader, who must explain them, connect what they separate, and create in his or her mind aspects that are not in the text but are incited by the text. The reader, consequently, is redefined, no longer a passive recipient of the ideas contained in a text but an active participant (*ibid*). This summary of the basis for Reader Response Theory was also used as an element of the deconstruction of community newspapers.

Figure 7.12: Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model for Critical Discourse Analysis (1992(b): 73).



In the implementation of Fairclough's model in my Community Newspaper Project, I followed the technique that Janks (1997: 330) uses in her work, in the first stages of the analysis of communicative events. CDA was simplified for learners in a 'user-friendly' manner with worksheets containing questions on each dimension, again aiming to construct the theory in a practical, workable manner. Each learner was given a set of worksheets with Figure 7.12 and questions for the analyses of the community newspapers at the level of each dimension (please see Annexure D6 and Figures 7.15, 7.16 and 7.17). Each group was also given a sheet of large chart paper on which three huge, empty embedded boxes were drawn so that working in their co-operative teams, scribes could record the comments of group members and answers to some of the questions for each dimension in the appropriate boxes as they occurred. The embedding of the boxes illustrated the interconnected and interdependent nature of the three dimensions: *Text*, *Discursive Practice* and *Social Practice*. In other words groups had to record the relevant data in the appropriate boxes on an enlarged version of Figure 7.12. In order to show the interconnections, the group scribes were asked to use different colours to indicate similarities and differences (Annexure F, 20/02/04: 20).

Learners used the considerable amount of information about *The Rising Sun*, *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express* that had already been collated in the preceding stage in addition to the details that emanated from the discourse analysis to summarise what was recorded in the boxes of the CDA model. Groups had to complete all three dimensions and then cascade their

analyses to the rest of the class. Of the five groups, two groups analysed *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03, 11-17/11/03), two groups examined *Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04, 4/02/04) and one group deconstructed *The Express* (mid-January 2004) (please see Figures 7.13 and 7.14). The analysis of *The Express* (mid-January 2004) took the shortest time, followed by the *Chatsworth Tabloid* with *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03, 11-17/11/03) taking the longest. The following community newspapers were deconstructed by the following groups:

- Group 1- *The Rising Sun* ( 21-27/10/03)
- Group 2- *The Rising Sun* (11-17/11/03)
- Group 3- *Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04)
- Group 4- *Chatsworth Tabloid* (4/02/04)
- Group 5- *The Express* (mid- January 2004)

Figure 7.13: an extract of a front page of a community newspaper deconstructed by learners.



(Chatsworth Tabloid, 21/01/04).

Figure 7.14 an extract of a front page of a community newspaper deconstructed by learners.



(The Express, mid- January 2004).

I discussed each aspect with learners in as brief and simple a manner as possible and asked group leaders to write certain applicable points into the relevant boxes as we went along (Annexure F, 20/02/04: 21). Advertising, ownership of the media, and the context of community newspapers had already been covered in other lessons. The first dimension that learners had to work with was *Discourse as Text*.

(i) *Discourse as Text*

Discourse as text entailed examining the verbal and visual elements in the newspaper as a whole. Here a very general critical structure was completed in order to give learners a broad view of textual analysis. A more detailed analysis of specific texts from community newspapers was undertaken in the phase that followed. This aspect, which deals mainly with language analysis, is a complex and sometimes technical sphere in its own right (Fairclough, 1992: 74).

There are seven main headings to the analysis of *Discourse as Text*: vocabulary (types of words used), grammar, cohesion (linkages), text structure (genre), type of speech act (request, promise) coherence of texts and intertextuality of texts (*ibid*: 75). In order to simplify the analysis, learners were asked to focus on these seven aspects under the headings: “Analysing the Verbal Signs” and “Analysing the Visual Signs” (Janks, 1997: 333-334) in the analysis of the texts provided in Phase Three. In addition, the following questions were used: What is represented? How is language used to construct the representations? How do the different genres position the reader? How is the newspaper constructed, for example, the visual, sequencing, patterns and logical reasoning (Fairclough, 1995: 59)? These questions were simplified and presented to learners in a more concrete form in order to direct their discussions and analyses (please see Figure 7.15 overleaf).

Simultaneously, examining *Discourse as Text* considers ways of improving reading and writing skills. In scrutinising texts and honing in on specific aspects like grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and visual and verbal signs, as illustrated in Figure 7.15, it was intended that learners develop an automatic inclination for doing this whenever they read community newspapers or any other text.

Figure 7.15: questions on texts from community newspapers.

<b>i) Discourse as Text</b>
<b>1. Examine the community newspaper as a whole and complete the following tasks:</b>
1.1 Identify grammatical, spelling, punctuation errors from the community newspaper headlines.
1.2 What are the different genres of texts contained in the community newspaper?
1.3 What genre dominates the newspaper?
1.4 Examine the vocabulary used and select words that have relevance only to the community of Chatsworth, to Indian South Africans in general or to sections of the Indian community.
1.5 Count the number of people from the community represented in the pictures.
<b>2. Select an article (analysing the verbal signs) and answer the following questions:</b>
2.2 What has been written about?
2.2 Comment on the language that has been used.
2.3 How is the reader positioned by the article?
<b>3. Select a picture (analysing visual signs) and answer the following questions:</b>
3.1 How does the caption anchor the picture?
3.2 What is absent from the picture?

*(ii) Discursive Practice: text production, distribution, and consumption*

The analysis of the economics of media is essential to help high school students understand the complex and paradoxical nature of communicative messages in contemporary culture, their value in the marketplace, and the ways in which audiences function as a commodity (Hobbs, 1997: 170).

The examination of advertising focused on the fact that newspapers with readers that are less affluent get less advertising revenue per copy than papers with richer readers because the advertisers can endorse more expensive products like mobile phones, computers, photocopiers, and cars rather than matches, soap powder, and toothpaste (Goatly, 2000: 250). During the previous segment learners examined the kind of advertising contained in the different newspapers and the rationale for this. During that task learners completed a more in-depth analysis of the kind of advertising found in the community newspapers (please see Annexure D5).

Ownership of the media is concentrated in the hands of large companies whose business is the culture industry aimed at circulating for a profit within a market influenced by commercial pressures and political and social voices (Fairclough, 1995: 42, 43). This idea, explored earlier, was now applied specifically to the Chatsworth community newspapers as

learners scrutinised the market within which they operated using much of the information provided earlier. The questions reflected in Figure 7.16 below were adapted from Fairclough (1995: 59):

*Figure 7.16: questions on production and consumption of community newspapers.*

<b>(ii) Discursive Practice: text production, distribution and consumption</b>	
1.	Who owns or controls the means of production?
2.	What relations exist between the producer of the newspaper and the reader?
3.	Who is the ideal reader of the newspaper?
4.	How is intertextuality at work in terms of what the publisher assumes about what the reader knows and values?

The addressing of these questions lead to an examination of the social and cultural contexts within which newspapers function.

*(iii) Social Practice: examining social and cultural contexts*

In the analysis of the community newspapers using Fairclough’s Three Dimensional Model (1992b: 73), one has to transcend the immediate situation of the communicative event to the wider social and cultural contexts which shape and are shaped by discourse practices in important ways (Fairclough, 1995: 50). In this case the community newspaper is shaped by the discourses of the people and events concerning the Indian community of Chatsworth and, in turn, the community of Chatsworth is shaped by the discourses contained in the newspapers. Particular attention was paid to the way the Indian community is positioned in these publications, and the attitudes of the respondents.

This task involved the context of the community newspapers being studied in some detail with the deconstruction following a general discussion on the history of Indians in South Africa and a background to the Indian press in South Africa. In this regard a brief examination of newspapers like *Post*, *Sunday Tribune Herald* and the *Sunday Times Extra* was undertaken. In addition the history of Chatsworth was discussed. Books like *The Poors of Chatsworth* (Desai, 2000), *From Canefields to Freedom: A Chronicle of Indian South African Life* (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2000), *The Indentured Indian in Natal: 1860-1917* (Henning, 1993), and copies of Chatsworth’s first comprehensive community newspaper *Chatsworth SUN* from the database that I had established, were brought to class for learners to peruse in order to gain greater insights.

The main questions on the third dimension of Fairclough’s model, *Social Practice: examining social and cultural contexts* that were to be addressed during the group discussions are outlined in Figure 7.17 first four questions are adapted from Fairclough (1995: 59) and Questions 5 and 6 from Luke (2000: 6).

Figure 7.17: questions on the social and cultural contexts of community newspapers.

(iii) <i>Social Practice: examining social and cultural contexts</i>
1. What is the socio-historical context of the newspaper?
2. What power relations shape this community newspaper?
3. What beliefs, ideas, principles are outlined by this community newspaper?
4. Does this community newspaper try to maintain or change existing relations of power?
5. How do the dominant cultural discourses position and construct readers, their understandings of the world, their social relations and their identities?
6. Which possible readers are silenced or marginalised

I observed that the planned tasks would not be completed by the time the session ended as all groups had not completed Questions 2 and 3 of Figure 7.15 based on *Text* and the questions on *Discursive Practice* and *Social Practice* (please see Figures 7.16 and 7.17). I therefore decided, given the time constraints mentioned earlier, to tell learners that since some of the ground, for example, the composition of the community newspapers had already been covered in the previous segment and that the analysis of individual articles and pictures from the community newspapers were to follow in the next phase, Questions 3 and 4 of Figure 7.15 should not be attempted. In addition the questions on *Discursive Practice* and *Social Practice* should also be left out as a class discussion would follow the report-back during which the important aspects of these sections would be covered. Group scribes recorded the contributions to the answers to each question in writing and presented a summarised version during the report-back session which is illustrated next in a series of figures and extracts from the field notes. I urged learners to complete only Question 1 of Figure 7.15 and the Critical Discourse Analysis chart before the next session.

#### 7.2.2.2 Part B: report-back on the interrogation of community newspapers

On 23/02/04, as this lesson preceded a lunch break, I made arrangements for learners to remain with me during the break as well so that the report-back session could be meaningfully concluded. I selected only three of the five groups to report back, one on each of the three newspapers since two were working with *The Rising Sun* and two with *Chatsworth Tabloid*. The selection was based on my observations of which group had more

in-depth, meaningful information on the publications although the groups did not differ significantly in their level of analysis. What began to emerge at this stage was that the groups, having been structured democratically, were constituted of learners of similar aptitudes and attitudes. Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 were more committed to the tasks than Group 5. I guessed that Group 5 had asked to analyse *The Express* because it was the leanest newspaper. They only got as far as the other groups in their discussion. I had intended to again use the group assessment sheet but since all group work tasks would not be completed, this also had to be forfeited. (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 21).

Groups that were not selected to report back were asked to supplement the information presented by the selected group if necessary. There was no choice as far as *The Express* was concerned since there was only one group analysing that text. I did not provide reasons to the class as to how I had selected groups to present but made it appear as if it was a random choice. Group leaders were asked to present using the chart outlining the CDA framework and the answers to Question 1 (please see Figure 7.15) written within the appropriate box (*ibid*).

The following analyses and discussions are based on field notes for 23/02/04 recorded during the group report-back session on *Discourse as Text*. A detailed look at specific aspects of how the community newspaper operated was undertaken. In interrogating the community newspapers as text, groups had time to complete only Questions 1.1 to 1.5 (please see Figure 7.15). The chalkboard was used to good effect by me to categorise the responses of groups. In response to Question 1.1: *Identify grammatical, spelling, punctuation errors from the community newspaper headlines*, Group 1 highlighted the following errors in *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03):

*School-girls' killers given life sentence* (p2)  
*ABH and iTalk celebrates World Hunger Day* (p12)  
*Crossmoor residents stand-up against crime* (p4) (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 22).

Group 2 added the errors below from *The Rising Sun* (11-17/11/03):

*Chatsworth: A drug dealers dream?*  
*Response from R. K. Khans against allegations*  
*Charitable organisations reaps rewards of CAC*<sup>5</sup> (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 22).

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<sup>5</sup> Chatsworth Athletic Club.

There were no errors in the headlines of the two editions of *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express*. A general observation of the common errors made in the headlines revealed that they related mainly to concord or the use of the apostrophe. Each error was discussed and corrected. For example, a discussion of the use of the headline: *Response from R. K. Khans<sup>6</sup> against allegations*, revealed how the community newspaper perpetuates the erroneous use of language. The exercise of identifying grammatical and spelling errors creates a critical awareness of language and is likely to improve learners' language abilities.

The responses to Question 1.2: *What are the different sections contained in the community newspaper?* were collated from the report-back of all five groups. The table below reflects the different genres that constitute the three community newspapers.

Figure 7.18: sections found in Chatsworth community newspapers.

<i>The Rising Sun</i>	<i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i>	<i>The Express</i>
News	News	News
Advertising	Advertising	Advertising
Advertorials	Advertorials	Advertorials
Letter to the Editor	Cupid's Corner	Astrology
Health and Beauty	Lifestyle	Classifieds
School News	Usha Uncut (column)	Sport
Events Guide	What's On	
Star Guide	Your Stars with Elma	
Classifieds	Classifieds	
Sport	Sport	
Motoring	Crime Round-up	

(Annexure F, 23/02/04: 22)

The responses to Question 1.2 (please see Annexure D6), reinforced learners' understanding of Genre and illustrated that while *The Rising Sun* and *Chatsworth Tabloid* included a variety of genres, the main purpose of *The Express* was to function as an advertising free sheet as it was glaringly devoid of news and genres other than advertising. The other two newspapers carry more articles but are still dominated by advertisements and advertorials. I pointed out to learners that the 'Health and Beauty' section was made up of advertorials of businesses that operated in this industry and that the 'Classifieds' section could also be seen as advertising. The *Chatsworth Tabloid* at that stage did not publish 'School News' or a

<sup>6</sup> It is idiosyncratic for some people of Indian origin to attach plurals to certain proper nouns especially the names of stores, for example, 'Games' for 'Game' in reference to the large retail outlet (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 22).

‘Letters to the Editor’ column. This publication did, however, fulfil a social responsibility by publishing a ‘Crime Round-up’ column (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 22).

The unanimous answer to Question 1.3: *What genre dominates the newspaper?* was that the advertising genre dominated each of the community newspapers. As already discussed in the general deconstruction of newspapers, the community newspapers have fewer articles and a higher advertising or advertorial ratio (*ibid*).

In replying to Question 1.4: *Examine the vocabulary used and select words that have relevance only to the community of Chatsworth, to Indian South Africans in general, or to sections of the Indian community*, learners revealed some interesting terms listed in Figure 7.19 below:

Figure 7.19: words relevant to Chatsworth and Indians used in community newspapers.

<b><i>The Rising Sun (21-27/10/03) and The Rising Sun (11-17/11/03):</i></b>
Punjabi, saries, kurthi top, halaal, Diwali, Deepavali, Ramadaan Mubarak, agarbathi, dhall, vedda, ghee, Lakshmi, Arena Park, Bayview, Crossmoor, Woodhurst, ABH, Rajbansi.
<b><i>Chatsworth Tabloid (21/01/04) and Chatsworth Tabloid (04/02/04):</i></b>
Andhra culture, Raam Bhajan, Bharatha Natayam, sharara, Fragrance Street Market, MF, Visvin Reddy, Lotus FM, Bhangra sessions.
<b><i>The Express (mid-January 2004):</i></b>
Kavady, harmonium, thabla, dholak.

(Annexure F, 23/02/04: 22)

Here all groups contributed to drawing up the list that, to the majority of African learners, was incomprehensible, but some Indian learners were also perplexed by the above lexicon which is explained in Figure 7.20. Predictably, therefore, the Indian learners offered brief definitions and explanations to the vocabulary and expressions, The list encouraged healthy and stimulating discussion on the terms. Incrementally, a representation of The Indian Community of Chatsworth began to emerge for learners. An African learner said that he had gone to school with Indian learners from Grade 1 but for the first time he realised how much he did not know about Indian culture. Some Indian learners, too, said that they had not heard words like ‘dholak’ before. Figure 7.20 provides a summary of the meanings of the terms that emerged and presents an idea of how the discussion progressed.

Figure 7.20: definitions of words relevant to Chatsworth and Indians used in community newspapers.

The Punjabi, sari, kurthi top, sharara - garments worn by Indian women.
Halaal - kosher food for a person of the Islamic faith to eat.
Diwali /Deepavali - reference to the Hindu Festival of Lights.
Ramadan Mubarak- the month-long fast observed by people of the Islamic faith.
Agarbathi- incense.
Dhal- dried split pea, a staple soup-like dish among South Africans of Indian origin.
Vedda- a flat chilli-bite made from ground dhal.
Ghee- form of butter from which the salt has been removed.
Lakshmi - Hindu goddess of wealth and prosperity.
Arena Park, Bayview, Crossmoor and Woodhurst - Chatsworth neighbourhood Units 6, 2, 11 and 10 respectively.
ABH-acronym for Aryan Benevolent Home, a home for children and the elderly that has a rich and long history.
Rajbansi- a controversial Indian politician- leader of the MF (Minority Front), who was minister in the House of Delegates and who reinvented himself after apartheid and is still active in politics. He regularly features in <i>The Rising Sun</i> and <i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> , using these publications as mouthpieces for his political views.
Visvin Reddy- equally controversial local politician who crossed the floor from the Minority Front to the Democratic Alliance to the African National Congress.
Andhra culture refers to the culture of Telegu-speaking Indians who originated from the South Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. The Raam Bhajan being part of this culture is a session of song and the playing of Indian drums as a thanksgiving to God.
The Bharatha Natyam - an ancient classical Indian dance form.
The Fragrance Street Market - a place where informal traders can sell their wares.
Radio Lotus - a national radio station serving the Indian community.
Bhangra - a form of modern Indian dancing, usually to songs from Bollywood movies.
Kavady - a South Indian Hindu religious festival associated with penance through reverence to Hindu deity, Lord Muruga.
The harmonium, thabla and dholak - all Indian musical instruments.

(Annexure F, 23/02/04: 23)

Before groups could answer Question 1.5: *Count the number of people from the community represented in the pictures*, they were told not to count people that appeared obscure in pictures, or those who appeared in advertisements who were clearly not community members. An approximate number would suffice. The approximate number of people counted by each of the groups is as follows:

- Group 1 - *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03) - 229
- Group 2 - *The Rising Sun* (11-17/11/03) -171
- Group 3 - *Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04) - 31
- Group 4 - *Chatsworth Tabloid* (04/02/04) - 67
- Group 5 - *The Express* (mid- January 2004) - 29

(Annexure F, 23/02/04: 23)

For every picture of a person that appears in the newspaper, there are a host of people associated with that person who will read the newspaper. The more pictures, the more family members, friends, neighbours want to read the newspaper and so circulation increases (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 23). In this regard group photographs advance this goal to a greater

degree than individual pictures. This idea is conveyed in Chapter 3, in a summary of *The Randy Rooster*, (Argus Group Community Newspapers, 1988) which provides a strategy on how community newspapers should function. The newspaper that seemed to have this tactic 'down pat' was *The Rising Sun*. The figures of the number of 'heads' counted by the groups revealed that *The Rising Sun* had a maximum of seven times more heads than the other two community newspapers (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 23).

The construction of a newspaper as text is determined by and also influences discursive practice, in this case the economics of the media: production, distribution and consumption a discussion of which followed after the feedback from the groups. Caxton Newspapers (owns a 45% stake) and *The Rising Sun* Group possesses and controls the means of production as the joint owners of *The Rising Sun*. I used the example of the Diwali issue of *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03) to illustrate that it was an example of intertextuality at work in terms of what the publisher assumes about what the reader knows and values? This issue was bulkier than normal because of a wide array of advertisements for:

- Food items especially those used in the making of Indian sweetmeats
- Prayer goods and lamps
- Traditional Indian garments, clothing and jewellery sales
- An endless variety of fireworks

Traditionally, Hindus, the majority of whom reside in Chatsworth, celebrate Diwali by praying, preparing a variety of sweet and savoury delicacies to be shared with family, friends and neighbours, adorning themselves with new clothes and lighting lamps and fireworks at night to symbolise the triumph of light over darkness, and good over evil. In addition, this issue of *The Rising Sun* contains a series of Diwali messages in the form of full-colour advertisements from the KwaZulu-Natal Ministries of Health, Transport and Works as well as messages from community and religious leaders (*ibid*).

If the ultimate goal was the consumption of the product, then an enormous amount of effort had to be afforded to text production and distribution. It was pointed out to learners that an understanding of the target market for the purposes of advertising was an essential component of text production. Evidence of this was *The Rising Sun's* (21-27/10/03) Diwali issue and *Chatsworth Tabloid's* (4/02/04) Valentine's Day issue. The commemoration of events such as Diwali and Valentine's Day greatly increased the volume of advertising in



dimension of *Social Practice* and the conditions of ‘production’ and ‘reception’ showed learners why this was so by using the different publications (books and newspapers) mentioned earlier pertaining to South Africans of Indian origin. Learners were particularly fascinated with, *From Canefields to Freedom: A Chronicle of Indian South African Life* (Dhupelia, 2000) which is mainly a pictorial record of the lives of Indians in South Africa since they arrived in this country in 1860 (*ibid*). An examination of the above text gave impetus to the discussion below (please see Figure 7.22):

Figure 7.22: Discussion Box 15 showing a conversation about Indian South Africans.

- T- Yes, Zinhle?
- L1- The picture on page 9 (of indentured Indian women who were farm labourers carrying baskets on their heads) reminds me of African women in the rural areas.
- T- Many of the pictures show you that the lives of indentured labourers were not easy. They were basically treated like slaves. By the way, does anyone know when Indians first came to South Africa?
- (Silence) Indians arrived by ship on the shores of Durban in 1860 from different parts of India.
- L2- You know Ma’m I never gave this much thought, 1860 wasn’t that long ago. I kinda always think of myself as a South African. I don’t really think that I’m Indian, India is just this place far, far away. I know that my forefathers came from there but it’s hard to picture.
- T- Andile?
- L3- Ma’m, I know Indians came from India a long time ago but that’s it. You don’t really think about it. We know that we are different especially from a cultural point of view but that’s it.
- T- Tell me, Andile about your experiences of interacting with Indians at school.
- L3- Well, that’s a difficult one. Although African and Indian learners get on very well during class time, some of us have been together for years, during the breaks it’s different, Indians ‘hang out’ with other Indians and African learners with other African learners.
- L4- I always thought Indians were rich, business people, but when I came to this school, I saw that Indian learners are from working class homes and some are very poor.
- T- So, that’s the stereotype of Indians. It’s far from the truth. How do you feel about reading the Chatsworth community newspapers?
- L- Some of it is okay. I get to know about the community in which my school is but I think that it will have more meaning if you are from Chatsworth, then you will understand it better.
- T- Zinhle, what do you think about the community newspapers.
- L- Well, I find parts of it interesting especially if there are pictures of Indian clothes and actresses. I’m into the Bollywood thing. The girls are always lending me Bollywood movies, but I agree with Andile, you have to live in Chatsworth to understand it fully- all those words we discussed earlier. I didn’t know most of them.

(Annexure F, 23/02/04: 24)

I proceeded to ask whether learners of Indian origin saw themselves as Indians or as South Africans. The majority said that they viewed themselves as South Africans first, that apart from Bollywood movies, the food, Indian garments, religion and language which constructed them as ‘Indian’, India was a place far away that they could not imagine living in. I went on to give learners a brief History of the ‘Indian Press’ in this country and its role in

perpetuating the culture and identity of Indian South Africans (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 25).

After the Critical Discourse Analysis of the community newspapers at the level of each dimension was complete, an analysis of specific texts from the community newspapers highlighted the theme of beauty contests. By focusing on these texts my intention was to illustrate how the ideas of sexism and ethnicity are perpetuated.

### **7.3 Phase 3: analysis of sources from community newspapers on the theme of beauty contests**

Phase 3 involved working with sources from the Chatsworth community newspapers centred on a specific theme featured extensively in all community newspapers, namely, beauty pageants. During August 2003 the three Chatsworth community newspapers as well as the *Sunday Times Extra* gave front-page coverage to the outgoing Miss India South Africa. Another trend that caught my attention at around the same time, August 2003, was the promotion of beauty contests that focused on young girls in two of the three community newspapers.

According to Gardner (2002: 1), these phenomena needed to be explored to illustrate that stereotyped images create false ideals that real people cannot hope to live up to, foster low self-esteem for those who do not fit in and restrict people's ideas of what they are capable of. With this in mind, I therefore deemed it important for learners to develop a critical understanding of cultural stereotypes regarding Indian South Africans and to examine representations of racial and gender stereotyping, ethnocentricity, and consumerism.

In post-apartheid South Africa, the concept of nationhood, and what it means to be South African, has become important points of discussion. This debate is particularly relevant to South Africans of Indian origin and is therefore of concern to the majority of learners involved in this Project. Similar debates about nationhood have been prevalent in post-colonial Australian society. The parallels between Australia and South Africa are clear in an examination of the work on texts done by Martino (1997) and Colin and Susan Kenworthy (1997), the structures of which have shaped the design of Figures 7.24, 7.26, 7.29 and 7.31 of the classroom intervention illustrated later in this chapter. Figures 7.24 and 7.26, for example, may appear simplistic, but they direct the reading of the text, ensuring that specific aspects are engaged with and not ignored by the reader.

### 7.3.1 Segment 1: beauty contests in general

The extract from Lesson Plan 7 below (please see Figure 7.23) refers to the tasks that needed to be completed by the teacher and learners on 02/03/04 in order for the objectives to be achieved. Once again, while not all tasks were concluded, those that were seen as essential to addressing the key questions of the Project were completed meaningfully. The non-completion of some tasks, therefore, did not compromise the objectives of the lesson.

Figure 7.23: an extract from Lesson Plan 7.

Teacher's Activities	Learners' Activities	H/W
1. Discuss media, gender, beauty contests and the Miss India South Africa Contest. (please see Figure 1). 2. Provide learners with worksheets for deconstructing Texts 1-5 (please see Figures 2, 3, 4 of Annexure D7). 3. Direct group discussion.	1. Listen. 2. Contribute to class and group discussions on how women are positioned in society and community newspapers. 3. Use Figures 1-2 of Annexure D7 to analyse Texts 1-5. 4. Complete questions based on texts.	Please see Figure 2.

(Annexure D7)

This segment began with a general class discussion on beauty contests and their significance in South African society, types of beauty pageants, and famous beauty queens who used their titles to advance their careers. Former 'Miss World' Aishwarya Rai who has become a sought after Bollywood actress was an example that was given by a learner. The discussion also extended to proms and debutantes balls which had become an established tradition in most South African schools including Community Secondary. A discussion ensued on the characteristics of various stereotypes practiced in our society, for example those pertaining to Jews, Blacks, Indians, Coloureds and gender was linked to the idea of beauty pageants (Annexure F, 2/03/04: 25). In the segments that followed, newspaper coverage of beauty pageants exclusive to the Indian community was examined<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> The western concept of the beauty queen contest was adapted with an Indian flavour. Sari-queen competitions were popular in the 1960s. Today the premier competition is the Miss India South Africa Pageant (Dhupelia, 2000: 128).

### 7.3.2 Segment 2: Miss India South Africa

This segment was conducted on the same day, 02/03/04, as the preceding segment did not take much time to conclude. The Miss India South Africa Pageant is part of a global beauty contest aimed at the worldwide Indian diaspora. The winners of the competitions at national levels qualify to enter the Miss India Worldwide contest. The South African competition is held at provincial levels first before the national competition can be held. There are also Mr India South Africa, Miss Teen India South Africa, and a recently launched Mrs India South Africa Pageant.

In July/August 2007, the media engaged in an interesting debate about the Miss Teen India South Africa Port Elizabeth leg of the competition when a Xhosa girl, Anelisa Willem, was crowned the winner. The controversy arose when it was reported in the *Sunday Times* (29/07/07) that a group attending the pageant walked out in protest when Anelisa Willem was chosen as Miss Teen India South Africa-Port Elizabeth. This article attracted a huge response from readers who articulated their views in letters to the editor. In condemning the incident, Ronnie Govender of Cape Town stated:

Perhaps a major influence is the 'Bollywoodisation' of our youth. These Miss India South Africa beauty contests spring from a commercial distortion of Indian culture and entrench sexism and racism. Thus what happened in Port Elizabeth was not entirely surprising. ... Willem must be commended for standing her ground and for her observation that when an Indian girl was chosen as Miss South Africa, "Blacks did not object".  
(*Sunday Times*, 05/08/07: 17)

Another reader, Owen Mngonelwa said:

I fail to understand why anyone other than an Indian person would want to take part in an Indian beauty pageant. Why did the organizers fail to stipulate beforehand that participation is reserved? The organisers are pushing ethnicity. Where have you heard of a white beauty pageant, a Xhosa beauty pageant, and a coloured beauty pageant?  
(*Sunday Times*, 05/08/07: 17)

In deconstructing the images of Miss India South Africa, I had hoped to engage learners in a similar debate highlighting issues of 'Bollywoodisation', racism, sexism, and ethnicity as communicated by the above readers.

*The Rising Sun* (12-18/08/03) (please see Annexure D7, Text 1), *Chatsworth Tabloid* (13/08/03) (please see Annexure D7 Text 2), *The Express* (Mid-August 2003) (please see Annexure D7 Text 3) and *Sunday Times Extra* (10/08/03) (please see Annexure D7 Text 4)

all published pictures of the outgoing Miss India South Africa in different poses and wearing different ‘Bollywood–style’ outfits by the same fashion house specialising in exclusive ‘Indian’ garments. These texts were numbered Annexure D7, Texts 1 to 4 respectively. Around the same time, in the run-up to Women’s Day, the *Daily News* (7/09/2003: 5) (please see Annexure D7, Text 5) carried an article and a large colour picture of Miss India South Africa, Sorisha Naidoo receiving the “Woman of the Year Award” for her contribution to community work. In this picture she is seen receiving the award, dressed in a suit, from a former winner of the prize.

In this segment, conducted on 02/03/04, each group was given copies of the above issues of the newspapers and each learner was provided with photocopies of all five texts. The preliminary task involved groups examining each text and then completing the table containing statements about each (please see Figure 7.24 below).

Figure 7.24: textual analysis: Miss India South Africa (completed).

Statements about Texts	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
1. This text appears on the front page.	×	×	×	×	
2. This text represents women primarily in terms of physical beauty.	×	×	×	×	
3. This text portrays Indian women as Bollywood actresses.	×	×	×	×	
4. This text appeals mainly to Indian South Africans.	×	×	×	×	
5. This text shows that the garment worn by Miss India South Africa is from “Suhaag: House of Asian Fashion”.	×	×	×	?	
6. This text reflects a western ‘take’ on Indian garments.	×	×	×	×	
7. This text presents a limited view on what it means to be an Indian South African.	×	×	×	×	
8. This text challenges the dominant stereotypes associated with beauty queens.					×

(Annexure D7)

As mentioned earlier, this exercise may have appeared to be easy to complete but it was intentionally constructed in such a manner to direct the reading of the text so that learners could, in their groups, interface with specific aspects and not ignore them. Some of the questions also aimed at looking at technical elements, like the anchoring of pictures by captions and the size of pictures to highlight how these techniques were used to centre the reader’s focus on specific features. On completion of this group task, a class discussion was conducted during which the above statements were briefly discussed. The following report on the discussion is based on field notes for 02/03/04.

The answer to the first statement was straightforward. All five groups had this correct. In

response to Statement 2: *This text represents women primarily in terms of physical beauty*, all groups agreed that the first four texts focused only on the physical beauty of the outgoing Miss India South Africa while Text 5 shows her as the recipient of a ‘Woman of the Year’ award, affirming her contribution to uplifting the community. Again, for Statement 3: *This text portrays Indian women as Bollywood actresses*, there was agreement that the first four texts constructed Miss India South Africa in a glamorous, Bollywood mode. As far as Statement 4: *This text appeals mainly to Indian South Africans*, was concerned, there was some disagreement about Text 5 (Annexure F, 2/03/04: 26). Learners agreed that the first four texts appealed mainly to Indian South Africans, especially young women, because of the garments that were worn and the publications in which they appeared. Some believed that Text 5 also appealed predominantly to Indians because there were two people of Indian descent in the picture. However, others said that the appeal was broader as the picture appeared in a paper that was not exclusively for Indian people (*ibid*).

Statement 5: *This text shows that the garment worn by Miss India South Africa is from “Suhaag: House of Asian Fashion”*, was also straightforward with some learners able to deduce that the fact that the pictures appeared in all three community newspapers around the same time with captions affirming that ‘Suhaag House of Fashion’ was one of the sponsors of the Miss India South Africa pageant, was an advertising ploy with the possible underlying message: if you too want to look like a ‘Miss India South Africa’, buy a garment from Suhaag. Not all learners agreed on Statements 6: *This text reflects a western ‘take’ on Indian garments* and Statement 7: *This text presents a limited view on what it means to be an Indian South African*. Figure 7.25 illustrates learners’ views (*ibid*).

Figure 7.25: Discussion Box 16: conversation on Texts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 of Lesson Plan 7.

L1- I think that the way Miss India South Africa is dressed is the way members of the Indian community dress to certain functions.  
 T- What are your views, Zinhle?  
 L2- Ma’m if the shawls are removed from each outfit, they wouldn’t look eastern and the outfit in Text 4 is just too revealing. (Most of the girls seemed to agree).  
 L3- I don’t think the way she is dressed promotes Indian culture. Cultural clothes are not so revealing.  
 L4 (Boy) - I think she looks ‘sexy’.  
 L5 (Boy) - The outfit is ‘hot’.  
 L6- I think I would wear a dress like that. I don’t see a problem with it.  
 T- You need to think about whether casting Indian women, especially, in a Bollywood mode constructs a specific image of them that is not necessarily correct. It stereotypes people’s understanding of who Indian South Africans are.

(Annexure F, 02/03/04: 26)

The response to Statement 8: *This text challenges the dominant stereotypes associated with beauty queens* was that Miss India South Africa was positioned very differently in this picture, as a community activist in a suit and not stereotypically like a beauty queen. It was as if she was a completely different person. She looked like a business executive. I pointed out to learners that very often people are positioned differently according to the garments they wear as in the case of Miss India South Africa (*ibid*).

I had intended that respondents be engaged in an individual task that required the answering of a series of questions on each of the texts that was not for assessment purposes but to feed into a subsequent class discussion after which they would complete a creative task, as homework, involving role reversal<sup>8</sup> (please see Figure 7.26).

Figure 7.26: individual responses to texts: Miss India South Africa.

<b>Individual Responses to Questions on Texts 1-5</b>
1. What were your initial responses to each text?
2. Describe the garments worn by Miss India South Africa in each text.
3. Are these garments a reflection of traditional Indian dress?
4. Discuss the captions and / or articles that anchor each of the pictures.
5. Suggest why four of the five pictures appear on the front pages.
6. Comment on the size of the pictures and <b>photographic techniques</b> used.
7. Provide reasons why you would / would not / cannot participate in this pageant.
8. Who owns the rights to this pageant and how do they benefit from this contest?
9. State the groups of South Africans are excluded from participation in the Miss India South Africa pageant.
<b>Homework Task: Reversing the Roles</b>
Take the pictures of Miss India South Africa, cut out the heads and replace with people who would normally be excluded from participating in this beauty pageant. Keep the heads but cut out the garments and replace with fashion that may not be considered suitable for the Miss India South Africa pageant.

However, once again due to the restrictions on time and the upcoming controlled test, learners requested at the outset, that the homework task be set aside. I agreed to do this as they were told at the beginning of the Project that there was no obligation to complete any task. The task was read out and discussed so that the idea of role reversal could be reinforced. They did, however, work with role-reversal during the segment on fairy tales. Since there was an overlap regarding some of the questions in the preceding class discussion, the forum that followed focused on Questions 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Figure 7.26 above.

<sup>8</sup> The role reversal task, had it been attempted, would have required that learners select four of the five photocopies of the texts, change the heads of two texts and the garments of another two using pictures from magazines and newspapers. In the concluding session that ensued, the creative pieces of work done by the learners on role reversal would have been displayed followed by a class discussion based on the above tasks.

Regarding Question 4: *Discuss the captions and / or articles that anchor each of the pictures:* learners felt that Texts 1 and 2 had very brief captions while texts 3, 5 had more substantial captions that also covered Miss India South Africa's award as a 'Woman of the Year'. Text 4 was anchored by a more substantial article that covered all aspects of her reign including the 'Woman of the Year' award. As far as Question 6: *Comment on the size of the pictures and photographic techniques used,* was concerned, some learners felt that the huge sizes of Texts 2, 3, 4 and 5 could be due to the general popularity of Sorisha Naidoo not only as Miss India South Africa but as a local radio disc jockey. I informed the class that given her popularity, the huge pictures were intended to enhance the readership of the newspaper. The responses to Question 7: *Provide reasons why you would / would not / cannot participate in this pageant* and 9: *State the groups of South Africans are excluded from participation in the Miss India South Africa pageant* were considered to be related and so were addressed together. Figure 7.27 on the following page is an important discussion on how community newspapers perpetuate discourses that tend to marginalise specific groups.

Figure 7.27: Discussion Box 17: a conversation on participation in the Miss India S.A. Pageant.

L1 - I don't think that I can enter this competition because I'm an African girl.  
 L2 - None of the boys can participate- obviously.  
 L3 - Although I'm an Indian girl I don't think I stand a chance because I have a short hairstyle and I'm dark in complexion.  
 L4- It's sad to say that in the Indian community many think that only if you are fair skinned you are beautiful.  
 L5- And most Indian girls and women have long hair. My mother says that when she was young girls were not allowed to have short hair styles.  
 T- By show of hands tell me how many of you will not be allowed to participate in this pageant (about twelve learners raise their hands). That's almost half the class that would be excluded for various reasons mainly race and gender. So these pageants can perpetuate discrimination by being sectional, the title 'Miss India South Africa' tells you that. You have also said that it conforms to a stereotypical view on beauty, fair skin, long hair and so on.  
 L6- But Ma'm, I won't mind participating in this pageant because it opens doors for you. Just look at Sorisha Naidoo, she's a radio DJ, she won so many prizes, she won the 'Woman of the Year Award'. Others who won the competition are now in good positions.  
 T- That is definitely another perspective to this pageant.  
 L7- Next year I would like to participate in the Mr India South Africa pageant for the same reason. I think that if you win you become famous and that gives you the advantage over others.  
 T- I think that would apply mainly if you want to follow a career in the entertainment or hospitality industries.

(Annexure F, 02/03/04: 27)

A closer analysis of the above discussion is undertaken in Chapter 8.

None of the learners knew the answer to Question 8: *Who owns the rights to this pageant and how do they benefit from this contest?* I enlightened them that the Miss India South Africa pageant was part of a Worldwide Committee and that a former journalist was the chairman of the South African pageant which is intended to promote Indian culture, but it also generates an income for the organisers. Learners were invited to think about whether this beauty pageant could be considered to be a cultural event or not (Annexure F, 2/03/04: 28). The final segment focusing on Beauty Contests centred on the promotion of beauty pageants for young girls by two of the three Chatsworth community newspapers.

### 7.3.3 Segment 3: community newspaper pageants for young girls

This lesson was conducted on 11/03/04. The extract from Lesson Plan 8 (please see Figure 7. 28 on the following page) also focuses on the learner and teacher activities that were planned for this lesson. As far as this lesson was concerned, though, the tasks planned were not too ambitious and unless there was an overlap with another question, all questions were completed by learners making the objectives achievable.

Figure 7. 28: an extract from Lesson Plan 8.

Teacher's Activities	Learners' Activities
1. Discuss Media, gender, beauty contests and the Little Miss... Contests. 2. Provide learners with worksheets for deconstructing Texts 1-3 (please see Figures 1, 2 of Annexure D8). 3. Direct group discussion.	1. Contribute to class and group discussions on how women are positioned in society and community newspapers. 2. Use Figures 1-2 of Annexure D 8 to analyse Texts 1-3 to complete questions based on texts.

(Annexure D 8)

My intention in facilitating the analysis of beauty pageants for young girls organised by the community newspapers, was to illustrate to learners that potentially damaging cultural and gender stereotypes are perpetuated by the media from a very young age. The media in general can be seen as promoting the sexualisation of very young girls, often to their detriment. This is discussed further in Chapter 8.

As with the previous lesson, the tasks given to learners were intended to generate a more in-depth understanding of the texts, pointing to specific aspects that I wanted them to focus on as the researcher:

- that the publishers, in invitations to participate in these pageants that appeared in their newspapers, were addressing the parents and not the little girls;
- a detailed examination and comparison of texts was intended to show how the little girls were constructed provocatively and that they were socialised from a young age to conform to stereotypes of the way girls should behave;

- in showing only Indian girls, other races may be reluctant to enter;
- that the publisher stood to gain financially by organising these pageants.

Three sources (Annexure D8 Texts 1, 2 and 3 respectively) were selected for analysis: “Are you the Next...” (*The Rising Sun*, 13-19/05/03) “Little Miss Chatsworth Tabloid” (*Chatsworth Tabloid*, 6/08/03), “Little Miss ...” (*The Rising Sun*, 26/08 - 1/09/03) (please refer to Annexure D8). As with the previous segment, groups were given a copy of each newspaper to provide access to full colour versions of the texts and each learner was given a photocopy of each text. Groups used Figure 7.29 to provide the impetus for a short discussion on each text and to draw links between them. Thereafter the individual questions contained in Figure 7.31 were answered. A discussion featuring comments from each group concluded this activity.

Figure 7.29: textual analysis: “Little Miss...” (completed).

Statements about Texts	T1	T2	T3
1. This text shows young girls appearing older than they actually are.	×	×	×
2. This text reinforces the fairy-tale fantasies of young girls who want to become queens and princesses.	×	×	×
3. This text promotes the belief in children that girls and women must be revered for their physical beauty.	×	×	×
4. The pictures are of young girls who are South Africans of Indian origin.	×	×	×
5. This text appears on the front page.	×	×	×

The following discussion is based on field notes for 11/03/04. During the report-back, all groups affirmed each of the statements in relation to each of the texts and Discussion Box 18 (please see Figure 7.30 below) is part of the subsequent discussion:

Figure 7.30: Discussion Box 18: a conversation on Texts 1, 2, 3 of Lesson Plan 8.

<p>L1- These girls are made to look like little versions of big girls.  L2- Too sexy for their age, look at the way they are posing.  L3- They get ‘big ideas’ before their time. That’s why teenage pregnancy is increasing!  L4- ...and child abuse.  T- Another factor you need to look at is that when girls become obsessed with their appearance at an early age they may believe from early on that a woman is defined by her appearance only and not by her worth. Children should be allowed to enjoy a wholesome childhood. There is no hurry to grow up.</p>
---

(Annexure F, 11/03/04: 28)

A more detailed analysis was undertaken when learners answered the questions on each of the texts (please see Figure 7.31). Learners were once again told that the purpose of this exercise was to feed into the class discussion that was to follow.

Figure 7.31: individual responses to texts: “Little Miss...”.

Individual Responses to Questions on Texts 1-3
1. Who is the speaker in the text? Who is being spoken to?
2. What are the connotations of “Little Miss...”?
3. If you were a parent would you allow your daughter to participate in a beauty pageant? Provide reasons for your response.
4. Do you think that these pageants exclude certain members of the community from participating? Are the organisers explicit about who can and cannot participate?
5. How do the organisers (the community newspapers) stand to benefit from staging these contests?
6. Describe the body language, facial expressions and dress of the young girls in these pictures. How do they attempt to emulate older girls / women?
7. What are the incentives for participation in each pageant?

In response to Question 1, *Who is the speaker in the text? Who is being spoken to?* All groups said that the publisher of the newspapers and the pageant organisers were the speakers. Three groups were able to deduce that it was not the young girls that were spoken to, but rather their parents, especially the mothers, who are lured by prizes like overseas trips and jewellery as the incentives for participation. It was pointed out that very often these children are too young and are unable to make decisions for themselves and the real role-players, the parents, are positioned in the background, perhaps seeing their dreams of becoming beauty queens realised through their young daughters (Annexure F, 11/03/04: 28).

In addressing Question 2, *What are the connotations of “Little Miss...”?* the connotations of “Little Miss...” being a prim, feminine young girl, a smaller version of older women or beauty queens were discussed (*ibid*).

Some of the responses to Question 3, *If you were a parent would you allow your daughter to participate in a beauty pageant?* are contained in Figure 7.32 and point to the expedience that sections of the community would also display in allowing their children to participate in these beauty pageants.

Figure 7.32: Discussion Box 19: participation in the ‘Little Miss...’ contests.

- |   |
|---|
| <p>L1- If I had a little daughter I would allow her to participate.<br/> L2- So would I. I will take pride in dressing her up and seeing her participate.<br/> L3- It will build confidence in my child.<br/> L1- If the prizes are good, why not!<br/> L4- I won't allow my daughter to participate. I think it's stressful to put a young child through that, not to mention the dangers.</p> |
|---|

(Annexure F, 11/03/04: 28)

Groups responded to Question 4: *Do you think that these pageants exclude certain members of the community from participating? Are the organisers explicit about who can and cannot participate?* Whilst agreeing that the organisers did not deliberately exclude anyone from participating, the fact that only the pictures of young Indian girls are published, learners did point out that this did serve to preclude people of other races from entering the pageant (Annexure F, 11/03/04: 29).

Question 5: *How do the organisers (the community newspapers) stand to benefit from staging these contests?* was answered with learners acknowledging that the organisers had an ulterior economic motive in running these pageants: advertising, endorsements and increased readership, as these pageants appeal to a large section of the Chatsworth community (*ibid*).

Question 6: *Describe the body language, facial expressions and dress of the young girls in these pictures. How do they attempt to emulate older girls / women?* was discussed earlier but I introduced the pictures of the crowning of the Miss India South Africa 2004 and her princesses (*The Rising Sun*, 19-25/08/03; *Chatsworth Tabloid*, 20/08/03) (please see Annexure D 8) and asked learners to observe these pictures alongside the picture of Little Miss *Chatsworth Tabloid*. The point I made was clear to learners, that the pageant for young girls was a miniature version of the one for older girls. I also asked learners, in examining the texts, to enquire: Who is behind the lens, prompting the girls to pose in specific ways (*ibid*)?

Many learners felt that after this intervention they had been conscientised about this issue and expressed strong views about young girls being depicted in provocative poses in the community newspapers. Some felt that these pageants should be discontinued. They were encouraged to write letters to the editors of the community newspapers expressing their opinions. With the lessons concluded all that remained was to consolidate the Project. This is described next.

#### **7.4 Phase 4: consolidation of the Community Newspaper Project**

The consolidation process was concluded in a short period of about thirty minutes taken from a mainstream English lesson on 12/03/04. The extract below (please see Figure 7.33 below) from Lesson Plan 9 lists the single activity of this lesson which is the completion of the Evaluation Form by Learners. I had to ensure that the identity of the learner was kept confidential. This was done by telling learners not to append their names anywhere on the

form so that anonymity could be ensured.

Figure 7.33: an extract from Lesson Plan 9.

Teacher's Activities	Learners' Activities
1. Provide learners with evaluation form and explain how they should go about completing it. 2. Ensure confidentiality.	1. Complete Evaluation Form as honestly as possible.

(Annexure D9)

Again due to the limitations on time and the impending March Test, I could not devote an entire lesson to consolidating the Project; neither could I burden learners with a lengthy evaluation form. I therefore designed a succinct evaluation form using seven scaled statements and one multiple-choice question to elicit a meaningful evaluation. Learners were asked to respond as honestly as possible. Figure 7.34 is an extract from the evaluation form that illustrates the kind of statements included.

Figure 7.34: an extract from Evaluation Form for Learners.

5] The Project has made me knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media.				
Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Annexure D9)

This consolidation process required that learners reflect on the experience of being involved in the Community Newspaper Project and being exposed to Critical Literacy for the first time. The strengths, weaknesses, and highlights of the Project were outlined culminating in a brief discussion of each. I also took the opportunity after the evaluation was complete to thank learners for co-operating with me, not just as their teacher but as a researcher, in ensuring that the Project was concluded successfully. The responses to the statements on the evaluation sheet will be discussed in Chapter 8.

### 7.5 Reflections

A total of thirteen sessions were utilised from August 2003 to March 2004 to complete the phases of the curriculum intervention. Time constraints in the Grade 12A class did not permit me to proceed with any additional tasks in respect of the Project although I would have preferred to include more activities based on other sources from these texts (community newspapers). In fact, as the descriptions in Chapters 6 and 7 reveal, completing many of the

tasks as I had originally planned was in itself challenging, due to the severe restrictions on time working within the constraints of the mainstream syllabus old syllabus, the scenario within which this Community Newspaper Project was conducted (prior to the implementation of the *NCS* (2003) in 2006).

An examination of community newspapers was especially significant in that it addressed the need to fill the considerable gap between the type of texts that formed part of the educational experience of learners and the kind of media they encountered in the real world. However, in addition to community newspapers, learners were exposed to other texts, like fairytales and a variety of South African and foreign newspapers which they explored using different approaches so that they could view them differently. As an educator and researcher, something must be said for the connection and engagement that learners have with the tasks at hand during learner-centred interventions, as opposed to the detachment I sensed during teacher-centred encounters.

In reflecting, at this juncture, it is apt for me to address to some extent, one of the key questions of the Community Newspaper Project: *How viable are Critical Literacy theories within the present English Home Language curriculum in the FET phase?* Learner-centred lessons, if conducted effectively, are hard work and time-consuming. Activities have to be designed and planned carefully so that they are engaging and exciting, and during the lesson much attention has to be given to specific learners. The overall outcomes are enriching for both teacher and learners and I suppose that, in a utopian sense that was the aim of Outcomes Based Education (OBE). However, contextual factors at public schools especially, make such rewarding encounters few and far between, and are the reasons why many say that OBE has failed. The methodology of OBE within the framework of the *NCS* (2003) is considered to be a failure because of the dichotomy between theory and practice.

Although the new curriculum itself is one that is conducive to a critical pedagogy in theory, I would like to contest that since the implementation of the *NCS* in 2006, the practical reality of being a teacher of English Home Language is that the curriculum in the FET phase is dominated by assessment. There are too many assessment tasks and moderation of these at cluster level for each Grade (10, 11, and 12), every term, places enormous pressure on both teachers and learners to complete specific prescribed tasks within specific time-frames. The

implementation of a critical pedagogy requires time and appropriate contextual factors within a school in order to be effective, which is not possible with the over-emphasis on assessment.

With sufficient scope within the new curriculum for a teacher of English to focus extensively on media, another shortcoming is likely to be the teacher's lack of training and knowledge in the field of media education and the teacher's own 'taken-for-granted' ideas about the teaching of English in a Cultural Heritage paradigm. Perhaps one of the reasons is that 'old habits die hard' as far as many teachers of English are concerned, and, as I myself discovered during the course of the Project. While one cannot deny that there may be many teachers who are engaged in creative work with media in the English Language classroom, it is, however, essential for teachers of English to be familiar with the theoretical foundations that underpin critical pedagogies and media education, two areas of focus that are complementary in the development of critical media users.

I therefore see the need for media education and critical pedagogies to be more extensively and intensively absorbed into the English syllabus at a more practical level, the responsibility for which must be placed firmly with the Department of Education. It is my belief that theoretical foundations in this regard should be implemented with teachers of English in the form of in-service training programmes. My small-scale Community Newspaper Project is an example of the type of engagement that both teachers and learners might have with media in the English Language classroom. This, together with aligning the demands of the syllabus with the practical realities at the level of the school, can go a long way to making learning more meaningful and narrowing the divide between the learner's life experience and classroom practice which is one of the objectives of the *NCS* (2003). Having provided a description of the intervention and its stages in this and the previous chapter, an analysis of the data and the reporting of findings (Stages 3 and 4) of the Project will be explained in Chapter 8 to follow.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PROJECT: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### 8.1 Introduction

A major challenge of the Community Newspaper Project was analysing the in-depth information gathered from a wide range of data described in Chapter 5. Chapter 8 provides an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data accumulated during the intervention with the respondents from which the findings are established. As mentioned, when outlining the methodology of the Community Newspaper Project (please see Chapter 5), both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed, a strategy known as triangulation (Denzin, 1970), was used to acquire several perspectives on the same phenomenon. For example, a questionnaire and semi-structured interview were used in order to gather data from the Managing Editor of a community newspaper. The survey of learners' newspaper reading habits and field notes based on the observations of the various lessons conducted during the classroom intervention, were complementary in collecting information about the learners.

Quantitative data methods generate numerical data that are analysed using statistical techniques. These mathematical procedures are used to describe, organise and explore relationships within the data. The aim of quantitative data collection and analysis is to produce findings which lead to the acceptance or rejection of specific hypotheses. However, in this case, the quantitative data is intended to supplement the qualitative. Yet, according to Gunter (2002: 245), qualitative data analysis has suffered from an insufficient specification and documentation of its procedures and stages. A whole range of approaches and techniques can be applied by relying on systematic procedures. Like any scientific enterprise, a qualitative study is committed to carrying out an analysis whose elements, procedures and stages are documented explicitly. It is language that is the main source of evidence in qualitative research, comparable in quantitative research to mathematical symbols and procedures (Jensen, 2002: 251).

In the Community Newspaper Project, language was the source of qualitative data comprised of field notes based on the observation of lessons during the classroom intervention which began on 1 August 2003 and formed the basis of what the Project was all about. While the most important component was the qualitative, the Project would be incomplete without the quantitative data which I examine first with an analysis of the Questionnaire for Learners.

## 8.2 Analysis of the results of the Questionnaire for Learners

The first quantitative instrument used was the Questionnaire for Learners (please see Annexure A). This was integrated into the lesson design and was issued to respondents in Segment 1 of Phase 1 of the Project. A synopsis of the results was discussed with respondents at the beginning of Segment 1 of Phase 2. The purpose of a summary of the results at that stage was to create awareness among learners of their reading habits, opinions and attitude *vis-à-vis* aspects of newspapers in general and community newspapers in particular before they embarked on the deconstruction of newspapers. At this juncture, however, I consider it appropriate, in relation to the thesis as a whole, to analyse the results of the Questionnaire for Learners in detail. This is done to provide an in-depth perspective on the sample of learners that participated in the Project and their newspaper reading habits so that there is an enhanced understanding of their responses during the lessons that constituted the classroom intervention.

The analysis of the responses to the Questionnaire for Learners (please see Annexure A) was planned in advance. As soon as all the questionnaires were collated, they were numbered in a specific manner for purposes of classification. Since the sample comprised both English and isiZulu Home Language speakers, each questionnaire was coded according to the respondents' gender and home language and arranged alphabetically according to pseudonyms for that category. For example, F/E/1 is female, an English mother-tongue speaker and respondent 1 in that category while /Z/1 is male, an isiZulu mother-tongue speaker and respondent 1. I found that categorising respondents in this manner made it easier for me to draw inferences, make comparisons, and show differences when necessary.

Summary sheets (please see Annexure E) were designed in advance to suit the analysis of each question. All data was recorded on these sheets according to the categories mentioned above, namely F/E-Female English; F/Z-Female isiZulu; M/E- Male English and M/Z- Male/isiZulu. Structured questions, like dichotomous, multiple-choice, and scaled questions were coded to allow for easy recording of responses. For example, in a dichotomous 'Yes/No' question, the 'Yes' is coded 1 and the 'No' is coded 2. Open-ended questions were recorded as accurately as possible using short-hand and abbreviations. After the task of transferring responses onto the summary sheets was complete, it was no longer necessary to refer to the questionnaires.

The Questionnaire for Learners was relatively straight forward and sought to confirm learners' details like place of residence, a brief family background, gender, age and home language (which also determined race) and to validate their behaviour in respect of the reading of mainstream and community newspapers a description of which will follow later. Annexure E, the summary sheet, provides learners' profiles and indicates how respondents are matched to the questionnaires.

### 8.2.1 Ascertaining respondents' profiles

Questions 1 and 2 were factual questions that required personal information. Question 1 asked for the name of the respondent and was used only to arrange the questionnaires in alphabetical order as per category mentioned above. However, in keeping with ethical considerations, the identity of each respondent was kept confidential and at no point was a learner's real name revealed. Question 2 enquired about respondent's place of residence, the responses to which are revealed in Figure 8.1.

*Figure 8.1: places of residence of respondents.*

Chatsworth	23
Lamontville	3
Umlazi	2
Isipingo	1
Seaview	1

The fact that the majority of respondents resided in Chatsworth, while those who lived outside its borders had access to the Chatsworth community newspapers, validated the choice of the sample for this Project.

Question 3.1, a dichotomous, Yes/No question established whether learners resided with their parents or not. Of the thirty respondents, twenty-eight resided with their parents, one with an aunt and uncle, and one with an older brother. Questions 3.2 and 3.3 were factual questions aimed at ascertaining parents'/ guardians' occupations in order to determine the background of the respondents. An analysis of both parents' occupations showed that three came from single parent backgrounds, three from homes where both parents were unemployed, the mothers of twelve learners were home executives and other occupations of parents included clerks, machinists, drivers, receptionists, supervisors and nurses. The summary sheet (please see Annexure E) includes a complete list of parents' occupations. From an analysis of parents' occupations it can be concluded that learners came mainly from working class backgrounds with some from lower-middle class homes and at the other end of the scale with

six learners (20%) ostensibly from poor homes. For example, both the parents of F/E/1, M/Z/2 and M/Z/4 were unemployed while both the parents of M/Z/1 were deceased with the brother acting as guardian. The general commitment of the majority of the respondents to their academic work attests to the value attached to education as a means to upward social mobility.

Question 4 established gender, Question 5, age and Question 6, home language. These were all scaled questions with Question 4 being dichotomous and Questions 5 and 6 multiple-choice. The statistics in respect of gender and home language of the respondents are described in Figure 8.2 while age is shown in Figure 8.3 on the next page.

Figure 8.2: gender and home language of respondents.



Females constituted 60% (18) of the respondents. With the exception of one isiZulu<sup>1</sup> speaking female the rest were home language English learners. The male population, 40%, comprised seven English Home Language learners and five isiZulu Home Language learners. It is important to note that 80% of the respondents were English Home Language speakers who were descendent from immigrant Indians who originally came from different parts of India and spoke Hindi, Tamil, Telegu, Gugerati or Urdu. However, no single Indian language could serve as a language of integration within the evolving community and so a gradual 'language shift' occurred replacing these languages by English as the common means of communication within the community. Today, many South African Indians have little or no competency in their original home languages as there has been receding generational competence in the erstwhile mother-tongue language (Mesthrie, 1995: 119,126).

A similar trend may seem to be emerging among a section of the isiZulu speaking population, where learners whose home language is isiZulu, choose to study at schools, like Community

<sup>1</sup> isiZulu speaking learners are Black South Africans.

Secondary, where the language of learning and teaching is English, and where the primary language offered for study is also English. However, the difference is that isiZulu is under no threat, like Indian languages, as English is used essentially in formal domains of education and public speaking, while in the informal domain of the neighbourhood and home, the home language still dominates (*ibid*: 126). Also, this trend can also be attributed to the importance attached to English as the language used in technical and scientific contexts, a ‘gateway’ language that prompts a strategic choice made by learners and parents that is motivated by an idea that English is a vehicle of progress (Balfour, 2002: 1, 2, 12).

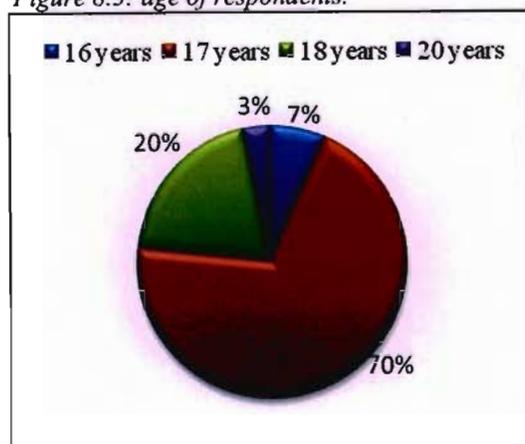
Based on my observations as their teacher of English, the isiZulu learners, all of whom attended English medium schools from Grade 1, displayed satisfactory overall competence in English with greater competency in spoken rather than written English. Some of the isiZulu learners had a better all-round command of the English language than some of their English Home Language colleagues. This may be implied by the fact that in 2004, of the twenty-three learners that wrote English on the Higher Grade<sup>2</sup>, twenty-one were Indian, English Home Language speakers and two were African, isiZulu Home language speakers. The seven learners who wrote on the Standard Grade were comprised of four African, isiZulu Home language speakers and three Indian, English Home Language speakers.

Figure 8.3 below describes the ages of the respondents. Only one learner was twenty years old with the rest falling within the sixteen to eighteen year age group. While many of the concepts explored in the Project were simplified in order to be mediated to mainly seventeen-year-old learners, at the same time the sample was, within the demographics of the school, mature enough to view the Project with the seriousness it deserved.

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<sup>2</sup> It must be noted that with the implementation of the NCS in 2006, grades, that is, Higher Grade and Standard Grade, are no longer applicable in any learning area or subject (DoE, *National Curriculum Statement: English Home Language*, 2003).

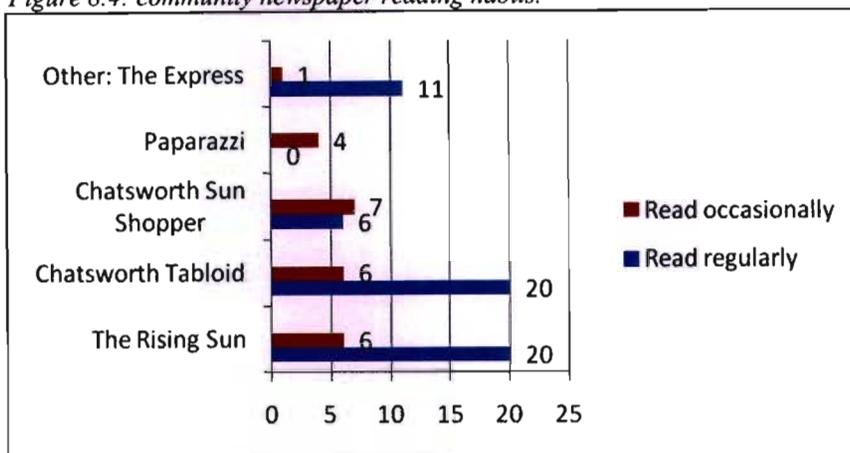
Figure 8.3: age of respondents.



### 8.2.2 Ascertaining community newspaper reading habits

Question 7, a multiple-choice question, explored community newspaper readership both on a regular and occasional basis. The bar graph (please see Figure 8.4 on the following page) highlights those statistics. The readership of both *The Rising Sun* and the *Chatsworth Tabloid* were the same with twenty of the thirty respondents reading them regularly and six occasionally. Of the six that read these newspapers occasionally, two were male isiZulu speaking learners who sometimes acquired the publications free from a shop they frequented to and from school. This information I established from them after they had completed the Questionnaire for Learners. *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* was read by six learners regularly and seven occasionally while four read *Paparazzi*, a newspaper that had a short life-span of just a few months, occasionally. A relatively new community newspaper at the time, *The Express* (established in 2002) was claimed to be read by eleven of the learners regularly and one occasionally under the category 'Other'. The figures on the community newspaper readership trend of the sample elicited from this question served to corroborate the motivation for the Community Newspaper Project outlined in earlier chapters, of the potential influence these publications have on learners by virtue of their accessibility.

Figure 8.4: community newspaper reading habits.



### 8.2.3 Ascertaining mainstream newspaper reading habits

Question 8, also a multiple-choice question, served to investigate behaviour of the respondents regarding their mainstream newspaper reading habits (please see Figure 8.5 on the next page). The fact that twenty learners (67%) read a mainstream daily newspaper regularly is an indication that print media is still a fairly popular form of media consumption among the working class. While eleven (37%) English Home Language learners claimed to read the *Daily News*, and five the *Mercury* (17%) regularly, one (3%) isiZulu learner read the *City Press*, one (3%) *ILanga* and two (7%) the *Sowetan* on a regular basis. This was, to some extent, a reflection of the target markets for those particular newspapers.

The most popular Sunday newspaper was the *Sunday Tribune* with thirteen learners (43%) reading it regularly followed by the *Sunday Times* with a regular readership of eleven (37%). The small margin of popularity (6%) that the *Sunday Tribune* enjoyed over the *Sunday Times* can be attributed to the fact that the former is a regional newspaper that offers readers news closer to home. This thirst for local news can be deduced from the readership of the *Post*, a weekly newspaper aimed at the Indian community with eight learners (27%) reading this publication regularly and seven (23%) occasionally. The popularity of this newspaper among the mainly Indian learners can be attributed to its in-depth coverage of all aspects of life of the South African Indian Diaspora and to its sometimes sensationalist front page stories.

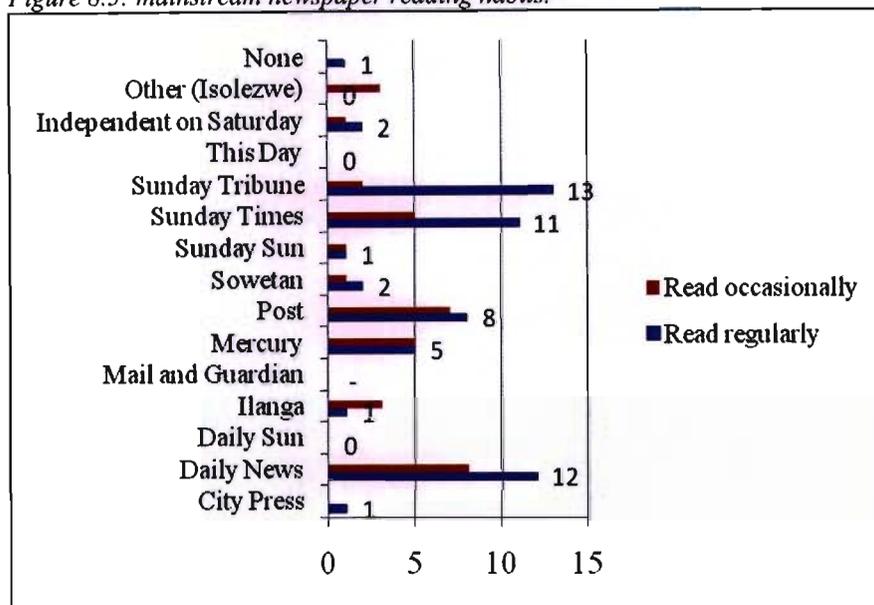
Among the newspapers not read at all were the *Mail and Guardian* and *This Day*<sup>1</sup>, two publications that appealed mainly to the more intellectual middle and upper-middle class. The readership market of the *Mail and Guardian* is the LSM 7-10 levels which ranges from the

<sup>1</sup> A relatively new Sunday newspaper at the time that had a short lifespan and is no longer in circulation.

middle classes to the rich (*Mail and Guardian*, 3-9/04/09: 02). This trend among this sample of learners is therefore implicit. At the other end of the scale the tabloid *Daily Sun*, also a relatively new newspaper at the time, catering for the lower end of the market, mainly the urbanised working class reader also had no readers among the sample.

What must also be noted is that few learners would make the choice as to which newspaper to purchase as this would be done by a parent or older member of the family who was working. Thus children tend to adopt the newspaper reading habits of older family members.

Figure 8.5: mainstream newspaper reading habits.

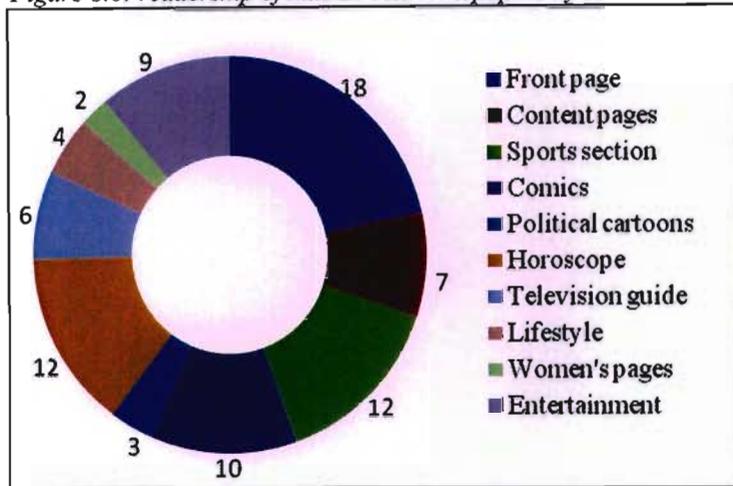


Question 9 was an adaptation of a rank-order question that did not require learners to rank but to choose at random the three most popular genres of the mainstream newspapers that they read. Figure 7.5 below highlights those sections. The front page, the understandable choice, was read by eighteen learners followed by the sports section and the horoscope read by twelve learners each. The comics and entertainment genres also proved popular with ten and nine readers respectively. The sections with the lowest readership, namely advertising, editorial and classifieds with one learner reading each, and the food/recipes and financial sections with no readers were not included in Figure 8.6 on the following page. Apart from the front page, the majority of learners preferred the ‘soft’ news with mainly girls reading horoscopes and boys interested in the sports section.

Establishing the sections most read in the newspapers allowed learners the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the different genres in mainstream newspapers in order to make a

comparison with community newspapers during the classroom intervention, to be able to view what was common to both, and what was excluded.

Figure 8.6: readership of mainstream newspapers by section.



#### 8.2.4 Ascertaining the level of interaction with community newspapers

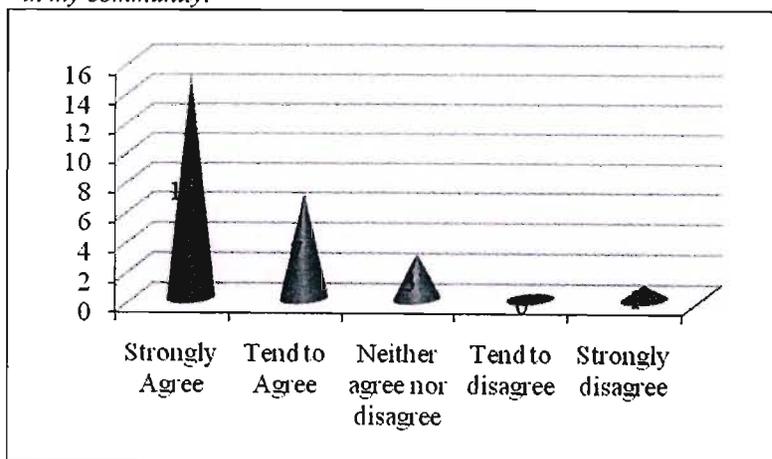
Opinions regarding community newspaper readership was explored fully in Question 10 of the questionnaire that was further divided into ten sub-questions including six open-ended questions, three scaled questions and one dichotomous question. This section of the questionnaire was applicable only to those learners who read community newspapers, either regularly or occasionally. As a result, four isiZulu speaking learners (one female and three males) did not complete Question 10. The two isiZulu learners that occasionally acquired community newspapers from the local shop completed this question. Thus the analysis for Question 10 shows results for twenty-six respondents.

Question 10.1: “State the section of the community newspaper that you find most interesting and give a brief reason for your response” elicited responses similar to those for Question 9 regarding mainstream newspapers with nine learners stating that they found the front page most interesting while eight felt that the general news content kept them abreast of the current happenings in Chatsworth. Only two were interested in the horoscopes contained in the community newspapers while twelve felt the horoscopes in mainstream newspapers interesting in response to Question 9. Of the two isiZulu speaking learners, one was interested in the advertising inserts to view sale items while one was curious about the latest sports developments. Responses to this question revealed that while learners gravitated towards ‘soft’ news in mainstream newspapers, in the community newspapers they preferred to read

the news content, perhaps because the stories were more closer to home and more relevant to their world view.

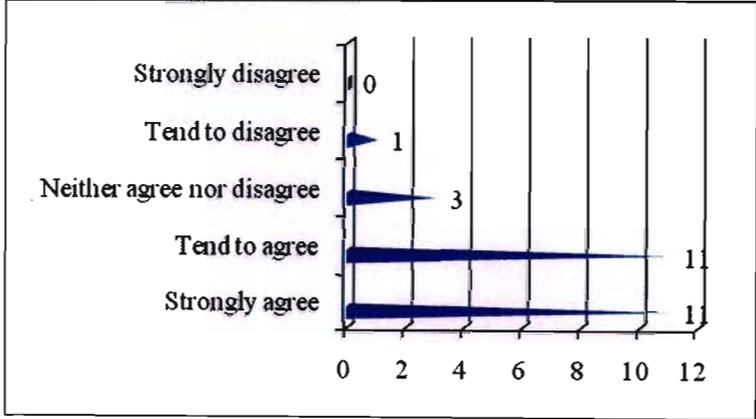
Question 10.2, the first of three Likert (1932) scales aimed at ascertaining the opinions of learners to the role of the community newspapers in keeping learners abreast of the latest community news. The analysis of the results for this question is reflected in the bar graph (please see Figure 8.7). The majority of respondents, fifteen, agreed that community newspapers played an important role in keeping people informed, while seven tended to agree, three were indecisive and one strongly disagreed. In response to Question 10.3, learners had to provide reasons for their choice in 10.2. Those that strongly agreed felt that the community newspaper kept them informed about crime, local heroes, and general news in the wider community. Many of those that tended to agree, and those who neither agreed nor disagreed, were of the view that the community newspaper could include more news; that the news was not always recent and that sometimes it included just gossip. The learner that strongly disagreed said that community newspapers were more interested in advertising than news. Of the two isiZulu speaking learners who had access to the Chatsworth community newspapers, one neither agreed nor disagreed but did not provide a reason for his choice and one strongly agreed, again stating that it kept him informed of sport in Chatsworth. Generally, the responses to Questions 10.2 and 10.3 revealed that most learners were decisive and some insightful in their views on community newspapers even before the deconstruction of these publications began. Learners' views were reiterated during the deconstruction process and the isiZulu speaking learners who did not usually have access to these publications were given a better sense of the Chatsworth community newspapers.

*Figure 8.7: responses to Question 10.2: The community newspaper plays an important role in keeping me abreast with the latest news in my community.*



The second Likert scale, Question 10.4, elicited responses as to whether the community newspaper was instrumental in shaping views and opinions on issues affecting the community. The analysis of this question is summarised in Figure 8.8. There were eleven learners who strongly agreed and eleven who stated that they tend to agree that the community newspaper shapes views and opinions on issues. In the justification of their choices articulated in response to Question 10.5, some of those who strongly agreed said that the community newspaper offered diverse viewpoints, is a platform for public expression, can be one-sided and biased and that some people will believe anything they read. The interesting responses to 10.5 of those who tended to agree included: “everyone reads community newspapers”, “not everything that one reads is true”, “opinions rather than facts are conveyed” and “there is confusion between news and gossip”. Of the three that neither agreed nor disagreed, one stated that the information conveyed was usually one-sided. The learner that tended to disagree said that the community newspaper was just about airing personal issues in public. Here again learners expressed their views frankly with some thoughtful responses. It was clear that these questions compelled learners to engage critically with the issue of the role that community newspapers played. This process of engagement assisted learners during the deconstruction process.

Figure 8.8: responses to Question 10.4: The community newspaper is instrumental in shaping the views and opinions on various issues affecting the community.

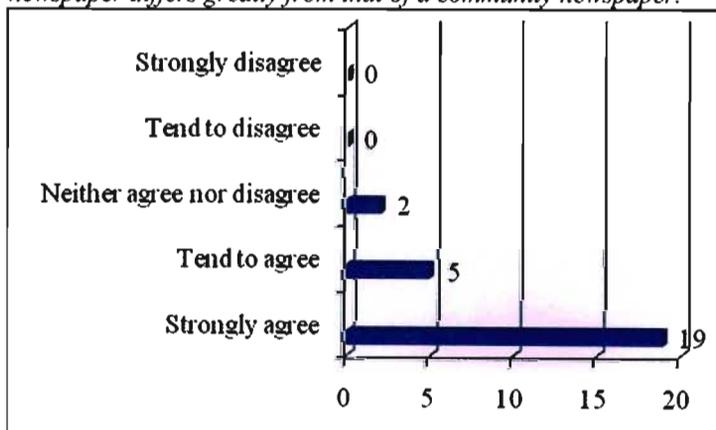


The third Likert scale, Question 10.6 was also followed by an open-ended Question 10.7 that required respondents to provide reasons for their choice in Question 10.6. Figure 8.9 shows an analysis of responses to Question 10.6 which was aimed at showing a comparison between the quality of mainstream newspapers and community newspapers. The majority, nineteen, strongly agreed that the quality differed while five tended to agree and two neither agreed nor

disagreed. This question, however, did not specify which type of newspaper was of a better quality, learners had to qualify this in their answers to the subsequent question.

A summary of the reasons reveals that many felt that mainstream newspapers were of a better quality because they provided a broader perspective and more in-depth news, compared to the narrower perspective of community newspapers. Learners did not seem to take into consideration that the purpose of a community newspaper was to cover issues specific to a particular community and most focused on the scope of coverage rather than the quality of journalism or the technical aspects like layout. It was pointed out by one learner however, that the quality of pictures was better in mainstream newspapers. The learner was not able to deduce that the reason for this was that community newspapers frequently accessed pictures from members of the public while mainstream newspapers published photographs taken by professionals. These aspects were pointed out by me during the deconstruction of newspapers.

*Figure 8.9: responses to question 10.6: The quality of a mainstream newspaper differs greatly from that of a community newspaper.*



Question 10.8, a dichotomous question first stated that although community newspapers were provided free of charge, a large income was generated from advertising before asking for learners' opinions as to whether the community newspapers gave back enough to the community. The 'Yes/No' response was used as a classification tool for the substantiation of the response to Question 10.8 that would have to be provided in Question 10.9. Of the twenty-six learners that responded to this question, twenty answered 'Yes' and six answered 'No'. Of those who answered 'Yes', in defending their responses, fifteen implied that by virtue of it being a free newspaper people were made aware of what was happening in the community, a service was being done especially to the poor who could not afford to purchase

newspapers; two learners thought that these publications were the voice of the community while two mentioned specific charity events sponsored in part by the community newspapers and one did not substantiate.

Those that answered 'No' felt that these newspapers contained more advertisements than news, that not enough was being done and that more should be invested into the community. The large amounts of revenue accessed by community newspapers from advertising makes it imperative for, not only community newspapers, but the large retailers that advertise in these publications, to make a meaningful contribution to the community that supports them. Learners' views were corroborated during the classroom intervention when they were able to perceive, in a tangible manner, the volume of advertising in the community newspapers and the frequency of advertisements by specific retailers.

The responses to the last Question, 10.10 which was open-ended, were varied. Many believed that there should be more news especially on the youth and school matters and crime-related matters, while others felt that it was necessary to include advice columns, cartoons, a television guide and a motoring supplement. Only two learners said that more should be done to assist community and welfare organisations. In the answering of this question, learners focused mainly on the content of the community newspaper rather than on how concrete solutions to the community's problems could be mediated through and by these publications. This was addressed with learners during the classroom intervention.

The results of the Questionnaire for Learners, as already pointed out, do not seek to generalise about the wider population, but instead are intended to ascertain and confirm personal details of the sample, garner information on their behaviour regarding newspaper reading, and elicit their opinions on community newspapers. Thus, the Questionnaire formalised information about the sample, placing the Project in perspective and providing a point of departure for me as researcher to plan the lessons that would constitute the second phase of the classroom intervention. Nevertheless, before analysing the lessons, the other dimensions of the data collated, the Questionnaire for the Managing Editor and the semi-structured Interview will be discussed briefly.

### **8.3 The Questionnaire and Interview for the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun***

During the classroom intervention, learners were deprived of the benefit of information from the managing editors/ owners of the community newspapers used in the Project. After the

dilemma of gaining access to two of the three managing editors, as revealed in Chapters 4 and 5, I decided that I would proceed with accessing information from the Founder, Co-owner and Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*, the most established of the three newspapers, who was willing to contribute to my research. Although this was done after the Community Newspaper Project was concluded, I decided that the data elicited would supplement the information on community media. It is for this reason that the findings of the Questionnaire and Interview with the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun* were included in Chapter 4 of the thesis. Next, I analyse and reflect on the core qualitative data of the Community Newspaper Project, the lessons conducted during the classroom intervention, based on field notes (please see Annexure F).

#### **8.4 Analysis and reflection of lessons conducted during the classroom intervention**

Qualitative data collection took the form of field notes that were recorded in the manner indicated on the observation chart specified in Chapter 5 (please see Figure 5.11). Field notes (please see Annexure F) were written during each encounter with the learners and then later described in detail after which an analysis was completed and reflections recorded. This followed the headings indicated in each column of the Observation chart, namely 'Jottings', 'Description', 'Analysis' and 'Reflection'. A detailed 'Description' of the lessons and the manner in which they were conducted based on the 'Jottings' or field notes for each session has been included in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 8 focuses on the aspects of 'Analysis' and 'Reflection' as a natural progression from the 'Description'. Practically, it was not possible to record each aspect on an observation chart as the space was not sufficient; therefore separate pages were used with the appropriate headings appended at the top. Furthermore, each heading was highlighted in a different colour as demarcated on the observation chart to support the easy handling and analysis of data.

At this stage it must be noted that I have structured the analysis and reflection of the classroom intervention in a chronological manner, as indicated in Figure 6.1 of Chapter 6, and follow the sequence of the lessons as they are described in Chapters 6 and 7. At the same time, I will discuss the pedagogic developments around the main themes of the Project as they emerged through learners' engagement with Critical Language Awareness, Critical Discourse Analysis, and other Critical Literacy theories. These themes include language and power, identity, the media as 'big business', and gender.

In analysing the lessons it is necessary for me to allude to some of the material described in Chapters 6 and 7 again. As far as the lesson plans are concerned, Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards (DoE, *NCS: English Home Language*, 2003) have been added to lesson plans (please see Annexure D1-9 for the detailed lesson plans) to make them relevant to the new syllabus. However, for the purposes of analysis in this Chapter, only the objectives which were used at the time, but are now obsolete, are reflected in extracts of the lesson plans. In the analysis of each lesson I shall illustrate the extent to which the objectives were achieved. The first lesson is analysed next.

#### 8.4.1 Analysis and reflection of Phase 1: orientation

##### 8.4.1.1 Analysis and reflection of Segment 1: Lesson 1: setting the scene

This initial segment was aimed at setting the context by discussing the fundamentals of the Project, Chatsworth community newspapers and Critical Literacy which was incorporated into the objectives of Lesson Plan 1 outlined in the extract provided (please Figure 8.10).

*Figure 8.10: an extract from Lesson Plan 1 showing the objectives.*

<b>Lesson Plan 1</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 01/08/03	
<b>Topic:</b> Contextualisation: Setting the Scene for the Community Newspaper Project	
<b>Grade:</b> 11A	
<b>Time:</b> 1 session	
<b>Objectives:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand the rationale for the Project.</li> <li>• To understand the different contexts of the Project.</li> <li>• To understand the ground rules for the Project.</li> </ul>	

(Annexure D1)

In reporting on the lessons, I used discussion boxes and description to illustrate the communication between myself as facilitator and the respondents. The predominance of teacher-talk as opposed to learner-talk in the discussion boxes (please see Annexure F) documenting the first two segments, is evidence of the use of mainly conventional teacher-centred pedagogy. Much had to be clarified especially in setting the context and explaining concepts that were essential to Critical Literacy pedagogy that was not the dominant discourse in the English Home Language classroom at Community Secondary School and so traditional methods were necessary in the initial stages of the classroom intervention. This helped realise the objectives of understanding the rationale for the Project, the different contexts of the Project and setting the ground rules.

At the outset, the seriousness of the Project also had to be conveyed to learners as their commitment and co-operation would ensure its success. I realised that my behaviour as facilitator and researcher in this regard was crucial. From experience, I knew that learners would follow my cue; therefore I had to always be thoroughly prepared for all lessons and firm without compromising freedom of expression in the classroom. An example of this can be observed in Discussion Box 1 (please see Annexure F, 01/08/03: 1). When contextualising the history of Chatsworth, a learner shouted out that Chatsworth used to be a banana plantation. This the learner expressed frivolously, intending it to be a joke. While there would be room for frivolity later, at this early stage, the tone had to set. I reacted by maintaining a sense of seriousness and went on to explain Chatsworth's beginnings as a farm prior to the *Group Areas Act* (1950), the implementation of which transformed it into a residential area. Learners followed suit and began contributing meaningfully, creating a general picture of Chatsworth. This was, however, not intended to be an in-depth representation and I thereafter led the conversation towards this community's access to media, especially community newspapers (*ibid*).

The idea of how community newspapers functioned was easily grasped by learners who understood that although they were distributed free to the public, they were essentially businesses that flourished on advertising. This kind of familiarity of the learners in the 11A class with the discourse of media, as a result of being involved in a previous Project with me, mentioned earlier, justified my choice of sample (Annexure F, 01/08/03: 2).

In engaging the Grade 11A class with the idea of how learners and the teacher were positioned differently during English lessons, they were being prepared for a more learner-oriented approach, synonymous with Critical Literacy pedagogy. During the discussion, the first learner's statement, 'The teacher is boss' (please see Discussion Box 3, Annexure F, 01/08/03: 2), encapsulates much about the interaction between learners and teachers at Community Secondary and at many other schools. From my experience as a teacher at a public school I learnt quickly that if you do not assert your authority, you will not be able to keep control of an average of forty teenagers with varying temperaments, personalities, abilities and from different backgrounds. This is a teacher 'survival strategy'. Also, operating at a sub-conscious level, is the perception that a 'good' teacher is one that is the 'boss', is in control, and has his or her class silently and 'gainfully occupied', so if that is the ethos of the school, teachers develop strategies to assimilate into that ethos. This usually involves learners

seated in rows facing the teacher/ chalkboard, the regular use of worksheets or the teacher talking and learners listening and taking notes.

Luke (1990: 17) refers to conventional classrooms that position the bodies of students in a manner that encourages docile reading subjects. He mentions teachers who say to learners: “sit up straight”, “face the front” and “look at your books”, adopting a particular ‘bodily position’ towards the text that denies the opportunity for critical learning. After years of being taught in a transmission manner and teaching using transmission pedagogy, engagement with learner-centred Critical Literacy meant a paradigm shift for me as an educator.

However, Shor (1997: 13) advocates that while establishing democratic classrooms, the teacher’s lack of authority interferes with his or her ability to initiate a critical power-sharing process. I was fortunate in that I had the distinct advantage both in taking charge and in sharing power, a paradox that worked in this context. This, I think, was the result of a mutual rapport and respect mentioned earlier. I knew, after more than ten years as a teacher at Community Secondary School, that there was an awareness among learners that in my classroom they could “consult, collaborate and negotiate” (*ibid*). Therefore, what was evident throughout the project was what Shor (1997: 12) refers to as a combination of Vygotskian and Freirean principles where a mutual learning process prevails that constructs learners as unofficial teachers who educate the official teacher while also getting educated by each other and by the teacher.

During the discussion on the kind of pedagogy used during English lessons (please see Discussion Box 3, Annexure F, 01/08/03: 2), two other important trends emerged: that teachers of English always seemed more concerned with completing the syllabus and more emphasis was placed on the Literature syllabus with the teacher offering explanations of texts, and learners writing notes. This Cultural Heritage orthodoxy in English classrooms requires learners to analyse aspects like tone, style, figurative language, theme, and characterisation that involve a scrutiny of ‘literary’ or high cultural texts (Prinsloo and Janks, 2002: 23). In addition, Prinsloo and Janks (2002: 24), assert that the manner in which the English examinations were constructed aimed at creating a learner who is a poised, literate and classed subject, who is socially mobile, and part of a global elite. This is referred to as the ‘worlding’ of the subject English and the human subjects which require that learners and teachers function within such a world.

This elitist framing of English, and the high premium attached to tests and examinations, makes teachers feel obligated to tell learners what they need to know about texts and the techniques involved in the analysis thereof in preparation for examinations, rather than to get them to creatively explore the texts themselves. According to Soane (2004: 109), who conducted an interrogation of how learners are taught Literature in English Home Language classrooms in KwaZulu-Natal, teachers will have made a substantial deposit into the learners' minds about the 'meanings' of the different texts they have studied, since preparation for the examination involves the assembly of as much external help as possible. Soane asserts that if learners cannot read networks without a translator, either the teacher or a study guide, then they are not negotiating meaning for themselves and they cannot be said to be 'reading' them (*ibid*: 113). Teachers are guided by the final examination questions which focus on mood, structures, images, the 'literariness' of 'great' works of Literature and not on how the reader has interacted with the text on a more personal level. Such an approach does not necessarily enhance the learners' enjoyment or understanding of texts (*ibid*: 110, 116). I would like to contend that as long as examinations remain all pervasive, teachers of English will consider learners negotiating meaning as too time-consuming and would not be at ease to deflect from what Freire (1970: 57-60) refers to as the *banking* model of education. Thus, the pressure to ensure that learners achieve, especially in the Grade 12 examination, leaves little room for a Critical Pedagogy. Later in this Chapter, I reflect on my own experience in this regard during the recommencement of the Community Newspaper Project in 2004 when the respondents were in Grade 12.

Transformation of the curriculum involves breaking old habits and the Community Newspaper Project was a challenge, a way for me to assess whether I could change the ways of teaching that I had become set in. After all, the action research component of this Project was meant to enable me to improve pedagogical practice.

Nevertheless, initial problems presented when I found it difficult to relinquish control in setting the ground rules. Although I told learners that we should negotiate, I still outlined what they should and should not do. I pointed out that little things like arriving to class on time and not talking about unnecessary matters during group work would go a long way to allowing the smooth flow of the Project particularly since I was aware of the fact that some of the girls in that class had a tendency to be particularly 'chatty' and some learners preferred to stroll to class rather than reporting promptly. Where I did practice negotiation was when I

spoke about keeping a media file and there was a groundswell of comments about not wanting homework since learners associated keeping a file with homework (Annexure F, 01/08/03: 3). This had me worried although I was used to the idea of teenagers being averse to the idea of homework. I reassured them that most of the work, except for completing the questionnaire and a few other tasks would be completed in school. The following 'Reflections' were recorded on the observation chart after the lesson:

Don't want to pressurise learners - might alienate them.  
But will they co-operate by doing homework when it is given?  
I should try to ensure that work is completed in class as far as possible  
(Annexure F, 01/08/03: 3).

Another matter of concern for me was that I would not be able to complete the Project that year. One of the reasons I chose the 11A class, as already mentioned, was that they had some prior understanding of media discourses and, as far as possible, I had to sustain the Project until 2004 with the same group of learners. The thought of having to begin the Project with a new class the following year was daunting. The following entry reflects my concerns:

I must request that I teach 12A English next year<sup>4</sup> or worst case scenario: I will have to start the Project afresh with another class next year. Don't see that happening but I must plan ahead (Annexure F, 01/08/03: 3).

The results of the questionnaire were discussed earlier in this Chapter and were outlined to learners at the beginning of Phase 2, when the deconstruction of newspapers began. Given the fact that I had completed all activities by the end of this lesson, and learners were attentive and responsive, it can be concluded that all the objectives set out in Figure 8.10 were achieved.

#### *8.4.1.2 Analysis and reflection of Segment 2: understanding Critical Literacy*

The first of two lessons that formed Segment 2 was conducted two weeks after Segment 1. The huge gap between segments was the 'price' that I had to pay for using purposive sampling. Thus, brief revision of work covered in previous sessions was necessary when there were large intervals between lessons. Figure 8.11 below is an extract from Lesson Plan

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<sup>4</sup> There was no policy at our school that teachers carry/follow through with learners from one Grade to the next. Much depended on how the computerised timetable worked out. Since I taught Grade 12 classes every year, I would have to request that I teach Grade 12A in 2004 and then request permission from the principal once again to continue the Project with that class. Since the English Department worked as a co-operative team, I knew that my request would be accommodated; however, the only problem I anticipated in that regard was that the timetable would not work.

2 that outlines the objectives that learners were expected to achieve at the end of the lesson. These objectives entailed getting learners started on the actual Project by shifting the pedagogy to one that was learner-centred through the formation of groups, and orientating them to the theories of Critical Literacy.

Figure 8.11: an extract from Lesson Plan 2 showing the objectives.

<b>Lesson Plan 2</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 14/08/03 <b>Topic:</b> Understanding the 'Foundations of Critical Literacy' <b>Grade:</b> 11A <b>Time:</b> 1 session	
<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form groups as pre-arranged with classmates</li> <li>• Expand understanding of the concept of 'text'.</li> <li>• Understand importance of asking questions.</li> <li>• Understand the meaning of values and how they operate in society and how language shapes values and attitudes.</li> <li>• Understand the importance of respecting opinions and beliefs.</li> </ul>	

(Annexure D2)

From the start of the Project, I was aware that the racial and cultural composition of the sample and the content under scrutiny would create a social space that Pratt (1991: 34) construes as “contact zones” where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other. Therefore, during Phase 1, I used aspects of Pratt’s contact zone theory which entailed structuring the class in such a manner where marginalized “others” could develop their positions, explore suppressed aspects of history and establish ground rules for communication across differences. Hence, the proviso that one African, isiZulu speaking learner, be part of the five groups of six and one group of five that was formed from the thirty-five learner sample.

I sensed that the Indian learners did not want to make their isiZulu peers feel isolated by being involved in a Project that focused significantly on discourses pertaining to Indians. This was evident in the ease with which the isiZulu learners were integrated into the groups. I was relieved that the formation of the groups was concluded smoothly as I had expected the process to take longer. I also had no qualms with the fact that learners structured their groups around the fact that they were friends. This, I believed, would make them feel relaxed with one another and enable them to express themselves without tension. Learners had therefore achieved the first objective of the lesson (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 4).

Regarding the completion of the questionnaires, the problem that learners expressed was that they did not like to write long answers to the open-ended questions. This is one of the disadvantages of the open-ended question which could result in 'respondent-fatigue' (*Market Research Glossary of Terms*, 2009) when a respondent can lose interest and sometimes provide invalid responses. Nevertheless, with the exception of a few, when the questionnaires were analysed, open questions were answered reasonably well (*ibid*). As with the formation of groups, here again, I was pleased that eventually, all learners completed the questionnaires (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 4).

In interceding the basic Critical Literacy theories to learners, Broomhall's (2002: 2) *Foundations of Critical Literacy Learning* (please see Figure 6.8 in Chapter 6) was a simple diagrammatical representation that could be used as the impetus for further discussion of concepts. In addition, the phases of the Community Newspaper Project also loosely followed Broomhall's cycle.

With regards to the 'Out of the Box' activity, which focused in the concept of text, (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 5) after identifying printed texts, learners could not proceed any further since they were limited in their understanding of what a text was. To them a text was a textbook or an extract from some written source.

T- This box still has more texts. What other genre or kinds of texts are in the box?  
L3- We give up ma'm, show us.

The revelation that the '50 Cent' compact disc was a text prompted the following response from a learner extracted from Discussion Box 4 (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 5) and my subsequent reply:

L4- Then, ma'm, why can't we study '50 Cent' instead of Shakespeare?  
T- Well, Karthi, you still have to study Shakespeare, but nothing stops us from studying the lyrics of a '50 Cent' track in the 'Language and Comprehension' component of the syllabus. In fact you could examine aspects of any one of these kinds of texts.  
(Annexure F, 14/08/03: 5).

One can deduce from this, that the pedagogy that learners are familiar with is one that conforms to the traditional idea of a text being in written form, therefore learners cannot be blamed for having this narrow view of the concept of 'text'. Prinsloo and Janks (2002: 23) contend that the literary text is revered in the teaching of English while popular culture is viewed sceptically with mass media texts seen as suitable only for identifying 'emotive

language' and for establishing the intention of the text, for example, propaganda, and not for textual enjoyment.

The new curriculum however, the *NCS* (DoE, 2003: 44-45) transcends this view, inviting teachers to extend the use of text to include some of those listed in Lesson Plan 2 (please see Annexure D2). An additional factor that would motivate the use of alternate texts in the English classroom can be elicited from my 'Reflections' in the Observation Chart:

I was struck by the enthusiastic response just at the sight of the '50 Cent' compact disc. All learners seemed to be united in their taste in music transcending whatever racial or cultural barriers that may have existed in the classroom (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 5).

Perhaps, in analysing texts, the selection of those that are more relevant to teenagers, like some that were chosen for the 'Out of the Box' activity, would make learning more effective.

After examining the different features of texts with learners I was satisfied that they understood that a text was much more than a printed textbook or passage, learners were invited to reverse conventional thinking in engaging with the third foundation of Critical Literacy, 'Framing and Asking Questions'. In the context of school, learners are usually bombarded with questions from teachers in the form of homework exercises, tests and examinations. Work with the theories of Critical Literacy, which is learner-centred, presupposes that learners ask questions of texts from different angles in order to negotiate meaning and comprehend at different levels (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 6). This aspect of the cycle did not take long for learners to figure out and later, during group activities, I noted that meaningful engagement with the texts translated into the fact that learners were framing and asking questions about texts although these were not always verbally articulated.

The third aspect of Broomhall's (2002) cycle, "Clarifying Values" alerted learners to the need to understand the values contained in a text. The objective of demonstrating that each person was constructed according to different value systems was achieved by demonstrating that while values were different on a cultural or religious level, as indicated by the list of binary oppositions drawn up by the class (please see Figure 6.11), every South African citizen was rendered equal by the values upheld by the *Constitution* (1996). A brief analysis of the article in *The Rising Sun*, (8-14/07/03): "Hospital Sends Aids Patient Home to Die" – Claim, (please see Annexure D2), though one-sided, was linked to the *Constitution* as it appealed to the values of ordinary people, like the readers of *The Rising Sun*. Here learners saw that the

opinions of others had to be respected, even though they may not be in line with their own. At the same time the idea of positioning was examined as it could be seen that texts position people differently in terms of their values. In addition, the idea that texts, from fairy tales to newspapers, are not neutral but are value-based was conveyed to learners and re-enforced during the deconstruction of texts.

The second session of Segment 2, ‘Understanding Critical Literacy’, required an entire lesson and concentrated on the final stage of the Critical Literacy learning cycle, ‘The Deconstruction and Analysis of Texts’ inherent in which was a discussion of the basic theories of Critical Literacy, namely, Intertextuality, Reader Response Theory, Critical Discourse Analysis, and Critical Language Awareness. Figure 8.12, below, is an extract from Lesson Plan 3 (Please see Annexure D3) representing the main objectives of the lesson.

Figure 8.12: an extract from Lesson Plan 3 showing objectives.

<b>Lesson Plan 3</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 27/08/03 (Day 9, Session 5)	
<b>Topic:</b> Understanding Critical Literacy: Foundations of Critical Literacy: Deconstruction and analysis of texts	
<b>Grade:</b> 11A	
<b>Time:</b> 1 session	
<b>Objectives:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a basic understanding of Critical Literacy theories.</li> <li>• Share ideas on everyday experiences to understand how language and power work.</li> <li>• Understand how language shapes values and attitudes.</li> </ul>	

(Annexure D3)

It was pointed out to learners that Intertextuality, Reader Response Theory, Critical Discourse Analysis, and Critical Language Awareness may have been present in their regular interactions with texts, but were not, until then, identifiable by specific terms. Learners simply had to attempt to understand the differences between each theory. There was no prescription for respondents to study each theory in detail. The onus was with me, as facilitator, to ensure that lessons were differentiated according to the above-mentioned theories.

Shor (1997: 14) asserts that theorising theory produces abstract discourse whose reference to experience and history gets lost, although, in academic circles, the more abstract a spoken or written discourse, the more prestige the speaker or text represents. This, Shor (1997: 15) states, is problematic and suggests that a Critical Pedagogy should begin with learner’s engagement with themes and then a connection to theory should be invited. As a result what

emerges from the conflicts and collaborations of teacher and learners is a new code that is different from the everyday language of students and the academic language of the teacher and is referred to by Shor (1997: 15) as the 'third idiom'. This scenario is a feature of the Community Newspaper Project that is evident in the discourses between teacher and learners contained in the Discussion boxes. For example, interesting conversations are illustrated in Discussion Boxes 6, 7 and 8, centred on the use of formal and informal language in different contexts (please see Annexure F, 27/08/03: 8-10), from which Shor's 'third idiom' materialises. From this, the theory of Critical Language Awareness, focusing on 'Language and Power' and 'Language and Positioning' (Janks, 1993), with specific attention given to gender positioning, was addressed.

Learners were enlightened that in formal situations, those in authority, for example, parents and teachers, have 'power' and so those relations will generally dictate how language is used. However, amongst peers, colleagues and friends, those power relations are equal and so language is informal. The following annotation was made in the 'Reflection' section of the observation chart:

The use of slang by me, the teacher, was to learners uncharacteristic and incongruous, but worked well since it seemed to set the tone for the discussion, somehow giving learners licence to be more expressive of their opinions than usual. However, I did not allow the discussion to disintegrate into one on slang but steered it towards a discussion of language so that different examples of the relationship between language and power could be covered (Annexure F, 27/08/03: 9).

The issue of how gender dictated the language of girls and boys was also an exciting development to the conversation in a class dominated by female learners who were, from my observations, always striving for a gender balance in the classroom. Discussion Box 7 in Chapter 7 demonstrates this (please see Annexure F, 27/08/03: 9). The debate on gender power relations was significant as it addressed one of the main themes of the Community Newspaper Project that was covered in Segment 3 on fairy tales and in Phase 3 on beauty pageants. It revealed a number of learners' insights into the gender roles prevalent in society and the fact that they were not content to accept the *status quo*. The discourse on the use of derogatory racial terms illustrated how language had evolved over the years. The use of African-American colloquial speech like 'nigga' was believed by some learners, to be a way of asserting one's racial identity (*ibid*). It revealed an inadvertent affirmation that people, irrespective of political correctness or democracy, were still positioned in terms of race. The strong sense of the level of influence of American Rap culture on the boys in general, irrespective of whether they were African or Indian, that I perceived by the popularity of

rapper '50 Cent' in an earlier lesson, was reinforced during this discussion.

As mentioned, when a learner asked, "Then, Ma'm, why can't we study '50 Cent' instead of Shakespeare?" (Annexure F, 14/08/03: 5), my response was that this was possible but only within a particular context. However, Delpit (1988: 288) asserts that the teacher cannot be the only expert in the classroom. She believes that to deny students their own expert knowledge is to disempower them and cites an example of classroom practice in Pennsylvania where students analysed Rap songs to discover their underlying patterns. The students became experts at explaining the rules for creating Rap songs and the teacher used the patterns the students identified as a base to explain the structure of grammar and then the structure of Shakespeare's plays. Here both the student and the teacher were experts at what they knew best. This indicates the creative possibilities when different kinds of texts are embraced in the classroom.

In discussing politically correct terms, learners were able to observe that the use of 'differently-abled' as a replacement for 'crippled' or 'disabled' indicated a shift in mindset from a negative to a positive, showing that one should no longer focus on what the person is unable to do but instead on what he or she is capable of doing. As far as the discussion of body language as a means of asserting power was concerned, the example that I cited, although also alluded to by Janks (1993, iii), was a personal experience and I'm sure the experience of other teachers in multi-cultural classrooms. This example shows how different forms of body language mean different things to different cultures. Each, however, is a social convention with neither being more acceptable than the other (*ibid*).

Attaining the level of Shor's (1997) 'third idiom' made it possible for Critical Literacy theories, particularly CLA, were mediated to learners in a clear manner. The appealing and pertinent subject matter covered, ensured that with regards to this lesson, it has been possible to demonstrate that the objectives outlined in Figure 8.12 had been achieved. As different approaches of interpreting texts were introduced to learners, they were requested to think about their interactions in everyday situations in different ways. An overall assessment of this lesson was one that was mutually engaging for me as facilitator and for the learners, which was not a rare phenomenon with this particular class, as they were generally expressive of their views. Since this lesson was relevant to their own realities and life-world, Intertextuality, Reader Response Theory and Critical Language Awareness were no longer just abstract theories.

### 8.4.1.3 Analysis and reflection of Segment 3: fairy tales

I have already discussed that the reason for using fairy tales was to further simplify Critical Literacy theories in order to familiarise learners with them so that they could be used effectively when analysing community newspapers. Figure 8.13 below, is an extract from Lesson Plan 4 (please see Annexure D4) that sketches the objectives of learners' three session interaction with fairy tales. An assessment on whether these objectives were achieved or not will take place at the end of the analysis of this lesson.

Figure 8.13: an extract from Lesson Plan 4 showing the objectives.

<b>Lesson Plan 4</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 09/09/03, 16/10/03, 29/10/03 (Day 9, Session 5)	
<b>Topic:</b> Understanding Critical Literacy: fairy tales	
<b>Grade:</b> 11A	
<b>Time:</b> 3 sessions	
<b>Objectives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li><li>• Understand how Eurocentric fairy tales have shaped gender roles.</li><li>• Meaningfully complete tasks based on <i>Four Resources Model</i> (1997), worksheet, and group Venn Diagram.</li></ul>	

(Annexure D4)

The discussion in the initial stages of this lesson on the opening and closing lines of most Eurocentric fairy tales and the positioning of males and females differently in and by these stories, allowed learners to see how, at least at a subconscious level, their lives are shaped according to the fantasies advanced by these stories.

While learners acknowledged that there was some exposure to mainly Indian religious stories at school, and an oral tradition of African mythology in the home, the formal curriculum included tales from a European background. For the first time learners found themselves questioning their exposure, in their formative years, not to stories from their own marginalised communities, but to stories from Europe. They were able to see not just what was included in the curriculum, but what had been left out (Annexure F, 09/09/03: 11).

The motivation for choosing three adaptations of *The Three Little Pigs* for learners to examine was that these stories were recognisable to all the learners. I might have chosen a story in keeping with a purely gender theme like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* or *Cinderella*, however, I thought that with two segments of Phase 3 that were planned with that

subject in mind, the possibility existed that learners could become bored with that idea. In addition, the gender theme was still relevant to the stories that had been chosen.

During this second lesson, the interest of the learners seemed stimulated with many articulating their delight at being able to listen to the stories being read:

- Why can't we study fairytales instead of Shakespeare? (murmurs of approval).
- This is not boring.
- Yeah, these stories are really cool (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 12).

The fact that they were revisiting the fairy tales as teenagers was not only nostalgic for learners, but they were interacting with the stories at a more complex level. Just reading and discussing the narratives was fine, but when I introduced the three worksheets that constituted the activities based on the stories that had to be completed in groups, a few, for whom analysing the stories was an anti-climax, commented:

L- Why can't we read more stories?

L- Why do we have to spoil the fun with all this work?

T- Don't worry. The exercises were designed to make you see aspects of the story in a different light, you will be able to understand better (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 12).

I observed that learners struggled with the idea of getting started since group work was not a conventional feature of their pedagogy. Nevertheless, they soon became accustomed to the idea as I began to interact with each of the groups. One of the crucial things that I had learnt from conducting the few learner-centred lessons in the past, and from this lesson as well, is that in order for group work to be effective, the teacher has to be engaged with the groups to provide direction. Interaction among group members too, becomes significant and focused if the teacher is meaningfully involved. At the end of Lesson 2, I made the following entry in the 'Analysis' section of the Observation chart:

Group work can be stressful. I had to be on my toes. Learners cannot be left to their own devices. The guidance and input from the teacher are crucial. I found that I interacted in a more meaningful way with learners and some learners who were experiencing difficulty could get assistance either from me or from other learners in the group. Also, even those that are generally quieter than others got an opportunity to speak. I saw Priya interacting with members in her group. Normally she is painfully shy. I'm not used to that buzz (noise) though. Fortunately, we are in the Library and not in the classroom (Annexure F, 16/10/03: 14).

During the third lesson on fairy tales, the group report-back session, it had become apparent that the group worksheet and the Venn Diagram (please see Annexure D4) elicited similar information but in different ways. The difference between these two tasks was that the worksheet allowed learners to focus on specific details of the stories. Given the time

constraints, in retrospect, the Venn Diagram, though valuable, should have been excluded from the activities for that lesson.

Despite initial problems by some learners to comprehend some of the questions of the group worksheet, they were eventually adequately answered by each group. An important aspect to emanate from this task was the discussion on the illustrations that were drawn with great detail and humour, especially in Text 2. The focus here was on the visual rather than the verbal. This was associated with the section on Visual Literacy in the Language and Comprehension component of the English curriculum, a section that learners did not generally perform well in. The focus on the visual aspects of the fairy tales allowed learners the opportunity to look for visual clues that were associated with the verbal. The fact that the subject matter was humorous helped in this regard.

Regarding the Four Resources Model (1997) problems during the group-work sessions stemmed from the fact that learners, according to Luke (2000: 7), bring diverse cultural, community and linguistic resources to the classroom with some having more privileged access to the kinds of literacy practiced in school than others and so understand the codes better. This can be said for the a small number of learners involved in the Project who experienced difficulty comprehending aspects of the resources, which may be attributed to the fact that some who were not Home Language English speakers found English more challenging than other non-mother-tongue speakers. In addition, given their disadvantaged backgrounds, a few respondents did not have exposure to school-based discourses in the home, lacking books and other printed resources from an early age.

Luke (2000: 7) also asserts that as far as the resource of text participation is concerned, cultural and gendered ideologies develop through pre-school linguistic and literate socialisation. This would explain why learners constructed meanings from fairy tales that took for granted the gender roles of characters in those texts (please refer to Annexure F, 29/10/03: 15) and later, also regarded as normal the manner in which women and girls were positioned in community newspapers as participants in beauty contests.

An important point to note about Developing Resources as a Text User is that by examining power relations, positioning and other aspects of fairy tales, respondents were provided with resources to enable them to eventually 'read' a range of variables of the community newspaper, a form of media that constituted their everyday experience.

As far as Developing Resources as a Text Critic is concerned, simply by examining the intention and effects of the fairy tales, learners were able to analyse and criticize the texts. Later, during the deconstruction of community newspapers, exploring the historical and cultural background of the community newspapers, the predominance of advertising, and the stereotypes perpetuated by these publications enabled learners to develop resources as critics of those newspapers.

As far as the objectives of the lesson outlined in Figure 8.13 are concerned, the first, that expects learners to express ideas freely and respect those of others, was achieved. As already mentioned, learners in the context of the group felt free to tell me that they experienced difficulties with tasks and they assisted one another where they could. At the beginning of this segment, aspects of gender positioning by Eurocentric fairy tales was again discussed. In addition, this theme was reiterated when the gender roles in Texts 1, 2 and 3 were examined. Therefore, the objective of understanding how Eurocentric fairy tales had shaped gender roles was realised. Thus, the examination of fairy tales provided learners with an uncomplicated and enjoyable way of understanding the various phases of Critical Literacy learning and the methods of deconstruction and analysis, providing them with the knowledge for engagement with texts in general and community newspapers in particular.

#### *8.4.2 Analysis and reflection of Phase 2: the deconstruction of mainstream and community newspapers*

During Phase 1 of the Project in 2003, when the respondents were in Grade 11 and I taught them Library Resource Education and not English, I noticed a distinct difference in my attitude as there was no pressure to complete a syllabus or to prepare learners for a 'high-stakes' examination. However, when Phase 2 began in 2004 and respondents were promoted to Grade 12, as their teacher of English I shared a common goal with the learners who were anxious to perform well in the final English examination, discussed earlier in this Chapter. At the same time, I was facilitator of the Community Newspaper Project, which I was eager to complete with the Grade 12 class as effectively as possible.

I tried to separate my role as teacher of English from my role as the facilitator of the Project and used two types of pedagogy simultaneously: a transmission pedagogy to complete the mainstream Literature syllabus and a Critical Pedagogy to complete the Community Newspaper Project. Learners had no problem shifting from one type of pedagogy to the next

as they seemed to view the Project as a separate subject altogether. During the Literature lessons, learners adopted a serious demeanour, and, although responsive when I asked questions, I sensed that they seemed to trust only what I said as they saw me as the authority on the text. I gathered this from the fact that they took notes only when I talked or wrote something on the chalkboard and not when their peers offered their perspectives. Although there was a desire to change my pedagogy in respect of teaching Literature, I did not, as the status quo favoured preparation for the examination. Conversely, when learners were engaged in activities related to the Community Newspaper Project they were more relaxed and seemed to enjoy the learning experience that related to their own realities and not to content that was obscure.

#### 8.4.2.1 Analysis and reflection of Segment 1: international and local newspapers

The objectives for this first lesson for 2004 are listed in Figure 8.14 (please see Annexure D5). The first objective is common to all lessons of the Project where group work is incorporated. At this stage, learners were very comfortable with one another, having come through most of their high school career together and freely expressed their views while respecting those of their peers. The other objectives will be discussed later.

Figure 8.14: an extract from Lesson Plan 5 showing objectives.

<b>Lesson Plan 5</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 29/01/04 (Day1, Session1), 30/01/04 (Day 2, Session 2)	
<b>Topic:</b> Interrogating Texts - International and Local Newspapers	
<b>Grade:</b> 12A	
<b>Time:</b> 2 sessions	
<b>Objectives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Understand how CDA, Genre, Reader Response Theory and Intertextuality can be applied to the deconstruction of newspapers.</li> <li>• Understand the processes of production, distribution and consumption of newspapers.</li> <li>• Complete worksheet meaningfully.</li> </ul>	

(Annexure D5)

The results of the questionnaire, outlined in detail earlier in this Chapter, and presented to learners in a summarized form, revealed that apart from the Sunday newspapers, two-thirds of the class read community newspapers regularly which was confirmation of the premise of the Project. Most began their analysis of newspapers with the preconceived notion that community newspapers played an important role in informing the community on local news, that community newspapers were instrumental in shaping the views and opinions of its

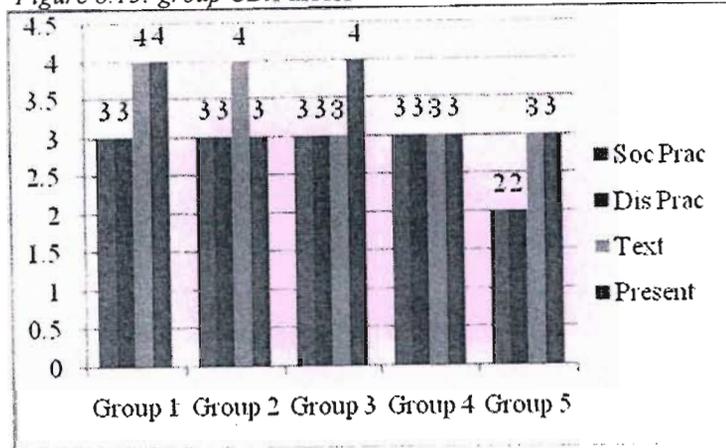
readers, and that mainstream newspapers were of a superior quality to community newspapers (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 17). In deconstructing the different kinds of newspapers, these ideas were generally validated by learners.

The grouping of newspapers into ‘stables’ provided profiles on the ownership, circulation, advertising and processes of production, distribution and consumption, outlined in Chapter 3 and focused on how they operated as businesses. For example, in discussing the *Sunday Tribune*, I pointed out that this newspaper belonged to Independent Newspapers which also owned the *Daily News*, the *Independent on Saturday*, *The Mercury* and *Post*. The motive in providing these profiles was to illustrate that newspapers were first and foremost ‘revenue streams’ before they were purveyors of information, (Annexure F, 29/01/04: 17) thus addressing one of the key questions of the Project.

The group assessment sheet (*Grade 9 Teachers’s Guide*, DoE, 2003), explained in Chapter 7 used for the deconstruction of newspapers (please see Annexure D6) provided me with a holistic view of the level of learners’ understanding of how newspapers operated, so that, as the facilitator I could assist those groups that I thought needed help during subsequent sessions. Figure 8.15 is a breakdown of my assessment according to the level of understanding of the three main dimensions for Critical Discourse Analysis: *Text*, *Discursive Practice* and *Social Practice*. In addition, groups were assessed for their overall presentation abilities. Each aspect had a mark allocation of ‘5’ and the total mark was ‘20’. The assessment was based on my overall interaction with the groups during the group work session and not only on the five-minute presentation by group leaders.

Group 1 had the highest score of 14 (70%) with Group 5 a score of 10 (50%). Groups 1 and 2 had a very good understanding of text while four out of five groups had an average understanding of discursive practice. Groups 1 and 3 had excellent presentation with ideas conveyed in a clear and succinct manner. There was also evidence that their group worksheets were completed in greater detail. Group 5 (three boys and three girls), seemed not as committed as other teams and I identified three boys who were averse to written work. The other members did attempt to draw them into activities as far as possible and as facilitator I found myself spending more time assisting Group 5 than any of the other groups. Nevertheless, their influence on activities was not disruptive and did not compromise the Project in any way (Annexure F, 30/01/04: 20).

Figure 8.15: group CDA assessment scores.



The discussion on South African Sunday newspapers was not intended to be a detailed analysis and revealed learners' general views that Discussion Box 12 (please see Annexure F, 30/01/04: 18) shows that although the *Sunday Times* (16/11/2003) and *Sunday Tribune* (16/11/2003) were similar in many respects, the *Sunday Times* had the lead because it contained a magazine which the *Sunday Tribune* did not have in that form.

Learners seemed more enthusiastic about analysing the British newspapers than the South African publications. This was possibly because the British newspapers were distinctly different in appearance and content. The discourse in this regard, contained in Discussion Box 13, Annexure F (30/01/04: 19) reveals that in saying a newspaper was 'classy', 'for intelligent people' or that it was a 'gossip newspaper', learners were inadvertently able to distinguish between the different target markets to which a newspaper appealed. They were also able to offer frankly their opinions on the risqué picture in *The Mail* (16/11/2003), the kind of picture one is generally not likely to see in a South African mainstream newspaper, which tended to suggest that South African newspapers, were rather conservative. In their actual physical construction, the British newspapers were strikingly different. South African newspapers were either in broadsheet or tabloid format, nothing in-between. So, with exposure to the British newspapers, some intellectual with narrow broadsheet formats; others less conservative; newspapers with no advertising inserts, better quality paper and binding, learners were able to construct a reality other than their own, of the different kinds of British newspapers and newspaper readers. This insight provided a broader more global perspective of newspapers for the respondents.

The general discussion on community newspapers followed that of the British newspapers and was rather cursory considering the time constraints (please see Discussion Box 14, Annexure F, 30/01/04: 19). Learners commented on the size and general content focusing specifically on advertising. One learner perceptively pointed out that *The Rising Sun* had more advertising than any of the other newspapers, local, and international. This translated into it being the most prosperous of the community publications in Chatsworth, making it obvious to learners of the dominance of *The Rising Sun* over the other community newspapers. Also, learners were able to internalise the fact that community newspapers could not be underestimated as potentially significant sources of revenue. This brief, but meaningful, investigation of community newspapers would be useful in directing the analysis of these publications in the lessons to follow that analysed specific texts from these publications.

As far as the achievement of the objectives of the lesson is concerned, the first was discussed earlier and Figure 8.15, the group CDA assessment scores, gives a detailed evaluation of the extent to which the other objectives were achieved by learners. By completing the group worksheet, during the deconstruction process, learners acquired a more practical knowledge of how each Critical Literacy theory worked. A more specific interrogation of community newspapers followed the general deconstruction.

#### 8.4.2.2 Analysis and reflection of Segment 2: using Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model for Critical Discourse Analysis to interrogate community newspapers

This segment was aimed at effecting a closer analysis of the Chatsworth community newspapers. Lesson Plan 6 (please see Figure 8.16, Annexure D6) on the following page outlines the objectives of this two-session lesson.

Figure 8.16: an extract from Lesson Plan 6 showing objectives.

<b>Lesson Plan 6</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 20/02/04 (Day 2, Session 2), 23/02/04 (Day 3, Session 5)	
<b>Topic:</b> Using the CDA model to Interrogate Community Newspapers	
<b>Grade:</b> 12A	
<b>Time:</b> 2 sessions	
<b>Objectives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Examine Discourse as text: Identify and correct grammatical errors.</li> <li>• Examine text production, distribution and consumption.</li> <li>• Examine social and cultural contexts.</li> <li>• Complete worksheets based on texts meaningfully.</li> </ul>	

(Annexure D6)

The first objective, common to all lessons, was discussed earlier and can be considered to be attainable for each lesson because the majority of learners in the 12A class had no problems expressing themselves and at all times respected the opinions of others. At the outset however, it must be stated that all the other objectives had not been accomplished in the manner that I had intended because of limitations on time, nevertheless, learners' understanding of CDA in relation to community newspapers was in no way compromised. Explanations were provided in Chapter 6.

As researcher and facilitator I considered Questions 1.1 to 1.5 of *Discourse as Text* which had been answered in detail by groups, as being crucial in contributing to the answering of the key research questions of the Project and formulating an overall understanding of the way each newspaper was constructed.

The tasks undertaken in this Project were intended to help learners see a connection between what they did in school and the communities they lived in, the cultural world from which they originated, helping them reshape their relationships with media products they encountered on a regular basis (Hobbs, 1997: 72). Voloshinov and Bahktin (2000: 6) refer to diverse and multiple "voices" at work in texts that give the reader access to cultural and historical positions that highlight whose interests such texts might serve.

It can be deduced from Question 1.1 that all the errors that occurred in this instance were from *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03 and 11-17/11/03). What must be considered, however, is that only headlines were scrutinised and as such one cannot make generalisations about the latter two newspapers just from this pithy analysis. However, during the interview with the Managing Editor/ Founder of *The Rising Sun* the issue of the high number of errors in the newspaper was addressed. In this regard, Questions 6.1 and 6.2 (please see Figure 8.17 below) are particularly significant, with the Managing Editor viewing criticism as an opportunity for development by inviting me to correct errors and bring them to his attention. In addition, in his response to Question 9 (please see Annexure C2), the Managing Editor saw *The Rising Sun's* partnership with Caxton as impacting positively in honing the writing skills of reporters.

Figure 8.17: an extract from the interview with the founder/ co-owner/ Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*.

<p><b>6.1 There are often errors in your newspaper, even in headlines, regarding grammar and spelling. What would you attribute this to?</b></p>
<p>Every effort is made to ensure quality control; however, in the rush to meet deadlines, some errors inadvertently do occur.</p>
<p><b>6.2 Do you plan to address this problem? If so, how?</b></p>
<p>Well we are constantly looking to improve our product. I would like to invite you to look through our newspaper each week and if you find errors, mark them in the newspaper and leave the copy at reception and I will address the issue with reporters. We appreciate feedback from members of the community, from anyone who thinks they can contribute.</p>

(Annexure C2)

As a Critical Literacy Project, cognizance must be taken of the fact that those with power and dominance in society maintain their position by what is considered to be ‘correct language’. Ethnic groups with little political and economic power are often taught that their very patterns of speech and writing are inferior, and are connected with their economic, social, and cultural deprivation. Such groups are expected to adopt standard, majority language use which is usually to speak and write ‘proper’ and ‘correct’ English (Graff, 1979). South Africa, with its eleven official languages, some of which, like English and Afrikaans, enjoy hegemony over the others, faces a dilemma in this regard.

An engaging outcome of the tasks on *Discourse as Text*, was the discussion that resulted from the responses to Question 1.4 (please see Annexure D6). By simply deconstructing the words used in the community newspapers pertaining specifically to Chatsworth and Indian South Africans, what emerged was a representation of what these publications embodied. For the African learners who were not part of Chatsworth or the Indian community, the use of this ethno-specific vocabulary presented a sense of subliminal gate-keeping on the part of the publishers. Learners were reminded of the relationship between language and power. This interrogation of the language found in the community newspapers also prompted a reply to one of the key questions of the Project as to whether these publications promoted a narrow sense of community and ethnocentrism. One cannot deny that through the use of language that is restricted to specific ethnic groups and geographical locations, the hidden message which these publications convey is that it favours as its readers members of that ethnic group and geographical location, to the exclusion of others. Yet the task of defining the vocabulary was an enlightening experience that all learners, Indian and African, embraced as an attempt to bridge the divides of apartheid through understanding (Annexure F, 23/02/04: 22-23).

The ‘counting heads’ task, Question 1.5 (please see Annexure D6), was a simple yet

significant way to illustrate to learners how to read the sub-text. In this case learners discovered that the number of faces in a community newspaper is significant as it contributes to the publication's circulation and expands the outreach of the paper, helping to entrench the brand in the community.

The idea behind Discourse analysis was to show learners how to move away from their positions as naïve readers to becoming resistant readers. Learners had been conscientised, throughout their schooling career to accept texts, for example comprehension passages, as factual. Goatly (2000: 155) suggests that as resistant readers, learners had to resist the contents of texts, question why texts were constructed in specific ways and whose interests they served. The class discussion that followed the report-back session on *Discourse as Text* focussed first, on *Discursive Practice: text production, distribution and consumption* which reinforced the idea, for learners, that newspapers were essentially businesses, that the financial viability of newspapers depended on advertising revenue (*ibid*: 249).

If the management of a publication expects the advertising to be successful then the distribution network must ensure that the newspaper reaches as many people as possible. Learners were therefore made to understand that distribution was a key component in the success of any form of print media, specifically, free community newspapers. If this was not properly monitored the publication would also not be able to justify its circulation figures with the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC). The possibility always exists that those responsible for distribution could 'dump' newspapers and not deliver to every household.

Regrettably, the interview with the Managing Editor/ Founder of *The Rising Sun* which included valuable information on the distribution of the newspaper was conducted after the conclusion of the Community Newspaper Project and so could not be cascaded to learners. However, the interview (please see Figure 8.18) confirms the tremendous investment in distribution made by newspapers like *The Rising Sun*.

Figure 8.18: an extract from the interview with the Founder/Co-owner/ Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*.

3. Explain the infrastructure you have in place to handle the distribution of your newspaper, viz. the number of vehicles, personnel etc.
The company has a fleet of forty vehicles. There are eight delivery trucks used for distribution of a total of 160 000 newspapers which is done from Tuesday to Thursday in the different areas with eight personnel assigned to each vehicle. Each delivery truck is equipped with a two-way radio to ensure constant contact. Printing is done by our own company, Rising Sun Printers, which operates as a separate enterprise.

Annexure C2

Later the interviewee confirmed that *The Rising Sun* had an Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) certified print order of 42 000, the highest of the community newspapers operating in Chatsworth and that the two-way radios kept the management on the pulse of the distribution of that print order. In that way their response times in terms of following up on the more than seventy-five calls per week pertaining to distribution complaints were prompt, ensuring that almost every household received a newspaper (Annexure C2).

An aspect of the *text consumption* of community newspapers that should have been warranted more time, had this variable not been limited, was the fact that *The Rising Sun*, (21-27/10/03) contained advertisements and advertorials for skin lighteners and faith healers. The prevalence of these advertisements prey on the insecurities among sections of the community that may be gullible, and so the community newspaper inadvertently perpetuates bigotry and superstition in not being discerning about the kinds of advertisements they publish, proof that newspapers are motivated by financial gain.

The discourse that followed, *Social Practice: examining social and cultural contexts*, focused on Indian South Africans and the framing of the Chatsworth community newspapers within a specific ethnic context (please see Annexure F, 23/02/04: 32). Janks (1997: 329) contends that in CDA the historical determination in relation to texts is necessary in order to illustrate that the processes of production and reception are socially constrained. The majority of respondents were consumers of the community newspapers that represented their historical, social and cultural contexts. However, from their responses during discussions, I was surprised to note that the majority of learners, fifth or sixth generation Indian South Africans, did not have an understanding of their historical backgrounds and how their ancestors came to be South African citizens.

Interesting perspectives were gathered from African learners on their interaction with Indian learners, the essence of which was that there was no deliberate attempt on the part of one group to marginalise the other, and both groups were friends, however, during the breaks, groups of friends remained homogenous with few intermingling. This behaviour I would attribute to differences of language and culture that would form part of the ethos at a school with a heterogeneous population, like Community Secondary.

The community newspapers perpetuate the idea of difference, of being part of an Indian diaspora in predominantly homogenous neighbourhoods. Very little news is imported from outside those parameters of being ‘Indian’ and of being a resident of ‘Chatsworth’. The inclusion of news almost exclusively about Indians from Chatsworth marginalises other race groups and people from other communities. This addressed a key question of the Community Newspaper Project which was relevant to the phase that followed which explored the possibility that specific kinds of beauty contests advanced the notion of a narrow sense of community.

#### 8.4.3 Analysis and Reflection of Phase 3: analysis of sources from community newspapers on the theme of beauty contests

Engagement with newspapers and community newspapers in the previous segment had been effective in developing for learners a general representation of how these publications operated. At this stage there was, from my observation, a level of immersion in the activities that would suggest an understanding of how they functioned. Phase 3, the deconstruction of specific texts from the community newspapers, illustrated how these publications perpetuate certain discourses within the communities they operate, for example, the discourse of beauty contests.

##### 8.4.3.1 Analysis and reflection of Segment 1: beauty contests in general

The promotion of sexism and ethnocentrism by the community newspapers through the discourse of beauty pageants was the motivation for the examination of this theme in Phase 3. The extract from Lesson Plan 7 (please see Figure 8.19 below) outlines the objectives of this lesson, the first three of which were accomplished. However, the homework task of this lesson was excluded and therefore the last objective could not be achieved.

Figure 8.19: an extract from Lesson Plan 7 showing objectives.

<b>Lesson Plan:</b> 7	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 20/03/04 (Day 2, Session 2)	
<b>Topic:</b> Analysis of Sources from Community Newspapers: Miss India South Africa.	
<b>Grade:</b> 12A	
<b>Time:</b> 1 session	
<b>Objectives</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Analyse texts meaningfully using worksheets provided.</li> <li>• Identify stereotyping, emotive and persuasive language.</li> <li>• Construct an alternative text using role reversal.</li> </ul>

(Annexure D7)

The manner in which women and girls are portrayed in the media, for example magazines, suggest that a woman's status and identity depends on her physical appearance (Goatly, 2000: 159). Similarly, the portrayal of women and girls in the Chatsworth community newspapers within the context of beauty contests was based on the principle of sexism and contributed to constructing a stereotype of women having to conform to a specific ideal of beauty. The reality is that many women do not 'fit the mould' and so there is pressure for them to conform to this stereotype. In drawing a comparison between the role of women in the fairy tales, examined earlier, and in beauty contests, the chauvinistic manner in which women are positioned was highlighted. Gender dynamics are often taken for granted and many saw the way women and girls are portrayed in the media as natural. It was only when those gendered representations were highlighted and discussed that learners could become resistant readers and consider ways of bringing about change.

A positive aspect of beauty contests that was noted was that it catapulted the careers of those that had won titles in the past and so could be viewed by some as a career path. This general discussion set the groundwork for an analysis of the Miss India South Africa pageant in Segment 2.

#### *8.4.3.2 Analysis and reflection of Segment 2: Miss India South Africa*

The most obvious characteristic highlighted during the discussion of the Miss India South Africa texts was the fact that these beauty contests are framed in such a manner as to overtly and covertly exclude participation by certain groups of people. The boys felt that they would automatically not be considered, as suggested by the word "Miss". Girl learners expressed that each was positioned differently in relation to the texts that portrayed Miss India South Africa. For example, they felt that if you were not fair-skinned, thin, and did not have long hair, you could not participate in the contest. This points to prejudices and practices within the Indian community that are seen as concealed but would prevent some from entering, for example, being dark in complexion. The construction of a specific ideal of beauty conveyed by the Miss India South Africa texts may create a sense of insecurity among those female readers who do not conform to that ideal. Some may believe that this sense of insecurity may dissipate if one buys a skin-lightening product advertised elsewhere in the community newspaper, which illustrates how the sub-text of the community newspaper, as a whole, can operate.

In addition, the word 'India' in the title immediately ruled out participation from other race and ethnic groups suggesting that the contest was exclusively for young women of 'Indian' origin (please see Figures 7.18 and 7.20 of Chapter 7). The notion of 'Indianness' was also represented in the type of clothes worn by Miss India South Africa in the pictures. However, there was consensus among learners that the garments were not really a representation of Indian culture but were presented as such. Learners believed that Indian cultural attire is more conservative and traditional. A closer examination is provided in a record of my 'Analysis':

The clothes worn by Miss India South Africa embodies the fusion of Indian and Western cultural artifacts which, through the medium of Indian film, has created a 'Bollywood culture'. The community newspapers, in endorsing a particular fashion house that specialises in Bollywood fashion (because it's financially viable), are in effect promoting the discourses of 'Bollywood'. Also, the use of vocabulary like 'sexy' and 'hot' by the boys are not terms that are usually used in reference to cultural garments. The pictures have been produced to result in such sexist responses from males (Annexure F, 02/03/04: 28).

The pictures of Miss India South Africa (please see Annexure D 7, Texts 1-4) have been deliberately constructed in a manner that will elicit specific reactions from male readers. The words 'sexy' and 'hot' which have been used by male learners to describe Miss India South Africa, illustrate that, just as it can be empowering, language is a way to disempower and dispossess subjects. Language is the primary means through which gender difference and identity is constructed, reinforced, maintained and policed (Balfour, 2003).

In the attainment of the objectives outlined in Figure 8.19, it must be noted that learners' responses were frank and honest and when respondents presented contrary viewpoints these were respected and not frowned upon by those that did not share their opinions. Some learners' responses showed that as resistant readers, they were prepared to challenge the assumptions of the idea of beauty conveyed by the texts. This critical orientation among learners was also present in the deconstruction of texts on community newspaper pageants for young girls.

#### *8.4.3.3 Analysis and reflection of Segment 3: community newspaper pageants for young girls*

The extract from Lesson Plan 8 (please see Figure 8.20) highlights the objectives that learners had to accomplish by the end of the session. The overall aim in choosing to extend the theme of beauty pageants to examine such contests for very young girls was to illustrate how this discourse is promoted by the community newspapers. In addition, community newspaper pageants for young girls, unlike the sectional 'Miss India South Africa' pageant, had a wider

focus as it is a discourse that is not common only to the community of Chatsworth.

Figure 8.20: an extract from Lesson Plan 8 showing objectives.

<b>Lesson Plan 8</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 11/03/04 (Day 2, Session2)	
<b>Topic:</b> Analysis of Sources from Community Newspapers: Community Newspaper Pageants for Young Girls.	
<b>Grade:</b> 12A	
<b>Time:</b> 1 session	
<b>Objectives:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Analyse texts meaningfully using worksheets provided.</li> <li>• Identify stereotyping, emotive and persuasive language.</li> </ul>	

(Annexure D8)

The media, through glossy magazines, newspapers, images on television and music, is responsible for the sexualisation of girls and young women. According to a report by the American Psychological Association in 2007, sexualisation of girls was physiologically and physically damaging as their sense of self was still being formed. Sexualisation could lead to eating disorders, low self-esteem, teenage pregnancy, depression and poor academic performance. In addition, exposure to sexualised images may give rise to sexually provocative behaviour that may result in abuse or rape (*Sunday Times*, 25/03/07: 31). In this case, two of the community newspapers are active participants in the discourse of beauty pageants as they organise their own such contests which include, among others, competitions for young girls.

Many learners, on completion of the tasks, were able to deduce that the girl children in the texts (please see Annexure D 8) were constructed in a provocative manner by community media. While some learners viewed this depiction of children as adults in a negative light, being able to perceive the potential dangers of constructing young girls provocatively, there were others who did not agree with their colleagues and expressed their support for the beauty pageants. The differing views of learners could be perceived as a reflection of the views of the community, that those who were critical thinkers would be circumspect about encouraging participation in these pageants while others would be expedient suggesting reasons why participation can be justified. Some learners were spurred on to action and considered writing letters to the editors articulating their disapproval of beauty pageants for young girls. This is in line with the purposes of Critical Literacy which is to stimulate action.

As far as the realization of the objectives of the lesson (please see Figure 7.24 above) are

concerned, the fact that learners were able to articulate differing views whilst also substantiating their arguments with evidence and reason, shows that they felt free to do so without being prejudiced. This attests to the achievement of the first objective. The second and third objectives are linked, that is, if the texts were meaningfully analysed, learners would be able to identify stereotyping, emotive and persuasive language. While many learners may have attained the two latter objectives, it is clear from some of the responses of learners that they had no problem with the perpetuation of sexist stereotypes by the community newspapers (please see Annexure F, 11/03/04: 28). The process of consolidation followed this final lesson of the Project.

#### 8.4.4 Analysis and reflection of Phase 4: consolidation of the Community Newspaper Project

This phase of the Project could not have much time devoted to it for reasons outlined in Chapter 7. Lesson Plan 9 (please see Annexure D9) outlines the brief lesson plan with the single objective: *Provide views and opinions on the Community Newspaper Project as a whole by completing the evaluation form as honestly as possible.*

The evaluation form comprised of seven statements and a multiple-choice question that I considered to be important in assisting me as researcher to assess learners' verdict of the Project as a whole. Twenty-eight learners were present on 12/03/04, the day the evaluation forms were completed. I shall analyse the first seven statements before going on to the eighth question. Figure 8.21 indicates, globally, learners' responses to Statements 1 to 7.

Figure 8.21: learners' responses to Statements on Evaluation Form.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1] The Community Newspaper Project was well organised.	3	23	2	0	0
2] The facilitator's instructions and explanations were clear.	20	8	0	0	0
3] Sufficient time was allowed for interactive participation.	0	18	5	5	0
4] The facilitator was knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media.	7	21	0	0	0
5] The Project has made me knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media.	0	22	4	2	0
6] The Community Newspaper Project has changed my attitude to Chatsworth community newspapers.	5	17	3	3	0
7] Teacher-centred lessons are better than learner-centred lessons.	12	9	3	4	0
<b>KEY:</b> 1-Strongly agree 2-Tend to agree 3- Neither agree nor disagree 4-Tend to disagree 5- Strongly disagree					

(Annexure F, 12/03/04, 29, 30)

An analysis of the above feedback indicates that most learners tended to agree with the first seven statements and on the whole gravitated to the positive rather than negative in respect of their overall estimation of the Project and its impact on them. The response to Statement 3 warrants some discussion. As facilitator, I tried to ensure that sufficient time was allocated for the tasks that had been chosen to be completed. That is the reason I did not compromise quality for quantity and decided to exclude certain activities as the Project progressed. It is possible that some respondents who tended to disagree with the statement may have thought that the time allocated referred to the Project as a whole and not to specific interactions.

Of particular concern to me as researcher was the impact of the Project on learners. With twenty-two of the learners affirming that they were more knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media in response to Statement 5, I was able to confirm my own evaluation of the Project, that it was essentially successful in increasing learners' awareness of Critical Literacy discourses and in making them more sensitive to the dynamics of how media operate especially when interfacing with community newspapers. This was validated by the responses to Statement 6.

The responses to Statement 7 indicated that the majority favoured learner-centred lessons and with respondents having been simultaneously exposed to mainstream and alternative methodologies, they were in an excellent position to make such an assessment. However, a short discussion that followed the completion of the evaluation forms, may provide a reason why four learners indicated that they 'tended to disagree' with Statement 7. Some learners articulated the view that they did not favour learner-centred lessons because it seemed that they had to do most of the work and the thinking, they therefore preferred teacher-centred lessons because the teacher did most of the work for them. All they had to do was take notes, paste or complete worksheets and that ensured that they passed tests and examinations, with learner-centred lessons they were not so sure (Annexure F, 12/03/04: 30).

Statement 8 required respondents to choose the most interesting of the lessons of the Community Newspaper Project which were categorised under five broad headings. Learners' memories were stimulated with brief summaries of each lesson before they filled in their responses. Figure 8.22 below indicates in percentage the popularity of the five types of lessons listed amongst the twenty-eight learners.

Figure 8.22: learners' responses to Statement 8 in percentages.

Understanding Critical Literacy	0%
Fairy tales	36%
Deconstruction of newspapers	0%
CDA and community newspapers	43%
Beauty Contests	18%

(Annexure F, 12/03/04: 30)

It came as no surprise to me that the most interesting were 'CDA and Community Newspapers' and 'Fairy tales' since, from my observation, learners were most absorbed and responsive during the activities of those lessons.

In the brief discussion that followed the completion of the evaluation forms, learners articulated that they had enjoyed the Project as it made them see things differently. It made them think about reasons why they did not speak to their parents and teachers in slang, how fairy tales had influenced gender relations in their lives, and that they approached community newspapers in a different light, more aware of the contents. One learner said that she 'counted the heads' each time she read a community newspaper (*ibid*).

As the researcher I was content that I had completed the Project with the sample that I had intended to use from the start. They were essentially good, well disciplined learners whose co-operation I knew I could count on. In retrospect, I do not think that I would succeed in conducting such a Project, concurrently with the mainstream syllabus, within the framework of the NCS (2003) in the FET phase at Community Secondary or at any other similar public school at present. The reasons for this will be outlined in the section that follows.

### 8.5 Reflections on the Community Newspaper Project

In embarking on the Community Newspaper Project I had a specific vision of what I intended to accomplish, which was embodied mainly in the key questions. In the preceding section I affirmed that the Project was largely successful suggesting that the overall aim had been achieved. One of the main reasons was the fact that I chose to employ convenience sampling.

My careful and deliberate choice of the 11A/12A class of respondents, as mentioned earlier, went a long way to ensuring the success of the Project. Had my apprehension of having to start the Project afresh, if I had not been granted the class to teach in 2004 been realised, I

believe that the accomplishment of the aims of the Project would have been compromised. My assertion is based on the fact that at the time, the other classes I taught had larger numbers; a higher number of learners who presented behavioural problems; higher rates of absenteeism and late-coming and learners who were not fully proficient in English and would therefore not have been suitable samples for a Project of this nature.

As mentioned already, time was the one variable of the Community Newspaper Project that was at a premium. As a researcher I had to assess continuously the progress of the Project and judge whether tasks could be completed or whether they needed to be set aside. Given this factor, I needed learners to be present at school and punctual on a regular basis, reasonably disciplined and focused, and proficient in English since some of the tasks were complex. The fact that the Grade 11A/12A class, based on my prior interaction with them, satisfied my criteria warranted that the Project was conducted in the manner that I had intended. I contended, in the section prior to this, and in the conclusion of Chapter 6, that the viability of Critical Literacy theories and discourses within the English Home Language curriculum in the FET phase is doubtful. Some reasons have already been offered in Chapter 6. In short, positive contextual factors in a school or class are prerequisites for the viability of Critical Literacy.

It must also be noted, that, at the same time, much thought must go into the design of activities and tasks in line with Critical Literacy theories. During the course of the Project, I had also been able to gauge which Critical Literacy theories work well and which do not and for what reasons. I had learnt as a facilitator and researcher that one must not try to be too ambitious and attempt too many tasks at once. A few well designed and simply-worded tasks will go a long way towards getting learners to interface with critical pedagogy meaningfully. Nevertheless, it is more than likely that most teachers of English Home Language would not know much about Critical Literacy, especially if they received their training as educators, like I did, in the pre-1994 era. As I mentioned in Chapter 6, the *NCS* (2003) is conducive to the implementation of a critical pedagogy, but the Department of Education is presumptuous to assume that all teachers of English are familiar with the critical theories and concepts contained in the *NCS Grades 10-12 English Home Language* (2003) syllabus. While a level of creativity is required from teachers of English Home Language if they wish to mediate these theories to teenagers, the Department of Education must play a more supportive role.

The question is therefore, how do we ensure that citizens become critical media users? The answer is through critical engagement with media in our schools, like with the Community Newspaper Project. As I have already pointed out, this is no easy task. It will take initiative and a co-operative relationship between the Department of Education and educators if this has to materialise on a large scale.

However, as an action research case study, I was able to begin at the level of my school by becoming more critical and reflective of my own classroom practice and find creative ways to implement change in pedagogical tradition by trying to integrate Critical Literacy theories with media education in my lessons, at a simpler level than the Community Newspaper Project did.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSION

#### 9.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I reflect holistically on the Community Newspaper Project and on key issues emerging from Chapters 2 - 8. I also address the key questions of the project according to their relevance to these issues. The key questions are not examined sequentially but as they arise within the discussion of each chapter. As a non-probability study, I do not aim to draw conclusions about a larger population from the outcomes of this small-scale research project. However, the number of transforming factors that informed the project, like the changing patterns in the curriculum, media, and the status of English as a Home Language, warrant considerable discussion in assessing the practicality of Critical Literacy within the present *National Curriculum Statement (NCS)* (2003) in South African classrooms. I also look back at the successes and limitations of the project, examining what worked and what I could and should have done differently. Implicit in the engagement with Critical Literacy is the understanding that changes, in relation to pedagogy, and the manner of interacting with texts, have to be effected. Therefore, ultimately, I discuss how the findings of this action research project can inform my own classroom practice; the value of the research for other educators, researchers and education policy-makers.

#### 9.2 Transitions to a new pedagogy: possibilities and limitations

##### *9.2.1 The racial composition and funding allocation of Chatsworth schools*

In Chapter 2, transforming educational and historical paradigms were fully explored in order to contextualise the Community Newspaper Project. As discussed in Chapter 2, South Africa's education system was transformed with the introduction of the *National Curriculum Statement (NCS)* (2003), and the apartheid curriculum was officially relegated to history when the last group of Grade 12 learners completed their examination based on the old curriculum at the end of 2007. Nevertheless, despite all the policy changes, I argue, based on the review of the literature, that many schools continue to operate very much as they did under apartheid. In Chatsworth, for example, with the exception of Community Secondary and a few other institutions, the racial composition of many schools has not transformed significantly. The statistics showing the classification by race of the Grade 12 learners that

wrote the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination in 2008 for three neighbouring public schools, including Community Secondary illustrate this (please see Figure 9.1).

*Figure 9.1: racial composition of Grade 12 learners for 2008 for Community Secondary and its neighbouring schools.*

School	Black	Indian	Coloured	No. Passed
School 1: Community Secondary	108	25	0	108
School 2	0	264	1	263
School 3	16	91	1	103

DoE, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, Umlazi District: Examinations and Assessment, 2008

In 2008, only 19% of Grade 12 learners of Community Secondary, a former House of Delegates (HoD) school in the predominantly Indian township of Chatsworth, were Indian, while 81% were Black. In contrast, about two kilometres away, School 2, also a former HoD school in Chatsworth, had almost 100% Indian learners in Grade 12 in 2008 with no Black learners. This school is considered to be more affluent and better resourced.

Only a negligible percentage of mainly affluent schools in South Africa can boast being fully in touch with the advances in media with well equipped up-to-date media centres and access to the internet. The National Education Infrastructure Management System (2008) on the state of schools in South Africa, revealed that 79% of schools are without libraries and 68% without computers (*The Mercury*, 14/11/08). A case in point is Community Secondary, although fairly urbanised, the school does not have e-mail or internet facilities and neither does it have a media centre where learners can have access to computers. A fully-stocked library, though some books are obsolete, is non-functional because the department had rationalised school librarians and the school does not have the funds to employ a librarian.

Ironically, Community Secondary which has chosen to transform, drawing its learner population from the disadvantaged communities outside the borders of its location, has suffered financially. Learners from these poor communities often cannot pay the relatively low school fees and since this school does not obtain sufficient funding from the state because its quintile ranking is high (discussed in Chapter 5), Community Secondary struggles to provide the basics to learners, let alone media centres and up-to-date computers. According to Chutgar and Kanjee (2009: 18,19) the current quintile system does not work effectively because it misclassifies schools, giving them incorrect quintile scores, like in the case of Community Secondary.

Therefore, in order to provide the basics, the school has in the recent past become what Christie (2001) refers to as a 'resilient school', an institution where stakeholders have developed the ability to survive and develop in contexts of extreme adversity, recognising what needs to be done and acquiring the necessary resources to act (*ibid*: 1, 2). For example, the school has acquired the assistance of a local religious organisation to provide sandwiches on a daily basis to orphans and vulnerable children enrolled at the school. Community Secondary is confirmation that inequalities still prevail within the South African public education system where a two-tier structure based on class and privilege has emerged.

### 9.2.2 *The present status of English Home Language within the NCS*

Also examined in Chapter 2 is the present status of English Home Language within the NCS (2003). As far as the Languages Learning Field is concerned, English, Afrikaans, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda and Xitsonga are categorised as Disjunctive Orthography while isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu and Siswati are grouped as Conjunctive Orthography. Languages that are Disjunctive Orthography require a higher word count for written tasks like summary and essay writing than languages that are classified as Conjunctive Orthography. Directing the curriculum for Home Language across all the eleven official languages are the examination papers which are assessed as follows: Language in Context, Literature, Writing and Oral Tasks (DOE, *Subject Assessment Guidelines*, 01/08).

In Grade 10, the total time allocated to three examination papers in both the Mid-year and November examinations is six hours, while in Grades 11 and 12 it is seven hours. For English Home Language in Grades 10 and 11 there are a total of sixteen assessment tasks spread over four terms with the mid-year and November examination further divided into three papers, resulting in a total count of twenty tasks. At Grade 12 level there are fourteen assessment tasks over three terms with the mid-year and Preparatory examinations further sub-divided into three papers bringing the total number of tasks to eighteen (*ibid*). Comparatively, the old English Curriculum, and the new, have many similar components with the focus areas of Literature, Comprehension and Language, Writing and Oral Work remaining the same. What has changed is that the Writing Paper (Paper 3) has been re-introduced, as was the case prior to 1996 with moderation of learners' assessment tasks taking place every term across all three grades in the FET phase within cluster schools.

Overall, the demands of the curriculum on teachers of English have intensified since the

implementation of the *NCS* (2003) in the FET phase in 2006 compared to when the Community Newspaper Project was conducted in 2003/2004. If, for example, a teacher of English in a public school has one Grade 12 class of thirty-five learners; two Grade 11 classes and two Grade 10 classes with an average of forty learners in each class, then, he or she would have to assess 3830 tasks of various lengths and degrees of complexity in an academic year. The emphasis on assessment, as illustrated above, leaves little room for the teacher to carry out meaningful, creative, learner-centred activities with which Critical Literacy is associated.

As outlined in Chapter 2, The Department of Basic Education has chosen to respond to criticism of the curriculum by suggesting that their main objective in implementing changes at the beginning of 2010 was to leave more time for teaching and learning (DoE: Basic, 2009: 2). However, given the simplistic, generalised and contradictory nature of the changes suggested, in my opinion, the objective was not achieved. Educators, especially of English Home Language, will find it more prudent to continue as they did in the past. A more comprehensive, protracted and subject-specific investigation into the curriculum is required so that fundamental changes, especially to assessment policies can be effected.

### *9.2.3 Media Education: playing 'catch-up'*

In an evaluation of the first Grade 12 National Senior Certificate examination that was written in November, 2008, the Deputy Director-General in the National Department of Education, acknowledged the fact that teachers are overworked by the new curriculum when she said that there had been criticisms of the assessment demands and that the Department aimed to address teachers' legitimate concerns of overload (*The Times*, 16/01/09: 21). However, at workshops conducted by the Department of Education in February 2009 for teachers of English Home Language in the FET phase, no changes were effected to the assessment requirements.

With prominence given to assessment, the need for Media Education (discussed in Chapter 2), which is synonymous with Critical Literacy, is reduced in importance. Historically, in South Africa, a developing country, engagement with media, especially electronic media, has not been on par with other developed countries. For example, as far as television is concerned, South Africa trailed distantly behind developed countries like the United States of America and Britain, with television only being introduced to this country in 1976, about four

decades after its introduction in the former two countries. With South Africa now a democracy, and borders between places broken down by the world wide web of the internet, making the space–time continuum more immediate in today’s globalised context, such delays are no longer possible. While we are playing ‘catch-up’ in respect of media, our education system remains locked in a ‘time-warp’ in many instances.

Against this background the Community Newspaper Project presupposed the need for education systems to transform and reinvent ways of teaching and learning. Engagement with the brisk advancements in a highly mediated world demands a critical disposition from learners that schooling should inculcate. In more affluent communities in South Africa, and in developed parts of the world, many young children are sending text and e-mail messages to their friends and downloading MP3 music files from the internet. They use search engines such as Google to acquire information. These digital children are learning to think and work differently from the television children a generation ago. Children do not rely on rote memorisation but, by using digital media are pushing education toward self-learning (Miller, 2007: 181). With web-based interaction becoming increasingly available on most cellular phones, digital culture is no longer reserved for just the prosperous and so, in South Africa, educational institutions will soon have to bring the curriculum in line with technological developments in order to ensure greater levels of fulfilment in the teaching-learning relationship.

According to Vosloo (*The Teacher*, 01/10: 9), an example of how digital technology can be embraced is through the mobile novel which uses cellphones as a viable platform to encourage South African teenagers to read and write, something they are not doing enough of. Last year Vosloo, a fellow of the Shuttleworth Foundation launched the *m4Lit mobiles for literacy* project which utilised teenagers’ preoccupation with cellphones as a strategy to get them to read. Through m4Lit, an 8000 word mobile mystery novel called *Kontax* could be accessed by teenagers on the cellphone social networking site MXit in English and isiXhosa. Two months after the launch in September 2009, more than 10 000 teenagers had read the story from beginning to end. This mobile novel was more popular than a best-selling novel which needs to sell 3000 copies in South Africa to be classified as a best-seller. Teenagers could also submit their comments and sequel ideas on MXit which encouraged writing as well (*ibid*). If the *Kontax* concept is introduced at schools as a prescribed short story within

the Languages Learning Area and with a written learner assessment component, it would be a paradigm shift for media education in South Africa.

However, as much as the new type of learning in a digital space needs to be embraced by children, there is a danger when the line between digital fantasies, like simulation technology in a computer game, and reality, is blurred. An example is the case of fourteen-year-old Michael Carneal, a boy who methodically carried out murders at a school in Kentucky, USA in 1997, killing each of his victims with a single accurate shot. Investigators found that he liked playing a video game that involved shooting 'human' targets (Miller, 2007: 181). Closer to home, there was the case of an eighteen-year old Grade 12 learner, at a school in Gauteng, who killed a fellow learner, wounded another and injured two gardeners with a Samurai sword on 18 August 2008. Allegedly influenced by the heavy-metal band Slipknot, the boy entered the assembly area of his school wearing black face paint and a mask, resembling that of members of the band, before he started wielding the Samurai sword (*The Times*, 19/08/08: 1). Many other such cases of violence, influenced by the media, can be quoted from around the world.

This is just one reason why managing the transition into the digital era will not be easy. Educational institutions will have to design curricula that are easily adaptable to fast-changing technology and systems of engaging with media. A number of variables need to be considered in order to meet the challenges of unpredictable social change brought about by these rapid technological advances in getting learners to interact critically and meaningfully with media. It is a mammoth systemic challenge faced by education departments the world over.

### **9.3 The potential for Critical Literacy**

The focus of Chapter 3 was Critical Literacy and its associated theories which are part of the discursive field of English as a school subject discussed in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 explored the possibilities for the implementation of Critical Literacy within the *NCS*. Although Critical Language Awareness (CLA) is mentioned several times in the *NCS: English Home Language* (2003) policy documentation, little is said about what it is, or how to go about using CLA in the classroom. Neither were these aspects covered adequately in the orientation workshops aimed at training teachers of English about the dynamics of the *NCS*. And, I am not aware of

any other theories of Critical Literacy being mentioned in the plethora of documentation provided to English Home Language teachers since the introduction of the *NCS*. This means that although there is a space for critical discourses in the new curriculum, teachers of English are generally uninformed about what they entail and how to go about using them in the classroom. While the Freireian (1970) principle of learner-centredness has been built into the *NCS* (2003), the teacher of English is free to choose the pedagogy he or she wishes to use in the classroom. With the demanding workload, many teachers especially in township public schools, opt to continue as they did in the past, using teacher-centred methods, but with all the policy requirements in respect of assessment tasks, record-keeping and the completion of the syllabus being met. Other mitigating dynamics in this regard are contextual factors like large learner numbers, poor resources, the need to maintain classroom discipline, and language ‘problems’.

### *9.3.1 Addressing Key Question 1*

I address the key questions of the Project. The first question, below, explores the ideal circumstances for Critical Literacy.

- How can the key concepts of Critical Literacy theories, that form the basis of this research project, be utilised to inform the lesson design and pedagogy in the English Home Language class in the FET phase?

Whether Critical Literacy is feasible or not, will be determined in the response to the fourth question which will be discussed later in this Chapter. To examine how Critical Literacy can be utilised in the lesson design and pedagogy for English Home Language within the framework of the *NCS* (2003), it should be referenced to the four fundamental learning outcomes of the subject in South African Schools: Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting and Language. To begin with, learners should develop a content or knowledge base, without which Critical Literacy theories cannot be implemented and the learning outcomes will not be achievable. It is for this reason that the Community Newspaper Project was designed in phases, aimed at scaffolding content in respect of the relevant Critical Literacy theories and the use of these to engage with texts in general, before deconstructing community newspapers in particular. This was described in Chapters 6 and 7.

As far as Critical Literacy, applicable to the first learning outcome: Listening and Speaking, is concerned, the learner should be able to concentrate in an attentive manner, avoid

preconceived judgements, and be able to acknowledge differing viewpoints. During group sessions, which are essentially about listening and speaking, learners need to demonstrate a sense of being able to work through differences and conflicts that may arise; articulate perspectives in a clear, well reasoned manner, speak calmly and coherently, and use appropriate speech conventions in different social contexts.

In relation to the second learning outcome: Reading and Viewing, Critical Literacy requires the learner to be active, engaged and intentional. In a highly mediated society, the emphasis has shifted from gathering information to evaluating information sources. Critical Literacy involves the ability to analyse, evaluate and interpret the content, intentions and effects that texts have on readers in order to critically assess information they engage with to use the ideas appropriately (*Dialogue Group Draft White Paper (Australia)*, 28/11/2001). This was illustrated by the evaluation of texts during the Community Newspaper Project. However, Prinsloo (1998: 141) asserts that learner-centred education requires the learners' investment in their own learning and observed, during her interaction with university students, a reluctance among some to read and be responsible for personal learning. There are suggestions that a disinclination to reading is endemic in South African society. A study, commissioned by the Department of Arts and Culture revealed, in 2007, that over 50% of South Africans said that there were no books in their homes and of those that do read, 84% read newspapers and 64% magazines. The findings also showed that books in South Africa are too expensive; there is a lack of books written in indigenous African languages; literacy levels were low and library facilities, especially in historically disadvantaged areas, are inadequate. The study listed that only 23% of the population of KwaZulu-Natal were 'committed' readers (*Sunday Times*, 24/06/07: 5).

Pertinent to the third learning outcome: Writing and Presenting, Critical Literacy entails that learners be able to use writing as a tool of inquiry and analysis and to organise and connect ideas and evidence appropriate to different contexts. They should be able to correct their own and other writers' drafts with a sense of objectivity before presenting the work in an appropriate manner (*ibid*). As regards the final learning outcome: Language, Critical Literacy expects that learners see power relations which shape and are shaped by language and should therefore develop skills in Critical Language Awareness (Fairclough, 1992).

Collaboration in groups is also crucial to the successful implementation of a Critical Literacy pedagogy, with interaction and feedback as important elements of that interaction. Thus, class sizes should be set at a reasonable number of twenty to twenty-five. In addition, Critical Literacy is labour intensive and so demands that teachers prepare thoroughly, are enthusiastic about tasks and require that there is ongoing professional development, reinforcement and review of the curriculum (*Dialogue Group Draft White Paper* (Australia), 28/11/2001).

#### **9.4 The shifting media scenario**

While Critical Literacy was one dimension of the Project, the contextualisation of community newspapers within the broad discursive field of the media, particularly print media was the central theme of Chapter 4. In the writing of the thesis, Chapter 4 had to be updated several times because of the transforming nature of the media and newspapers. The changes that had taken place over short periods of time in this area, and the media landscape changing in South Africa and globally, include, media companies changing hands, new newspapers being launched and new concepts like 'citizen journalism' coming to the fore. The latest development is that media experts predict that the most serious financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, which began in the latter half of 2008, will result in newspapers of all sizes faltering and dying in 2009. In the United States of America, the hardest hit by the economic meltdown, some are lobbying for that government to bailout the press as they did the banking sector. However, where the press is concerned, this raises ethical issues as the traditional role of the press is to operate free from government influence (*Sunday Tribune*, 4/01/09). South Africa has not been unaffected by the challenges that face newspapers globally with one of its largest media companies, Independent News and Media (SA), announcing that it will be retrenching staff in 2009 (*Sunday Tribune*, 21/12/08).

The economic recession is expected to also affect the upgrading of technologies which will see modification of existing technologies rather than the development of new ones. However, a digital revolution will take place in South Africa in mid- 2009 when a new undersea cable will provide faster internet capabilities on par with that of the developed world (*The Times*, 12/01/09: 15).

As far as community newspapers are concerned, the information elicited from the interview with the Managing Editor/ Founder of *The Rising Sun*, contributed significantly to the profile of this newspaper in Chapter 4. The deconstruction of *The Rising Sun* during the classroom

intervention also provided me, as researcher, with more insight into the publication during the interview. What struck me was the open-door policy of the Founder and Managing Editor of the Rising Sun group. This was in stark contrast to the other two established newspapers operating in the Chatsworth community. Although they had every right not to have filled in the questionnaire, or, granted me an interview, their efforts at 'gatekeeping' could be construed as feeling 'threatened', that knowledge of their operations might somehow be used to further undermine their secondary positions in a very competitive advertising space. I viewed the frankness of the Founder of *The Rising Sun* about the running of his publications, during the interview and in the publication of commemorative issues outlining the history of the newspaper, as conveying a sense of ownership of the newspapers to the community which further entrenches an already established brand in the marketplace. On the other hand, the founder's keenness to tell the story of the newspaper's success is also the privilege of a newspaper group that enjoys the monopoly of the marketing space, especially since the NAB sold advertising to large national retailers exclusively for *The Rising Sun* Community Newspaper group.

However, in competition for advertising spend with *The Rising Sun* and other Chatsworth community newspapers used in the research project, was the launch about a year ago, of a free weekly publication called *Eastern Express*, which also targets Indian readers. This newspaper claims to have a circulation of 145 000 in the Durban Metropolitan area, has an average of about twelve pages, covering international and local news and is mainly, but not exclusively, relevant to Indian South Africans. It carries a fair amount of advertising with occasional promotional inserts, but advertisements do not overwhelm the newspaper. Important issues like Education are covered in extensive reports. It is a commendable product in respect of layout, and the quality of pictures and reporting is good. The existence of yet another publication in the community newspaper space aimed at the 'Indian' community of Durban is evidence of the lucrative financial capacity of this target market which is highlighted in the description of the Community Newspaper Project in Chapters 7.

An analysis of recent developments in the broader discursive field of the media, to which community newspapers belong, relating to the debate around press freedom is relevant to the Community Newspaper Project. At a *Mail and Guardian* Critical Thinking Forum entitled, *The New ANC and the Media* (31/03/08), Professor Guy Burger, Head of Journalism at Rhodes University, said that communities get the newspapers they deserve and that people in

communities need to complain to the Press Council, and to the press ombudsman in order to ensure press freedom and ultimately better quality newspapers. An example from the Community Newspaper Project would be the citizens of Chatsworth 'opening up' public debate on the issue of the sexualisation of very young girls through the promotion of beauty contests in community newspapers.

Also at the Forum, Mary Papayya, the Secretary-General of SANEF outlined four pillars of a free media: media is independent of government; it is protected by the judiciary; it upholds truth-telling in a democracy, and it holds those in power accountable. While these pillars exemplify the press in South Africa and are upheld by *The Constitution* (1996), at its Polokwane Conference in 2007, the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) proposed a media tribunal. Robert Nkuna (*Mail and Guardian*, February 8-14/08) of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), and one of those responsible for drafting the media tribunal proposal, espoused the view of the ANC when he said that society should evaluate the extent to which the media's exercise of its rights to freedom of expression, and that of the press, impacts on the rights of other South Africans.

While people like Joe Thloloe, the Press Ombudsman, said at the Forum (31/03/08) that a media tribunal can strengthen, complement, and support current press regulations, one has to question why the ruling party would call for such a tribunal when press freedom is one of the cornerstones of democracy. The political changes of the post-Polokwane era mark a new chapter in South Africa's history that will determine whether the foundations of this democracy, like freedom of expression and freedom of the press will be tested and compromised. Another significant development regarding media freedom is that, in an attempt to stamp out child pornography, the *Film and Publications Amendment Bill*, which has been drafted and debated in parliament, suggests that media houses submit certain material to the Film and Publications Board for pre-publication approval. These include stories reporting on sexual conduct, propaganda for war, incitement of violence or the advocacy of hatred. Media practitioners, who are at present self-regulated, believe that if this *Bill* is passed it could also be used to severely restrict media freedom and enforce censorship (*Sunday Tribune*, 06/05/07). While such a *Bill* is significant and welcome in curtailing child pornography, one hopes that media freedom will not be threatened, then any attempt to promote Media Education would also be thwarted, as effective engagement with media cannot involve restrictions reminiscent of apartheid-era censorship.

## **9.5 A brief reflection on the action research case study**

Chapter 5 described the Project methodology that was used in the Community Newspaper Project which was an action research case study. As an action research study not only did it aim at informing pedagogy at the level of the school, but it also invited learners to question the way things are, and to create alternatives in terms of the choices they make in their daily lives. As a case study of the interaction of learners from previously disadvantaged backgrounds with a specific genre of print media, the Community Newspaper Project was unique in that it revealed engaging and distinctive responses from learners, described in Chapters 6 and 7.

## **9.6 An overview of the implementation of the Community Newspaper Project**

### *9.6.1 Thoughts on the classroom intervention*

Chapters 6 and 7 outline the actual classroom intervention of the Community Newspaper Project which saw the completion, with the sample of learners, of the quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (participant observation during the lessons) methods of data collection, described in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 deals with the implementation of Phase 1 of the project which was aimed at orienting learners in respect of Critical Literacy theories and applying them to fairy tales. Learners clearly enjoyed Phase 1 which explored the concepts of 'text' and 'genre', the interaction with Critical Language Awareness, and the engagement with fairy tales. The positive feature of the time devoted to fairy tales, although one might argue that the examination of the stories was not directly related to community newspapers, was that learners, through the various tasks associated with this segment, were able to absorb and immerse themselves in Critical Literacy discourses which augured well for later segments of the project.

A closer analysis of the worksheet designed for the fairy tale segment revealed that I should have simplified the wording for learners. Learners were correct in saying that Questions 3, 7, 9 and 10 were difficult with the phrasing of the questions posing a challenge for the average Grade 11 child (Annexure F, 29/10/03: 17). In a traditional classroom setting, learners would not usually complain about the difficulty of the wording in a class exercise, test or examination but within the context of a group this was easier to do since they were being

given individual attention and because the actual pedagogy I used made it possible for learners to express these difficulties without seeming confrontational. At the time of the research project learners' difficulty with comprehending the manner in which questions were phrased and the vocabulary used, provided some form of introspection for me as a teacher, as it was something I had become complacent about, taking for granted that learners would understand. This situation reflects the disjuncture that can exist when teachers assume that learners are able to understand their written or verbal language, when they may in fact not, and becomes particularly significant when learners write tests and examinations.

While at Community Secondary, every effort is made to simplify the language that is used to phrase questions in school-based tests and examinations, learners are generally disadvantaged when they write external examinations. An example is the Grade 11, November 2007, Paper 1: Language and Comprehension for English Home Language set by the National Department of Education which proved extremely challenging to the majority of learners, especially those whose home language is not English. Presently, with more isiZulu mother tongue speakers in my classes, I have become more sensitive, my choice of vocabulary in written tasks is given much more attention than before, and, when teaching I often 'code-switch' to facilitate understanding.

Chapter 7 described Phases 2, 3 and 4 of the Community Newspaper Project with Phase 2 examining the general deconstruction of mainstream and community newspapers and Phase 3 investigating specific texts from community newspapers structured around the theme of beauty competitions. The Discourse Analysis of text in general explored ways of looking closely at specific aspects of text, ultimately aimed at developing their skills in reading and writing, which are interdependent. In expanding reading and writing competency, and examining texts critically, learners are expected to engage with and to become estranged from the text, that is, to question the positions of a text. According to Janks (1997: 331), engagement without estrangement is a form of submission to the text despite the reader's own positions, and estrangement without engagement is a refusal to leave the limits of one's own subjectivity, a refusal to allow other positions to enter. In addressing gender issues through an interrogation of beauty contests, the Community Newspaper Project is an attempt to correct gender bias. This is in keeping with the basic tenets of the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS, 2003) and is an example of the opportunity that the new curriculum can offer teachers to deal with subjects like gender, racial and other forms of inequality.

Chapter 7 also illustrated how Social Practice, one of the three dimensions of Critical Discourse Analysis, was mediated to learners by discussing the history of the South African Indian diaspora which was outlined in Chapter 2. The ensuing discussions explored the idea of integration in post-apartheid South Africa which has taken place mainly in the more affluent areas around the country, but regrettably, most communities in South Africa, especially the marginalised townships, like Chatsworth, Wentworth, and Umlazi remain predominantly homogenous. For example, the aforementioned townships are still populated largely by Indians, Coloureds, and Africans respectively and fifteen years after the demise of apartheid that trend is unlikely to change. The Chatsworth community newspapers cannot be seen in isolation, each township has its own community newspaper or two, perpetuating its own stereotypes and culturally specific mores.

#### *9.6.2 Addressing Key Question 2*

At this stage we should examine the semantics and ask whether ‘diversity’ is a euphemism for ‘ethnocentrism’ and a ‘narrow sense of community’, which prompts an examination of the second key question:

- do the community publications used in this research project promote ‘a narrow sense of community and ethnocentrism’ (Steenveld, 2002: 17) perpetuating a legacy of damaging stereotypes left over by apartheid? *Or* Do these publications provide an important chronicle of the lives of South African Indians living in the township of Chatsworth, Durban (an important minority group within South Africa’s diverse demographic milieu)?

This ambivalent question can best be responded to by looking first at the framing of the community newspapers through the use of language, advertising, and having as its target market an ethnic minority situated in a specific geographic location by the apartheid government. The promotion of beauty competitions with an ethnic underpinning, use of language pertaining to a specific ethnic group, advertising for skin-lighteners and faith healers, and the pervasiveness of former apartheid politicians in these publications, all perpetuate a legacy of damaging stereotypes emphasised by apartheid.

The exploration of the central theme of the promotion of specific forms of beauty contests was intended to heighten awareness among learners of the sexism and racism and the sexualisation of young girls that the community newspapers advocate. While many learners were critical of these contests and their potentially negative impact on the community, not all

learners were sensitive to their damaging influence, reflecting the adamant endorsement of these discourses by sections of the community.

Linked to this question is an issue not explored by the Project but important to note; the fact that a controversial Chatsworth politician who has endured from the days of apartheid and continues to be active in the present government, uses not only *The Rising Sun*, but the *Chatsworth Tabloid* to promote and exhibit his activities. More often than not, a single issue of these community newspapers will contain several photographs and articles pertaining to the politician as well as advertisements for his political party and letters to the editor written by him. Such extensive coverage afforded to a single political personality has prompted critically-thinking members of the community to question the intentions of the community newspapers in this regard: are these community newspapers the mouthpieces of the politician and his party and do these publications have a political bias? This continues to be a point of contention regarding the community newspapers among the critically thinking people of Chatsworth, especially those who have no allegiance to the politician or his party.

Nevertheless, despite these conspicuous examples that promote ethnocentrism, the Chatsworth community newspapers represent a medium that is important in connecting people with their communities. The question should also be asked, *what would communities be without community newspapers?* Surely, an important thread that connects people will be lost. Just as all the other community newspapers record the day-to-day events of the townships they operate in throughout the country, so too do *The Rising Sun*, the *Chatsworth Tabloid*, and *The Express*. It is only through an understanding of our differences, as the interaction between Indian and African learners involved in the project proved, that we can begin to understand one another and realise that we are all South Africans first.

### 9.6.3 Addressing Key Question 3

The process of deconstruction and Critical Discourse Analysis outlined in Chapter 7, verified the predominance of advertising in newspapers, especially the community newspapers. This highlights the third key question:

- Are community publications simply 'revenue streams' or do they provide social and political resources for critically thinking citizens (Steenveld, 2002: 17)?

The first part of the question can be answered in the affirmative; however, the second part of the question is more complex. As far as the first part of the question is concerned, the rise of a publishing 'empire' implies intentions that were driven first and foremost by profit, proof that media is 'big business'. As deduced from the results of the questionnaire and the interview, the flagship newspaper within the *Rising Sun* group is the Chatsworth edition, as all central operations are conducted from a premises that was constructed in Chatsworth. Such a major investment in property, the sophistication of its distribution operations to ensure that all members of the community receive a copy of the newspaper (please see Annexure C2) and, a large contingent of employees would not have been made in vain. I view this as part of the 'plan' to maintain the dominance of the newspaper group in a lucrative advertising market in a densely populated township with a high disposable income and therefore greater spending power. Conversely, a noteworthy 'spin-off' from the profits that are acquired, is the fact that community newspapers have tremendous potential for altruism. This is evident from considerably large donations that are made to important charitable organisations of Chatsworth, for example, in 2002 a R60 000 donation was made to Chatsworth Child Welfare by *The Rising Sun* that is also a major sponsor of the *Chatsworth Fair*, which is a magnanimous gesture to the community it serves (please see Annexure C2).

The second part of the question addressed the fact that while some of the articles invite discussion and even action, especially front page articles on crime, drugs, service delivery and political issues, other stories, like those that advance the views of specific political parties and personalities and promote sexist discourses will stimulate debate among sections of the population who are critical thinkers. While some might accept the views expressed and others might display apathy, critical-thinking citizens who do not exercise a choice in purchasing the community newspapers but instead, like thousands of others, have it given to them, will always exercise their right to freedom of expression.

Community newspapers allow the members of the communities they serve to engage in and with discourses concerning them and in some instances, like in the promotion of beauty contests, they shape those discourses. These newspapers serve as rallying points for the opinions of the community and a point of departure in shaping those opinions. Consequently, while the community newspapers have an important role to play in shaping the discourses of a community, and, are in turn shaped by the discourses operating within a community, they are primarily a source of income and profit before one can justify their existence as providing

a free newspaper to the poor, or, as platforms for community engagement or social justice. Learners discovered that, compared to all the other newspapers assessed, *The Rising Sun* had the most number of advertisements, suggestions that income and profit were priorities. In addition, while some sections of the community may always believe everything they read, there will always be those who will question what they read. Even if a community newspaper contains just a few articles of community interest as opposed to advertising, like *The Express*, then, depending on the nature of the articles, it will be a resource for critically thinking citizens. The fact that learners have been able to engage critically with these publications is proof of that.

However, as researcher, when reflecting on the constraints of the project as a whole, I think that learners would have done more justice to the activities outlined in Chapters 6 and 7 had there been more time allocated. Many of the tasks that may have elicited interesting and creative responses had to be shortened or forfeited<sup>1</sup>.

### **9.7 A brief reflection on the Findings of the Community Newspaper Project**

As far as the Questionnaire for Learners was concerned (analysed in Chapter 8), some respondents complained that they had to write long responses to some of the questions. Had these open questions been re-phrased as multiple-choice questions they would have been less time-consuming for respondents and would have facilitated easier analysis. In retrospect, I believe that the Questionnaire for the Managing Editor should have been forfeited as some of the responses were not substantial and more significant responses may have been forthcoming had the questions been integrated into the interview schedule. Regrettably, the information from the Interview with the Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun* was not available to learners during the Community Newspaper Project, as this would have facilitated better understanding of the processes of text production and distribution, especially since valuable information in this regard was revealed during the Interview. It would also have been

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<sup>1</sup> An example of a task that was forfeited was the homework exercise (please see Chapter 7, Figure 7.20) that would have required learners to take the pictures of Miss India South Africa cut out the heads and replace them with people who would normally be excluded from participating in this beauty pageant. Then they would have had to keep the heads but cut out the garments and replace them with fashion that may not be considered suitable for the Miss India South Africa pageant. Such an exercise apart from being fun, would have allowed learners to reinforce their understanding of how Critical Literacy operated. Nevertheless, in no way could learners' completion of the mainstream Grade 12 syllabus be compromised, and although the Community Newspaper Project would have been enhanced by the luxury of more time, the outcomes were not seriously affected by the constraints.

valuable to learners had a field-trip to witness first-hand how the community newspaper operated, been arranged prior to the commencement of the project. Alternatively, the Managing Editor could have been invited to speak to learners about how his newspaper functioned.

Had time been permissible, I would have included a segment on the analysis of texts regarding the controversial politician, mentioned earlier, about whom news is pervasive in two of the community newspapers. Some of the advertisements and articles are blatant examples of propaganda and are clearly expedient and egocentric in their promotion of an individual who claims to represent the interests of the community. However, the inclusion of such a segment may have been contentious as the possibility existed that the ire of parents who were supporters of the politician may have been instilled.

#### **9.8 Addressing Key Question 4**

Present debate regarding the questionable success of the methodology of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) within the *NCS* (2003) should inform the response to the fourth and final question:

- How viable are Critical Literacy theories and discourses within the present English Home Language curriculum in the FET phase?

OBE is synonymous with a critical pedagogy since it is engaging and participatory; is intended to educate children who will be able to think for themselves and, is considered a tool to democratise learners' minds (Pretorius, *Mail and Guardian*, 19/12/08 to 08/01/09). However, according to Pretorius (*ibid*) OBE lost its way in the heart of where education happens: the classroom.

Respected academics such as Chisholm (2004) have articulated their views on the failure of OBE and the state of education in South Africa. Spady recently distanced himself from the South African version of OBE describing it as a 'professional embarrassment'. He said that OBE worked when there were no time constraints and students could work at their own pace, which was not possible in formal education which was based on strict time schedules (*Sunday Tribune*, 02/11/08). Jansen (*The Teacher*, 09/08), believes that OBE had become the property of political diehards who would rather preside over the chaos than admit to failure; that the great tragedy of OBE was that it deepened the inequalities between former white schools and black schools. The former category of schools has highly experienced teachers with ideal

resource levels who could interpret the curriculum in ways that made sense inside their own contexts. Ramphele (*Sunday Times*, 18/01/09) concurred with Jansen when she said that at the heart of the under-performance of learners is the poor knowledge base of teachers in the majority of schools serving the bulk of poor pupils. She quoted a 2004 baseline study of Grade 3 teachers' proficiency in Literacy which found that the majority scored between 29% and 50%, stating that in any other country committed to excellence in education, immediate action would have been taken to protect young pupils from these dangerously under-prepared teachers.

According to Bloch, an education policy analyst (*Mail and Guardian*, March 9-15, 2007), two parallel systems mirror the two worlds that separate South Africans. Basic reading scores of learners are among the worst in Africa and there are alarming disparities between schools. While 65% of children in formerly white schools saw appropriate scores at Grade 6 level, the corresponding figure for black schools was 0.1%.

A discussion document, widely reported in the media, that resulted from a meeting hosted by the Development Bank suggested, "Review OBE and if needs be, issue its 'death certificate.'" The National Minister of Education responded by saying that OBE was a necessary change for South Africa and 'we need to make it work' announcing plans for a 'curriculum implementation committee' that for the first time, would work in partnership with teacher unions (*Mail and Guardian*, 21-27/11/08).

If OBE is synonymous with Critical Literacy then it can be deduced from the opinions of the educational experts that the two main factors that would make Critical Literacy viable are a sound disciplinary knowledge base and the work ethic of the teacher. Learner-centred Critical Literacy lessons are 'hard work' at the level of preparation and implementation, and willing and proficient learners are its intended audience. These two variables are present at the majority of schools offering English Home Language which are also the better resourced former Model-C, HoD and HoR schools.

Prinsloo (2002) established, in her investigation into the factors and conditions that limited or enabled Critical Literacy, that educational histories created different foundations for people to take on Critical Literacy or not. Those that are constituted as historically advantaged have an enhanced predisposition in relation to Critical Literacy than those who are historically disadvantaged (Prinsloo and Janks, 2002: 23).

It can therefore be deduced that, in the South African context, Critical Literacy is viable in the English Home Language curriculum in the FET phase where the right contextual factors exist. The exception may be schools like Community Secondary, where it would be difficult to implement Critical Literacy, at present, in the manner that I did with the Community Newspaper Project, as the majority of are isiZulu Home Language speakers studying English as a home language at school, which they find challenging. One cannot aim to introduce a critical pedagogy in English to learners who struggle with the language. Proficiency has to be achieved first before the finer nuances, that engagement with Critical Literacy aims to reveal, can be grasped, as demonstrated earlier in this Chapter.

Certain elements like role-reversal and an examination of power relations in contexts relevant to their own experiences can be extracted, simplified, and integrated into lessons. This does not suggest that Critical Literacy is exclusive and elitist as the scope exists within the *NCS* (2003) for the implementation of a critical pedagogy across all eleven official languages at Home and First Additional language level, thus critical discourses need not be restricted to English and can be incorporated into the lesson design of all languages. With this in mind I examine the implication that the Community Newspaper Project has for further research.

### **9.9 The significance of the Community Newspaper Project to educational practitioners**

Finally, I examine the value of my Project to educators, researchers and policy-makers. First, as far as educators are concerned, the Community Newspaper Project is an important resource that can be utilised to inform the pedagogy of the English language classroom. The detailed lesson plans are relevant learner-teacher support materials that can be modified or used in parts to teach from a Critical Literacy basis. For example, the segment on fairy tales may be used to allow learners the opportunity to examine how their thinking has been shaped by exposure to these texts in their early childhood.

According to Mather (1996: 1) when textbooks are used as the main or only source during lessons, the uncritical acceptance of the content is favoured and textbooks can also become outdated very quickly but because of budgetary constraints are used from year to year and so lose their appeal to learners. It is therefore necessary for teachers to develop their own relevant, interactive and up-to-date resources. Robinson and Mentor (1991: 218) attest that:

...the involvement of teachers in materials development needs to be seen in the context of an overall strategy towards teacher empowerment. ...it is crucial that teachers are

respected and developed as educators, that they not be seen (and indeed they not see themselves) as functionaries carrying out what has been deemed by others to be best for them to do in their classes. We need to build a tradition of action and reflection, of integrating theory and practice, with a view to grassroots engagement in the curriculum process.

The Project demonstrates how Community newspapers in general offer a wealth of material that can be used creatively by the teacher of English in the classroom to make learning more relevant and meaningful to learners.

Second, the thesis can be of benefit to researchers as it contains detailed and pertinent information on various dimensions that informed the project. It is also a case study that chronicles how a particular minority group in the South African context relates to media applicable to that community. Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the research is that it highlights a focus on the popular media in the form of community newspapers, and, as such provides impetus for further investigation by researchers interested in examining the sphere of influence of such publications. It also contributes to the body of research that advocates the need for media education.

Third, the research can be valuable to policymakers as it assesses the relevance of Critical Literacy and media education to the *NCS* (2003). It also reinforces the need for a learner-centred pedagogy by illustrating that there is no alternative to meaningful and involved engagement with texts. Subject advisors are responsible for the 'roll-out' of policy to teachers and in turn they provide important feedback to curriculum planners in the National Department of Education in respect of modifying policies. It is my view that the research project could be the basis for orientating teachers of English to Critical Literacy theories and working with media in the classroom. A series of workshops, for teachers, based on the Community Newspaper Project could be held in conjunction with English subject advisors who in turn could assess the value of the Project in contributing to the upgrade of the curriculum. Such an activity would make the thesis meaningful beyond its case study context.

### **9.10 Reflections**

Change is the quintessence of the world that humans occupy and in no period has that change been as dramatic as in the past one hundred years due to speedy industrial, technological, and economic developments. As citizens of developing countries like South Africa and as citizens of the 'global village' (McLuhan, 1964), the rapid advancements in media technologies require paradigm shifts in order for people to become accustomed to the changes over shorter

periods of time. It is imperative to meet the challenges that arise from these changes that would undoubtedly have a profound impact on education. I would therefore like to reiterate that media education should feature more intensively in the curriculum, especially in the Languages Learning Field of the *NCS* (2003). This, I believe, goes ‘hand-in-hand’ with a critical pedagogy which can only be effected where conditions within a school are conducive to the implementation of such methodology.

As far as the implementation of a critical pedagogy is concerned, although teachers have much to learn from their students’ experiences, a teacher can never know everything about the oppressions, understandings and everyday lived experiences of learners, neither can the teacher assume the position of being the centre of knowledge and authority (Ellsworth, 1989: 310).

Yet theorists of critical pedagogy have failed to launch any meaningful analysis of or program for reformulating the institutionalised power imbalances between themselves and their students, or of the essentially paternalistic project of education itself. In the absence of such an analysis and program, their efforts are limited to trying to transform negative effects of power imbalances within the classroom into positive ones. Strategies such as student empowerment and dialogue give the illusion of equality while in fact leaving the authoritarian nature of the teacher/ student relationship intact (*ibid*, 1989: 306).

I can identify with this assertion made by Ellsworth as I encountered difficulty in relinquishing control as an educator within a learner-centred ethos during the Community Newspaper project, which I discussed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. The implication is then, that if a teacher subscribes to the belief that to relinquish authority will result in the disintegration of discipline among learners, making it impossible to complete his or her duties as an educator on a daily basis, then that teacher cannot really practice this utopian critical pedagogy.

Therefore, I concur with Ellsworth (1989: 297) that critical pedagogy has developed along utopian lines and is not always sustainable within the daily workings of education. When I first encountered Critical Literacy, I was inspired by its relevance to post-apartheid South Africa, where discourses were transforming and the time was right for a radical and revolutionary pedagogy. Critical Literacy seemed to embody the direction in which many an activist saw education moving. This was the motivation for using Critical Literacy theories as the basis for the research project. However, I have in the course of my research, also discovered the ambivalent nature of Critical Literacy. While it is fundamentally political and aims to reconstruct classroom practice to bring about social change, the incongruity is that it

cannot be implemented with large classes of up to forty-five learners or to learners who have reached the FET phase lacking in basic reading and writing skills, and in poorly resourced schools. The concept of critical pedagogy assumes a commitment on the part of the teacher toward ending the learner's oppression. How do teachers empower learners from disadvantaged racial, ethnic and gender groups who do not have access to the skills of critical analysis, when the conditions do not exist within the school for the teacher to do so?

Thus, ironically, Critical Literacy is likely to work in some of the more well-resourced schools in Chatsworth, former Model-C schools, and affluent private schools. Realistically, the task of implementing Critical Literacy at my school has, with the changes in the past few years, been rendered nearly impossible by negative contextual factors. The idealist in me would like to re-iterate that, where conditions are appropriate, the possibility exists for teachers of English to put Critical Literacy into practice, as I did with the successful implementation of the Community Newspaper Project in 2003/ 2004, and instil in learners effective communication and critical thinking skills which epitomise these characteristics associated with a critical citizenry in South Africa and beyond.

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# APPENDICES

**ANNEXURE A:**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS**

**Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire.**

- 1. The aim of this survey is to fully understand your newspaper reading habits, with specific focus on the community newspapers available to you.**
- 2. There are no right or wrong answers. All that is required is that you complete the questionnaire in full and that you share your opinions as honestly as possible.**
- 3. Remember that your participation is voluntary and that you are free to withdraw at any time.**
- 4. All the information that you fill in will be treated with the strictest confidence and your identity will be kept anonymous.**

**Your assistance in completing this questionnaire as honestly as possible will be appreciated.**

1] Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2] Present residential address:

\_\_\_\_\_

3.1] Do you reside with your parents? Yes  1 No  2

3.2] If your answer to 3.1 is Yes, state your:

a) Mother's occupation \_\_\_\_\_

b) Father's occupation \_\_\_\_\_

3.3] If your answer to 3.1 is No, state:

a) Who is your guardian (eg. brother, friend, uncle, other relative.)

\_\_\_\_\_

b) Your guardian's occupation

\_\_\_\_\_

4] Sex: Male  1 Female  2

5] Age: 16  1 17  2 18  3

other (specify)  4

6] What is your Home language? (Tick only the block with the language most spoken at home)

- 1. English  1
- 2. Afrikaans  2
- 3. isiZulu  3
- 4. isiXhosa  4
- 5. Other (specify)  5

7] Which of the following community newspapers do you read regularly and which do you look at occasionally ? Tick all that apply to you.

- |                           | Regularly                  | Occasionally               |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. The Rising Sun         | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| 2. The Chatsworth Tabloid | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| 3. Chatsworth Sun Shopper | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| 4. Chatsworth Express     | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| 5. Other (specify)        | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| 6. None                   | <input type="checkbox"/>   |                            |

8] Which of the following daily/weekly mainstream newspapers do you read regularly and which do you read occasionally? Tick all that apply to you.

	Regularly	Occasionally
1. City Press	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
2. Daily News	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
3. Daily Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
4. Ilanga	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Mail and Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
6. Mercury	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
7. Post	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
8. Sowetan	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
9. Sunday Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
10. Sunday Times	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
11. Sunday Tribune	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
12. This Day	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
13. The Independent on Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> 13
14. Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	<input type="checkbox"/> 15
15. None	<input type="checkbox"/>	

9] If you read any of the newspapers mentioned in Q.8, tick three of the sections that you find most interesting.

- |    |                             |                          |    |
|----|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----|
| 1  | Front page                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1  |
| 2  | Inside pages (News content) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2  |
| 3  | Editorial pages             | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3  |
| 4  | Sport Section               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4  |
| 5  | Comics                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5  |
| 6  | Political Cartoons          | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6  |
| 7  | Horoscope                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7  |
| 8  | Classifieds                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8  |
| 9  | Financial section           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9  |
| 10 | Lifestyle/ Health           | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 |
| 11 | Women's pages               | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 |
| 12 | Arts/ Entertainment section | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12 |
| 13 | Food/Recipes                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 |
| 14 | Advertising inserts         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 |
| 15 | Television guide            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 |

10] If you read any of the newspapers mentioned in Q.7 then answer Q10.1 to 10.10

10.1] State the section of the community newspaper that you find most interesting and give a brief reason for your response.

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10.2] The community newspaper plays an important role in keeping me abreast with the latest news in my community. Choose only one option.

- 1. Strongly agree  1
- 2. Tend to agree  2
- 3. Neither agree nor disagree  3
- 4. Tend to disagree  4
- 5. Strongly disagree  5

10.3] Provide reasons for your response to 10.2

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10.4] The community newspaper is instrumental in shaping the views and opinions on various issues affecting the community. Choose only one option.

- 1. Strongly agree  1
- 2. Tend to agree  2
- 3. Neither agree nor disagree  3
- 4. Tend to disagree  4
- 5. Strongly disagree  5

10.5] Provide reasons for your response to 10.4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10.6] The quality of a mainstream newspaper differs greatly from that of a community newspaper. Choose only one option.

- 1. Strongly agree  1
- 2. Tend to agree  2
- 3. Neither agree nor disagree  3
- 4. Tend to disagree  4
- 5. Strongly disagree  5

10.7] Provide reasons for your response to 10.6

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10.8] Community newspapers are provided free of charge, however a large income is generated from advertising. In your opinion do the community newspapers that you have access to, give back enough to the community?

- Yes  1                      No  2

10.9] Provide reasons for your response to 10.8

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**ANNEXURE B:**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MANAGING EDITORS OF CHATSWORTH  
COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS**

- 1. Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire.**  
**2. The aim of this survey is:**  
**\*To establish as much information about how your newspaper functions**  
**\*To draw comparisons between the different community newspapers**  
**circulating in Chatsworth and surrounding areas.**  
**3. Remember that your participation is voluntary and that you are free to**  
**withdraw at any time.**  
**4. All the information that you fill in will be treated with the strictest confidence**  
**and your identity will be kept anonymous.**

**Your assistance in completing this questionnaire as honestly as possible will be appreciated.**

1. Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

2. First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

3. Gender: Male  1      Female  2

4. Age: 20-30  1    30-40  2    40-50  3    50-60  4    60+  5

5. Formal Qualifications: Matric     Post-Matric     Post-Graduate

6. Experience in field: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Are you a resident of Chatsworth?    Yes  1      No  2

8. Title of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

9. When was your newspaper first established? \_\_\_\_\_

10. How many newspapers form part of your newspaper stable? \_\_\_\_\_

10.1 Is your newspaper a weekly production? Yes  1 No  2

10.2 If yes, State the day on which it is circulated. \_\_\_\_\_

11. What are your present circulation figures? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Where are operations conducted? Provide details, including information about the printing of the newspaper. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13.1 How many personnel does your newspaper employ? \_\_\_\_\_

13.2 State the number of full-time and part-time/freelance personnel.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13.3 State the number, qualifications and experience in their fields of the personnel listed below:

		Qualifications	Experience
a) REPORTERS			
b) SUB-EDITORS/LAY-OUT ARTISTS			
c) PHOTOGRAPHERS			
d) DESIGNERS/ARTISTS			
e) ADVERTISING PERSONNEL			
f) ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL			
g) FINANCIAL PERSONNEL			

14.1 Do you find that as editor you play several roles eg. Reporter, photographer, designer, financier?

Yes  1      No  2

14.2 If yes, please elaborate.

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15.1 Are you satisfied with the quality of your present product?      Yes  1      No  2

15.2 If No, give details of what measures you would like to implement in order to improve the quality.

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16.1 Do you have consultants advising you on the typography, graphics, layout and other technical aspects of the newspaper?      Yes  1      No  2

16.2 If yes, please give details.

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17. Does the National Advertising Bureau (NAB) sell advertising for your newspaper? Provide details. \_\_\_\_\_

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18. What are the prices of your adverts? Include a schedule reflecting the prices of the various sizes and types of advertisements. \_\_\_\_\_

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19.1 Does your newspaper fund community projects in the Chatsworth and surrounding areas?

Yes  1      No  2

19.2 If so, please specify.

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20. What is your estimated profit per annum? \_\_\_\_\_

21. Please provide any additional information about your publication that you would consider pertinent to this study.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION**

**ANNEXURE C1:**

**Interview Schedule for the Co-owner/ Managing Editor of the *Rising Sun***

Please understand that you are at liberty not to answer any of the questions if you do not wish to.

1. Provide a brief history of your newspaper.

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2. Who owns the newspaper? Give a brief overview of how the newspaper is funded.

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3. Are there other newspapers operating under different names but owned by your newspaper group?

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4. Explain the infrastructure you have in place to handle the distribution of your newspaper, viz. the number of vehicles, personnel etc.

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5. In your opinion, what sets your community newspaper apart from other such newspapers servicing the Chatsworth area?

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6.1 There are often errors in your newspaper, even in headlines, regarding grammar and spelling.

What would you attribute this to?

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6.2 Do you plan to address this problem? If so, how?

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7. What was your rationale behind the merger with Caxton?

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8. With Caxton poised to exit the Community Press Association (CPA) what would be the implications for your newspaper?

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9. What control does Caxton have over the newspaper as intellectual property, ie. over editorial and copy?

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10. Recently you had a survey commissioned by Research Surveys. In what ways do you intend using the findings of this survey?

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11. Would you be willing to release the findings of this survey to me?

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## ANNEXURE C2

### Interview with Co-owner/ Managing Editor of *The Rising Sun*

<p><b>1. Provide a brief history of your newspaper.</b></p>
<p>In 1986, having recently matriculated, I went from my hometown of Umzinto to Tongaat to seek employment. When I saw the potential in the north coast town where there were a number of businesses and hence potential for advertising, I decided that I could earn a living by establishing a community newspaper in Tongaat since there was a need for one in that marketplace. So, with the help of family I printed 6500 copies of the first issue of <i>The Rising Sun</i>. Thereafter, as the newspaper began to grow, I expanded to my hometown of Umzinto and in 1993, the Chatsworth edition of <i>The Rising Sun</i> was born.</p>
<p><b>2. Who owns the newspaper? Give a brief overview of how the newspaper is funded.</b></p>
<p>On 1 July 2003, Caxton Newspaper Group's Highway Mail, purchased a 45% share of <i>The Rising Sun</i> Community Newspapers. The day-to-day running of the newspapers are still conducted by the Rising Sun group.</p>
<p><b>3. Are there other newspapers operating under different names but owned by your newspaper group?</b></p>
<p>Yes, until a month ago, <i>The Chatsworth Sun Shopper</i>, was part of the <i>Rising Sun</i> stable but operating separately. We found that part of the name, 'Chatsworth Sun', was confusing to the marketplace and not identifiable with the Rising Sun group, so this newspaper was discontinued. As far as other publications are concerned we have Rising Sun newspapers throughout KZN, including Phoenix, Merebank, Pietermaritzburg and Port Shepstone.</p>
<p><b>4. Explain the infrastructure you have in place to handle the distribution of your newspaper, viz. the number of vehicles, personnel etc.</b></p>
<p>The company has a fleet of 40 vehicles. There are 8 delivery trucks used for distribution of a total of 160 000 newspapers which is done from Tuesday to Thursday in the different areas with 8 personnel assigned to each vehicle. Each delivery truck is equipped with a 2- way radio to ensure constant contact. Printing is done by our own company, Rising Sun Printers, which operates as a separate enterprise.</p>
<p><b>5. In your opinion, what sets your community newspaper apart from other such newspapers servicing the Chatsworth area?</b></p>
<p>In my opinion, the other newspapers do not do as much for the community as <i>The Rising Sun</i>. <i>The Rising Sun</i> is in an ongoing partnership with the Chatsworth Child Welfare and the Aryan Benevolent Home (ABH). and through the ABH Fair, of which <i>The Rising Sun</i> is a major sponsor, funds are raised for that charity. In addition, we run a feeding programme for pre-</p>

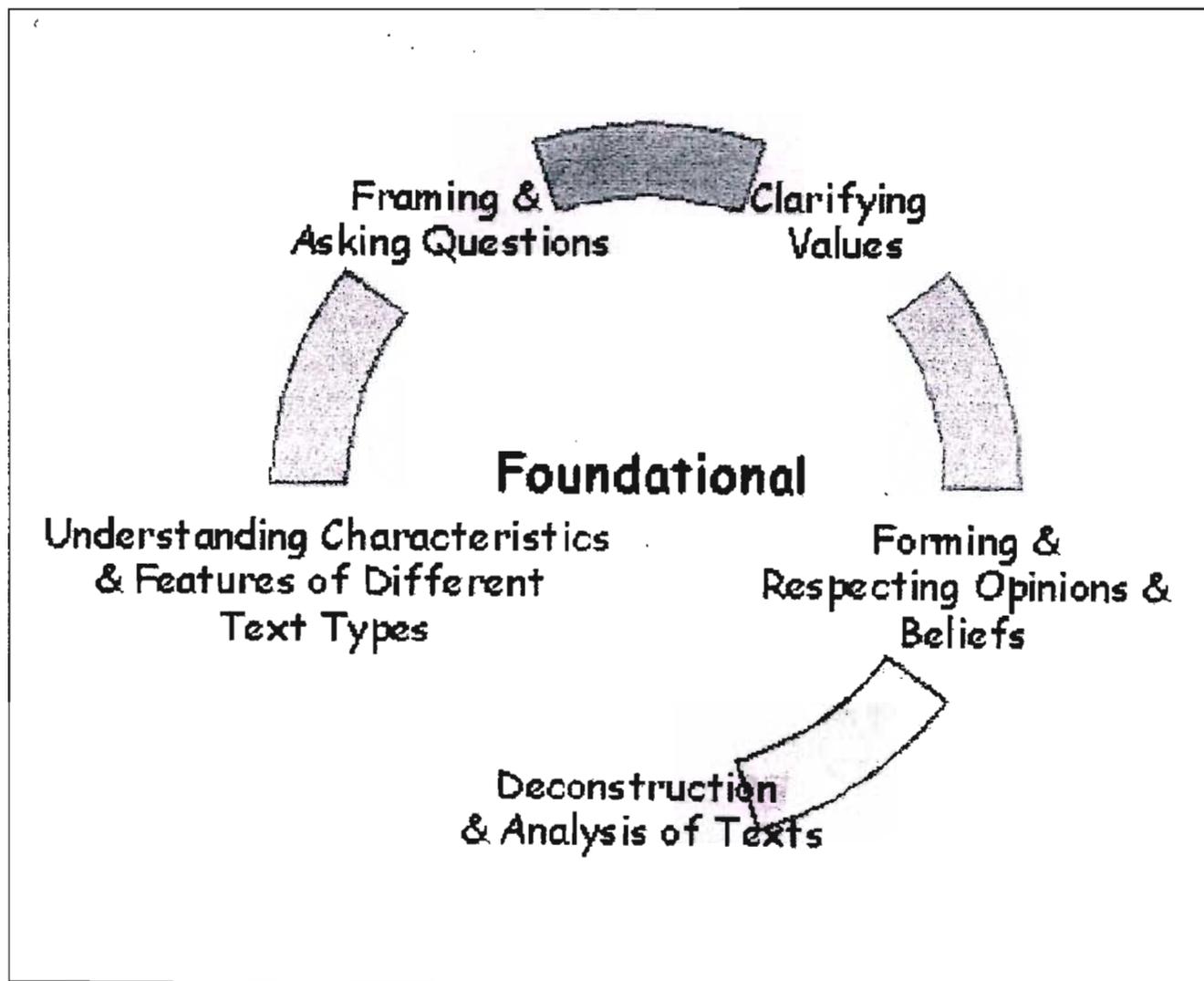
<p>school children in the impoverished Welbedacht<sup>1</sup> area. Also, <i>The Rising Sun</i> has an Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) certified print order of 42 000, the highest of the community newspapers operating in Chatsworth. As I already mentioned, our delivery vehicles are equipped with 2-way radios which keep us on the pulse of distribution. In this way our response times in terms of following up on distribution complaints are prompt. We receive an average of 75 calls per week in this regard.</p>
<p><b>6.1 There are often errors in your newspaper, even in headlines, regarding grammar and spelling. What would you attribute this to?</b></p>
<p>Every effort is made to ensure quality control, however, in the rush to meet deadlines, some errors inadvertently do occur.</p>
<p><b>6.2 Do you plan to address this problem? If so, how?</b></p>
<p>Well we are constantly looking to improve our product. I would like to invite you to look through our newspaper each week and if you find errors, mark them in the newspaper and leave the copy at reception and I will address the issue with reporters. We appreciate feedback from members of the community, from anyone who thinks they can contribute.</p>
<p><b>7. What was your rationale behind your merger with Caxton?</b></p>
<p>Independently the <i>Rising Sun</i> Group could only be taken to certain heights, however by forging links with the 'big players' in the market place, I believe that the company can be taken to new heights. Our partnership with Caxton is now more than a year old and I can say that it has been a good move. I have observed a distinct difference, there are certain systems in place that allow for more efficient administration like monthly management meetings and constant training of staff. Also, <i>The Rising Sun</i> is rated highly when compared to other community newspapers in the country.</p>
<p><b>8. With Caxton poised to exit the Community Press Association (CPA) what would be the implications for your newspaper.</b></p>
<p>Caxton will be setting the trend in this regard and we will be directed by the decision that Caxton makes.</p>
<p><b>9. What control does Caxton have over the newspaper as intellectual property, ie. over editorial and copy?</b></p>
<p>Both the <i>Rising Sun</i> group and Caxton are committed to freedom of the press and freedom of expression so there is no real control over news content. However, the group editor of Caxton runs regular training programmes, trying to improve the writing skills of our reporters.</p>
<p><b>10. Recently you had a survey commissioned by <i>Research Surveys</i>. In what ways do you intend to use the findings of this survey?</b></p>
<p>This was mainly a market research survey done for advertising purposes at a cost of R20 000 per area.</p>
<p><b>11. Would you be willing to release the findings of this survey to me?</b></p>
<p>No, that is confidential information.</p>

<sup>1</sup> This area made up of mainly informal dwellings is on the border of Chatsworth and Umlazi.

<b>ANNEXURE D1</b>		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Lesson Plan 1</b>		
<b>Segment 1: Lesson 1</b>		
<b>Date:</b> 01/08/03 (Day 9, Session 5)		
<b>Topic:</b> Contextualisation: Setting the Scene for the Community Newspaper Project		
<b>Grade:</b> 11A		
<b>Time:</b> 1 session		
<b>Objectives:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand the rationale for the Project.</li> <li>• To understand the different contexts of the Project.</li> <li>• To understand the ground rules for the Project.</li> </ul>		
<b>Learner Outcomes</b>		<b>Assessment Standards</b>
1. Listening and Speaking		1.1 Learn about and share ideas. 1.2 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others. 1.3 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learners' Activities</b>
1.	Introduce learners to Project.	1. Listen.
2.	Describe setting – Chatsworth	2. Contribute to discussion.
3.	Discuss community media in Chatsworth.	3. Help set the ground rules for the Project.
4.	Discuss present pedagogy – invite learners to shift the focus.	4. Negotiate with other learners regarding the formation of groups.
5.	Negotiate ground rules including how groups are to be formed.	5. Complete questionnaire.
6.	Guide learners through questionnaire.	
<b>Expanded Opportunities/ Enrichment</b>		<b>Resources</b>
1. Compile a media file with print media resources, mainly community and mainstream newspapers.		1. Community newspapers
2. Learn to negotiate with others.		2. Questionnaire for learners (please see Annexure A).
3. Develop critical skills for interacting with media.		<b>Homework:</b> complete questionnaire.

<b>ANNEXURE D2</b>		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Lesson Plan 2</b>		
<b>Segment 2: Lesson 1</b>		
<b>Date:</b> 14/08/03 (Day 9, Session 5)		
<b>Topic:</b> Understanding the 'Foundations of Critical Literacy'		
<b>Grade:</b> 11A		
<b>Time:</b> 1 session		
<b>Objectives</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form groups as pre-arranged with classmates</li> <li>• Expand understanding of the concept of 'text'.</li> <li>• Understand importance of asking questions.</li> <li>• Understand the meaning of values and how they operate in society.</li> <li>• Understand the importance of respecting opinions and beliefs.</li> </ul>		
<b>Learner Outcomes</b>		<b>Assessment Standards</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening and Speaking</li> <li>2. Reading and Viewing</li> <li>4. Language</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Learn about and share ideas.</li> <li>1.2 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others.</li> <li>1.3 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.</li> <li>2.1 demonstrate various reading and viewing strategies for comprehension, namely, summarise main and supporting ideas; evaluate socio-cultural values attitudes and beliefs.</li> </ol>
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learners' Activities</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange learners in groups.</li> <li>2. Collect completed questionnaires.</li> <li>3. Discussion on 'What is a text?' using 'Out of the Box' game.</li> <li>4. Discuss: Foundations of Critical Literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding characteristics and features of different text types ;</li> <li>• framing and asking questions and clarifying values;</li> <li>• respecting opinions and beliefs (Please see Figure 1 below).</li> </ul> </li> <li>5. Explain the concept of binary oppositions.</li> <li>6. Discuss values using the <i>Constitution</i> (1996) and the front page headline of <i>The Rising Sun</i>, "Hospital Sends AIDS Patient Home to Die" – <i>Claim</i> (July 8-14/03).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contribute to discussion.</li> <li>2. Form groups.</li> <li>3. Make brief, meaningful notes.</li> <li>4. Help formulate binary oppositions.</li> <li>5. Use texts provided to grasp basic concepts of Critical Literacy.</li> </ol>	
<b>Expanded Opportunities/ Enrichment</b>		<b>Resources</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand knowledge on texts and Critical Literacy.</li> <li>2. Develop critical skills for interacting with media.</li> <li>3. Add print media resources and notes to media file.</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Media files.</li> <li>2. Worksheet: Foundations of Critical Literacy.</li> <li>3. List of Texts for 'Out of the Box' game: <i>Get Rich or Die Trying</i> (Fifty Cent, 2003). <i>English in Context</i> (Hendry et al, 2000). <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> (Lee, 1960). <i>Accents</i> (Chapman and Voss, 1994). <i>Nokia 2100</i> cellular phone. <i>Macbeth</i> (Shakespeare, Stratford Series, 1991). Simba Sweet Chilli Fritos chips; <i>Coca Cola</i> can. <i>Kelloggs Corn Flakes</i> box. <i>Mail and Guardian</i> (25-31 July 2003). <i>Constitution of the Republic of S.A.</i> (1996). <i>The Rising Sun</i> (July 8-14/03). <i>Car Magazine</i> (July, 2003).</li> </ol>

Figure 1: *The Foundations of Critical Literacy Learning* (Broomhall: 2002).



<b>ANNEXURE D3</b> <b>Lesson Plan 3</b> <b>Segment 2: Lesson 2</b>		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 27/08/03 (Day 9, Session 5) <b>Topic:</b> Understanding Critical Literacy: Foundations of Critical Literacy: deconstruction and analysis of texts <b>Grade:</b> 11A <b>Time:</b> 1 session		
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share ideas on everyday experiences to understand how language and power work.</li> <li>• Understand how language shapes values and attitudes.</li> <li>• Develop a basic understanding of Critical Literacy theories.</li> </ul>		
<b>Learner Outcomes:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening and Speaking</li> <li>2. Reading and Viewing</li> <li>4. Language</li> </ol>		<b>Assessment Standards:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1 Learn about and share ideas.</li> <li>1. 2 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others.</li> <li>1. 3 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.</li> <li>2. 1 Evaluate how language may reflect and shape values and attitudes in texts.</li> <li>4. 1 Develop Critical Language Awareness to analyse how implicit and explicit messages, values and attitudes reflect the position of the speaker/reader.</li> </ol>
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learners' Activities</b>
1.	Explain: Intertextuality, Reader Response Theory, Critical Language Awareness, Critical Discourse Analysis.	1. Listen.
2.	Use everyday experiences to illustrate how language and power work: in school, home, among friends.	2. Contribute to discussion. 3. Make brief, meaningful notes.
<b>Expanded Opportunities/ Enrichment:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add resources and notes to media file.</li> <li>2. Expand knowledge on texts and Critical Literacy.</li> <li>3. Develop critical skills for interacting with media.</li> </ol>		<b>Resources</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Worksheet: Foundations of Critical Literacy. (please see Figure 1: Annexure D2).</li> <li>2. Critical Language Awareness Series: <i>Language, Identity and Power</i> (Janks, 1993).</li> </ol>

<b>ANNEXURE D4</b> <b>Lesson Plan 4</b>	<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language	
<b>Date:</b> 09/09/03, 16/10/03, 29/10/03 (Day 9, Session 5) <b>Topic:</b> Understanding Critical Literacy: Fairy Tales <b>Grade:</b> 11A <b>Time:</b> 3 sessions		
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Understand how Eurocentric fairytales have shaped gender roles.</li> <li>• Meaningfully complete tasks based on <i>Four Resources Model</i> (1997), worksheet, and group Venn Diagram.</li> </ul>		
<b>Learner Outcomes</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening and Speaking</li> <li>2. Reading and Viewing</li> <li>3. Writing and Presenting</li> <li>4. Language</li> </ol>	<b>Assessment Standards</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Learn about and share ideas.</li> <li>1.4 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others.</li> <li>2.1 Give and motivate personal responses to texts with conviction.</li> <li>2.2 Analyse development of plot, conflict and character.</li> <li>3.1 Develop coherent ideas and organise these by using a diagram.</li> <li>4.1 Develop Critical Language Awareness by examining stereotyping and role reversal.</li> </ol>	
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learners' Activities</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss 'Stories' and positioning using, 'It was one of those days...'</li> <li>2. Discuss Eurocentric fairy tales and African/Indian Tales listed below.</li> <li>3. Examine gender positioning by Eurocentric fairy tales.</li> <li>4. Read the three versions of the <i>Three Little Pigs</i>.</li> <li>5. Discuss <i>Four Resources Model</i> (please see Figure 1 below), Venn Diagram (please see Figure 2 below) and Worksheet (please see Figure 3 below) and explain how to use each instrument to analyse the stories.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen.</li> <li>2. Contribute to group and class discussions.</li> <li>3. Contribute to group task based on <i>Four Resources Model</i>.</li> <li>4. Complete worksheet based on three versions of the <i>Three Little Pigs</i>.</li> <li>5. Contribute to drawing the group Venn Diagram.</li> </ol>	
<b>Expanded Opportunities</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand knowledge on texts and Critical Literacy.</li> <li>2. Develop critical skills for interacting with media.</li> </ol>	<b>Resources</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Madiba Magic: Nelson Mandela's Favourite Stories for Children</i> (2002).</li> <li>2. <i>Time for Telling: a Collection of Stories from around the World</i> (1992).</li> <li>3. <i>Indian Stories</i> (1994).</li> <li>4. <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> (Hall et al, 2002).</li> <li>5. <i>The Three Little Pigs: a retelling</i> (Muir, 1993).</li> <li>6. <i>The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig</i> (Trivizas, 1993).</li> <li>7. <i>Four Resources Model</i> (1997) (please see Figure 1 on the following page).</li> <li>8. Worksheet (please see Figure 2 on the following page).</li> <li>9. Venn Diagram.</li> <li>10. Flip-chart paper.</li> </ol>	

Figure 1: an adaptation of the Four Resources Model

<b>Developing Resources as a Code Breaker</b>
How do I crack this text?
How does it work?
What are the patterns and conventions that are repeated?
<b>Developing Resources as a Text Participant</b>
How are the ideas represented in the text connected?
What cultural values are contained in this text?
What are the cultural meanings that can be constructed from this text?
Are boys and girls positioned differently by each text?
<b>Developing Resources as a Text User</b>
How is this text shaped by who will use it?
What is my response to this text here and now?
How will different people view this text?
<b>Developing Resources as Text Analyst and Critic</b>
What is this text trying to do to me?
In whose interests was this text written?
What kind of person wrote this text?
What is absent (not included) in the text?

Figure 2: Worksheet on 'The Three Little Pigs'

Statements about Texts	Texts			Relevant references to the texts
	1	2	3	
1. This text is different to the one told to me as a child.				
2. The language used in this text is suitable for primary school learners between 5-8 years old.				
3. This text disrupts the original story and presents a different perspective.				
4. This text uses role reversal.				
5. This text provides an in-depth insight into the characters.				
6. This text conveys humour through the words and illustrations.				
7. This text is skillfully constructed and represents the creative and technical expertise of the writer and illustrator.				
8. This text shows development of the plot by employing a specific convention of writing.				
9. This text challenges conventional ways of viewing texts and thus encourages critical thinking.				
10. This text favours reconciliation as an alternative ending.				
<b>KEY:</b> Text 1 - Original story of <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> (2002). Text 2 - Frank Muir's retelling of <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> (1993). Text 3 - <i>The Three Wolves and the Big Bad Pig</i> (1993).				

<b>ANNEXURE D5</b> <b>Lesson Plan 5</b>		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language	
<b>Date:</b> 29/01/04 (Day1, Session1), 30/01/04 (Day 2, Session 2) <b>Topic:</b> Interrogating Texts - International and Local Newspapers <b>Grade:</b> 12A <b>Time:</b> 2 sessions			
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Understand how CDA, Genre, Reader Response Theory and Intertextuality can be applied to the deconstruction of newspapers.</li> <li>• Understand the processes of production, distribution and consumption of newspapers.</li> <li>• Complete worksheet meaningfully.</li> </ul>			
<b>Learner Outcomes</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening and Speaking</li> <li>2. Reading and Viewing</li> <li>4. Language</li> </ol>		<b>Assessment Standards</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Learn about and share ideas.</li> <li>1.4 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others.</li> <li>1.5 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.</li> <li>3. Locate, select, organise and integrate information</li> <li>4. Develop Critical Language Awareness: analyse how values and attitudes reflect the positions of the speakers and readers; examine persuasive language.</li> </ol>	
<b>Teacher's Activities</b>		<b>Learners' Activities</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss briefly the results of questionnaire (Annexure A) completed the previous year.</li> <li>2. Discuss CDA, Genre, Reader Response Theory and Intertextuality.</li> <li>3. Provide background to newspapers in general and to community newspapers specifically.</li> <li>4. Assess groups using group assessment sheet (please see Figure 2).</li> </ol>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen.</li> <li>2. Contribute to class and group discussions.</li> <li>3. Complete group worksheets (please see Figure 1 below).</li> <li>4. Use completed worksheet to contribute to report-back session.</li> </ol>	
<b>Expanded Opportunities</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand knowledge on texts and Critical Literacy.</li> <li>2. Develop critical skills for interacting with media specifically newspapers.</li> <li>3. Develop skills for working with Critical Discourse Analysis.</li> </ol>		<b>Resources</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>British Newspapers:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 <i>The Mail</i> (16/11/2003).</li> <li>1.2 <i>The Sunday Telegraph</i> (2/11/2003).</li> <li>1.3 <i>The Independent on Sunday</i> (9/11/2003).</li> <li>1.4 <i>Metro</i> (1/06, 29/09, 19/11/2003).</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <u>South African Newspapers dating from August 2003 to January 2004:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 <i>Sunday Times</i> (16/11/2003).</li> <li>2.2 <i>Sunday Tribune</i> (16/11/2003).</li> <li>2.3 <i>The Rising Sun</i> (21-27/10/03, 11-17/11/03, 20-/01/04).</li> <li>2.4 <i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (21/01/04).</li> <li>2.5 <i>Chatsworth Sun Shopper</i> (15/01/04).</li> <li>2.6 <i>The Express</i> (mid November 03, mid- January 04).</li> <li>2.7 <i>Daily News; POST; Mercury; Mail and Guardian; Daily Sun</i> (August 2003 to January 2004).</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Please see Figures 1 and 2 on the following page.</li> </ol>	

Figure 1

<b>GROUP WORKSHEET: DECONSTRUCTION OF NEWSPAPERS</b>	
<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>DETAILS</b>
1. Title of Newspaper, Type	
2. Country, city where published	
3. Owner, Publisher, Editor	
4. Other publications owned by the same company	
5. Price; Frequency eg. daily, weekly; number of pages	
6. Size: eg. tabloid, broadsheet	
7. Composition: Number of separate sections eg. Magazine	
8. Target market	
<b>SUB-GENRES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1. News	
2. Lifestyle	
3. Sport	
4. Puzzles	
5. Business/Finance	
6. Motoring	
7. Social News	
8. TV Guide	
9. Columns/Comment	
10. Editorial	
11. Classifieds	
12. Obituaries	
13. Cartoons	
14. Entertainment Guide	
15. What's On	
<b>PICTURES</b>	<b>OBSERVATIONS</b>
1. What kind of pictures appear on the front page?	
2. What is the main race of the people that appear in the pictures?	
3. How often do women appear in the pictures?	
4. How are women represented in the pictures?	
5. How do words, captions anchor the pictures? Give one example.	

ADVERTISING	ANALYSIS
1. What is the approximate ratio of advertising versus copy?	
2. What kinds of products are advertised in this newspaper? Can the choice of advertising be linked to the target market of this publication?	
3. Did this newspaper contain any advertising inserts and/or supplements? If so what were they?	
4. What can be said about the age, gender, class and race of the people in the advertisements?	
5. Are there stereotypes, ideas, lifestyles and desires common to the advertisements contained in this newspaper?	

Figure 2

<b>Group Assessment sheet for Deconstruction of Newspapers</b>					
<b>Group Members' Names:</b>					
<i>Specific Outcomes: Learners access, process and analyse information from a variety of newspapers; Learners use appropriate communication strategies and presentation skills.</i>					
	Not Achieved 1/5	Partially Achieved 2/5	Achieved 3/5	Outstanding 4-5/5	Total 20
Demonstrates a clear understanding of the conditions of production, reception, socio-historical context and power relations that shape each newspaper.					5
Demonstrates a clear understanding of the link between the processes of production and reception; the relations between producer and reader and the ideal reader of each newspaper.					5
Demonstrates an understanding of the overall construction of the newspaper as a text and the sub-genres that constitute each publication.					5
Uses the skills necessary to deliver an interesting and insightful presentation.					5

(adapted from DoE, 2003)

<b>ANNEXURE D6</b> <b>Lesson Plan 6</b>		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 20/02/04 (Day 2, Session 2), 23/02/04 (Day 3, Session 5) <b>Topic:</b> Using the CDA model to Interrogate Community Newspapers <b>Grade:</b> 12A <b>Time:</b> 2 sessions		
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Examine <b>Discourse</b> as text: Identify and correct grammatical errors.</li> <li>• Examine text production, distribution and consumption.</li> <li>• Examine social and cultural contexts.</li> <li>• Complete worksheets based on texts meaningfully.</li> </ul>		
<b>Learner Outcomes</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening and Speaking</li> <li>2. Reading and Viewing</li> <li>3. Writing and Presenting</li> <li>4. Language</li> </ol>		<b>Assessment Standards</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Learn about and share ideas.</li> <li>1.4 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening To and respecting those of others.</li> <li>1.5 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.</li> <li>2.1 Scan texts for supporting details.</li> <li>2.2 Summarise main and supporting ideas.</li> <li>3. Locate, select, organise and integrate information.</li> <li>4.1 Develop editing skills.</li> <li>4.2 Develop Critical Language Awareness: analyse how implicit and explicit messages, values and attitudes reflect the position of the speaker.</li> </ol>
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learners' Activities</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss CDA specifically in relation to: Discourse as text, Discursive Practice and Social Practice.</li> <li>2. Mediate Fairclough's 3-D model of CDA to learners as simply as possible (please see Figure 1).</li> <li>3. Provide learners with worksheets for each dimension in deconstructing community newspapers (please see Figures 2, 3, 4 on the following page).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen.</li> <li>2. Contribute to class and group discussions.</li> <li>3. Use Figures 1 to 4 to interrogate community newspapers.</li> <li>4. Use completed CDA Model and worksheets to contribute to report-back sessions.</li> </ol>	
<b>Expanded Opportunities</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand knowledge on texts and Critical Literacy.</li> <li>2. Develop critical skills for interacting with media specifically newspapers.</li> <li>3. Develop skills for working with Critical Discourse Analysis.</li> </ol>		<b>Resources</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Flip-chart paper.</li> <li>2. Community Newspapers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Rising Sun</i> (October 21-27 2003).</li> <li><i>The Rising Sun</i> (Nov 11-17 2003).</li> <li><i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (21 January 2004).</li> <li><i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (4 February 2004).</li> <li><i>The Express</i> (mid- January 2004).</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Please see Figures 1 to 4 on the following page.</li> </ol>

Figure 1: Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model for Critical Discourse Analysis (1992(b):73)

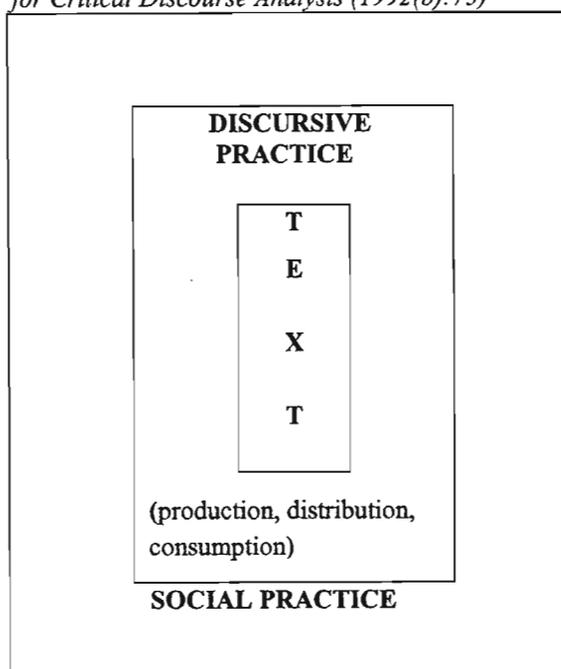


Figure 2: Questions on texts from community newspapers

<b><i>i) Discourse as Text</i></b>
<b>1. Examine the community newspaper as a whole and complete the following tasks:</b>
1.1 Identify grammatical, spelling, punctuation errors from the community newspaper headlines.
1.2 What are the different kinds of texts contained in the community newspaper?
1.3 What genre dominates the newspaper?
1.4 Examine the vocabulary used and select words that have relevance only to the community of Chatsworth, to Indian South Africans in general or to sections of the Indian community.
1.5 Count the number of people from the community represented in the pictures.
<b>2. Select an article (analysing the verbal signs) and answer the following questions:</b>
2.2 What has been written about
2.2 Comment on the language that has been used.
2.3 How is the reader positioned by the article?
<b>3. Select a picture (analysing visual signs) and answer the following questions:</b>
3.1 How does the caption anchor the picture?
3.2 What is absent from the picture.

Figure 3: Questions on production and consumption of community newspapers

<b>(ii) Discursive Practice: text production, distribution and consumption</b>
1. Who owns or controls the means of production?
2. What relations exist between the producer of the newspaper and the reader?
3. Who is the ideal reader of the newspaper?
4. How is intertextuality at work in terms of what the publisher assumes about what the reader knows and values?

Figure 4: Questions on the social and cultural contexts of community newspapers

<b>(iii) Social Practice: examining social and cultural contexts</b>
1. What is the socio-historical context of the newspaper?
2. What power relations shape this community newspaper?
3. What beliefs, ideas, principles are outlined by this community newspaper?
4. Does this community newspaper try to maintain or change existing relations of power?
5. How do the dominant cultural discourses position and construct readers, their understandings of the world, their social relations and their identities?
6. Which possible readers are silenced or marginalised?

<b>ANNEXURE D7</b> <b>Lesson Plan 7</b>		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language	
<b>Date:</b> 20/03/04 (Day 2, Session 2) <b>Topic:</b> Analysis of Sources from Community Newspapers: Miss India South Africa <b>Grade:</b> 12A <b>Time:</b> 1 session			
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Analyse texts meaningfully using worksheets provided.</li> <li>• Identify stereotyping, emotive and persuasive language.</li> <li>• Construct an alternative text using role reversal.</li> </ul>			
<b>Learner Outcomes</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening and Speaking</li> <li>2. Reading and Viewing</li> <li>3. Writing and Presenting</li> <li>4. Language</li> </ol>		<b>Assessment Standards</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Learn about and share ideas.</li> <li>1.4 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others.</li> <li>1.5 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.</li> <li>2.1 Scan texts for supporting details.</li> <li>2.2 Summarise main and supporting ideas.</li> <li>3. Locate, select, organise and integrate information.</li> <li>4.1 Develop Critical Language Awareness: identify and challenge subtle bias and stereotyping, emotive and persuasive language.</li> </ol>	
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learners' Activities</b>	<b>H/W</b>
1.	Discuss media, gender, beauty contests and the Miss India South Africa Contest. (please see Figure 1).	1. Listen.	Please see Figure 2.
2.	Provide learners with worksheets for deconstructing Texts 1-5 (please see Figure 2, 3, 4).	2. Contribute to class and group discussions on how women are positioned in society and community newspapers.	
3.	Direct group discussion.	3. Use Figures 1-2 to analyse Texts 1-5 4. Complete questions based on texts.	
<b>Expanded Opportunities</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand knowledge on texts and Critical Literacy.</li> <li>2. Develop critical skills for interacting with media specifically newspapers.</li> <li>3. Develop skills for working with Critical Discourse Analysis.</li> </ol>		<b>Resources</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>The Rising Sun</i> (12-18 August 2003) (please see Text 1).</li> <li>2. <i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (13 August 2003) (please see Text 2).</li> <li>3. <i>The Express</i> (Mid-August 2003) (please see Text 3).</li> <li>4. <i>Sunday Times Extra</i> (10 August 2003) (please see Text 4).</li> <li>5. <i>Daily News</i> (07/09/2003) (please see Text 5).</li> </ol>	

TEXT 1

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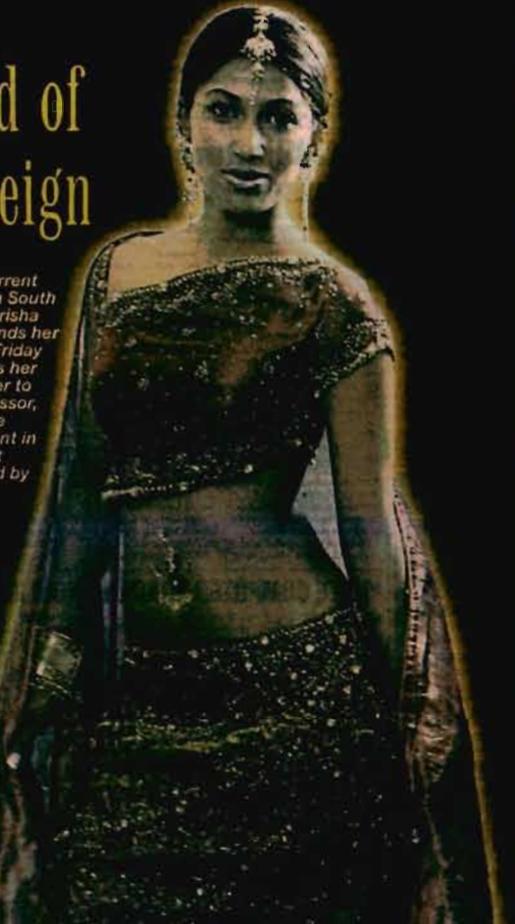
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## End of a Reign



WHEN current Miss India South Africa, Sorisha Naidoo, ends her reign on Friday and hands her crown over to her successor, she will be resplendent in a garment sponsored by Suhaag

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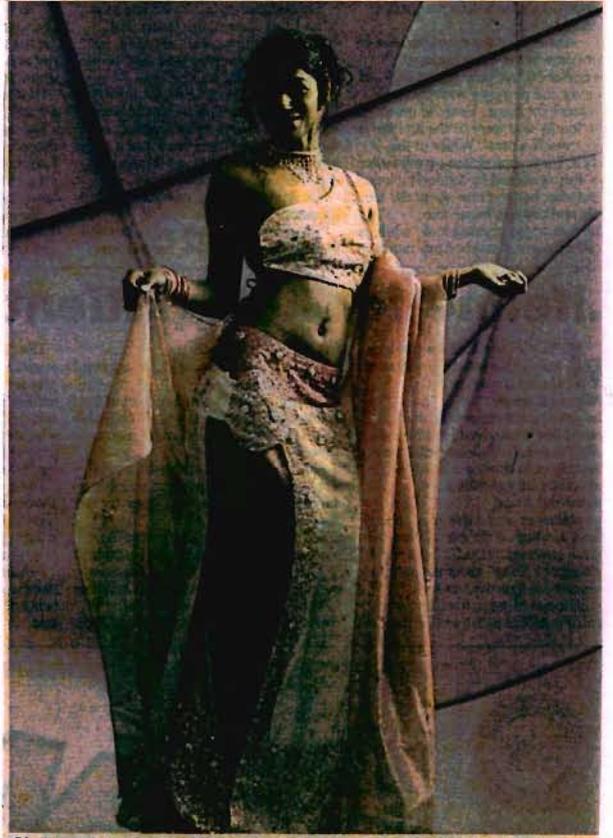
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Chatsworth model and Miss India South Africa, Sorisha Naidoo will end her reign on Friday when she hands over the crown to her successor at the Playhouse. The 25-year-old Shelcross DJ last week received the Phoenix Bhambeji Coalition's Woman of the Year award for her charity work in the community. Suhaag House of Fashion will dress her for the pageant.

## QUEEN SORISHA ENDS HER REIGN



THE outgoing Miss India South Africa, Sorisha Naidoo, has still not received two of the prizes she won when she was crowned two years ago, writes **TASCHICA PILLAY**.

Naidoo, whose reign ends on Friday, is still waiting for two tickets to India and jewellery promised to her as queen.

She will hand over the crown to her successor at the Miss India South Africa pageant at the Playhouse.

The 25-year-old East Coast Radio DJ said although she had reached the end of her reign, she would continue with her charity work and giving mo-

tivational talks.

The Shallcross model, who was placed in the top 10 of the Miss India Worldwide pageant in November last year, also presents *Heita!* and *Nightlife* on e-tv and runs an events and public relations company.

Naidoo this week received the Phoenix Bhambayi Coalition's Woman of the Year award for her commitment to the community.

She said the highlight of her reign had been meeting former president Nelson Mandela, working with the Cancer Association and Whizzkids, and assisting in charity drives.

"My philosophy and belief has always been that there is only one religion — the religion of love — and tolerance is the key to everything.

"My message to my successor is to remember that there is a downside to holding the title, as people will express different opinions about you and you will not be able to be everywhere. She should do the best she can."

Naidoo said she had no immediate marriage plans and aspired to become involved in TV production.

Picture: **JACKIE CLAUSEN**



**FROM ONE WINNER TO ANOTHER:** Community activist Sulosh Pillay (right) presents the Phoenix Bhambayi coalition's Woman of the Year award to reigning Miss India South Africa, Sorisha Naidoo, who earned the accolade for her commitment to the community. Pillay is a former winner of the award, presented annually to women who have made a difference to communities in KwaZulu-Natal.

Figure1: textual analysis: Miss India South Africa

Statements about Texts	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
1. This text appears on the front page.					
2. This text represents women primarily in terms of physical beauty.					
3. This text portrays Indian women as Bollywood actresses.					
4. This text appeals mainly to Indian South Africans.					
5. This text shows that the garment worn by Miss India South Africa is from "Suhaag: House of Asian Fashion".					
6. This text reflects a western 'take' on Indian garments.					
7. This text presents a limited view on what it means to be an Indian South African.					
8. This text challenges the dominant stereotypes associated with beauty queens.					

Figure2: individual responses to texts: Miss India South Africa

Individual Responses to Questions on Texts 1-5
1. What were your initial responses to each text?
2. Describe the garments worn by Miss India South Africa in each text.
3. Are these garments a reflection of traditional Indian dress?
4. Discuss the captions and / or articles that anchor each of the pictures.
5. Suggest why four of the five pictures appear on the front pages.
6. Comment on the size of the pictures and photographic techniques used.
7. Provide reasons why you would / would not / cannot participate in this pageant.
8. Who owns the rights to this pageant and how do they benefit from this contest?
9. State the groups of South Africans are excluded from participation in the Miss India South Africa pageant.
<b>Homework Task: Reversing the Roles</b>
Take the pictures of Miss India South Africa, cut out the heads and replace with people who would normally be excluded from participating in this beauty pageant. Keep the heads but cut out the garments and replace with fashion that may not be considered suitable for the Miss India South Africa pageant

<b>ANNEXURE D 8</b> Lesson Plan 8		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 11/03/04 (Day 2, Session 2) <b>Topic:</b> Analysis of Sources from Community Newspapers: Community Newspaper Pageants for Young Girls <b>Grade:</b> 12A <b>Time:</b> 1 session		
<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express ideas freely and respect those of others.</li> <li>• Analyse texts meaningfully using worksheets provided.</li> <li>• Identify stereotyping, emotive and persuasive language.</li> </ul>		
<b>Learner Outcomes:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listening and Speaking</li> <li>2. Reading and Viewing</li> <li>3. Writing and Presenting</li> <li>4. Language</li> </ol>		<b>Assessment Standards:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Learn about and share ideas.</li> <li>1.2 Interact effectively in group discussions by expressing own ideas and opinions and listening to and respecting those of others.</li> <li>1.3 Use negotiation skills to reach consensus.</li> <li>2.1 Scan texts for supporting details.</li> <li>2.2 Summarise main and supporting ideas.</li> <li>3. Locate, select, organise and integrate information.</li> <li>4.1 Develop Critical Language Awareness. Identify and challenge subtle bias and stereotyping, emotive and persuasive language.</li> </ol>
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learners' Activities</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss Media, gender, beauty contests and the Little Miss... Contests.</li> <li>2. Provide learners with worksheets for deconstructing Texts 1-3 (please see Figures 1, 2).</li> <li>3. Direct group discussion.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contribute to class and group discussions on how women are positioned in society and community newspapers.</li> <li>2. Use Figures 1-2 to analyse Texts 1-3 to complete questions based on texts.</li> </ol>	
<b>Expanded Opportunities</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expand knowledge on texts and Critical Literacy.</li> <li>2. Develop critical skills for interacting with media specifically newspapers.</li> <li>3. Develop skills for working with Critical Discourse Analysis.</li> </ol>		<b>Resources</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Are you the Next..." (<i>The Rising Sun</i>, May 13-19/03) – Text 1.</li> <li>2. "Little Miss Chatsworth Tabloid" (<i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i>, 6/08/03) – Text 2.</li> <li>3. "Little Miss ..." (<i>The Rising Sun</i>, August 26 - September 1/03) – Text 3.</li> <li>4. <i>The Rising Sun</i>: July 8-14 2003; July 29-August 4 2003.</li> <li>5. <i>The Rising Sun</i> (19-25 August 2003).</li> <li>6. <i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (20 August 2003).</li> </ol>

TEXT 1

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TEXT 2

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Recently crowned Little Miss Chatsworth Tabloid, Kamelle Chetbur (8) is flanked by runners-up (left) Roseann Nicks (7) and Merche (9). Photo: [unreadable]

TEXT 3

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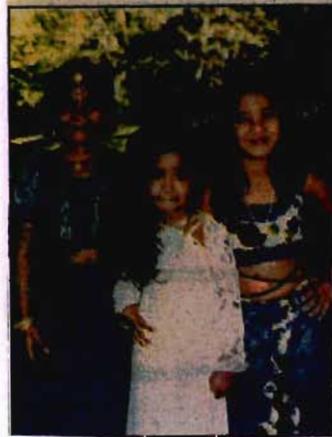
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**See Inside For CHATSWORTH CENTRE**

**LITTLE MISS, MISS TEEN,  
MISS, MRS & MR RISING SUN/  
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COLLEGE 2003**



Are you eyeing the most sought after crown for 2003? Do you have what it takes to represent the highest circulating community newspaper? Do you want to win some fantastic prizes including an overseas trip then enter now for our pageant on Saturday, 18 October 2003 at the Durban City Hall?

For tickets or more info phone Model Ace International on 083 747 9410. Pictured left is Merantha, Metania and Alicia who are entrants in the Little Miss Rising Sun

Figure 1: textual analysis: "Little Miss..." (Completed)

Statements about Texts	T1	T2	T3
1. This text shows young girls appearing older than they actually are.			
2. This text reinforces the fairy-tale fantasies of young girls who want to become queens and princesses.			
3. This text promotes the belief in children that girls and women must be revered for their physical beauty.			
4. The pictures are of young girls who are South Africans of Indian origin.			
5. This text appears on the front page.			

Figure 2: individual responses to texts: "Little Miss..."

Individual Responses to Questions on Texts 1-3
1. Who is the speaker in the text? Who is being spoken to?
2. What are the connotations of "Little Miss..."?
3. If you were a parent would you allow your daughter to participate in a beauty pageant? Provide reasons for your response.
4. Do you think that these pageants exclude certain members of the community from participating? Are the organisers explicit about who can and cannot participate?
5. How do the organisers (the community newspapers) stand to benefit from staging these contests?
6. Describe the body language, facial expressions and dress of the young girls in these pictures. How do they attempt to emulate older girls / women?
7. What are the incentives for participation in each pageant?

<b>ANNEXURE D9</b> <b>Lesson Plan: 9</b>		<b>Subject:</b> English Home Language
<b>Date:</b> 12/03/04 <b>Topic:</b> Consolidation: Evaluation of Community Newspaper Project <b>Grade:</b> 12 A <b>Time:</b> 30 minutes		
<b>Objectives:</b> Provide views and opinions on the Community Newspaper Project as a whole.		
<b>Learner Outcomes</b> 3. Writing and presenting.		<b>Assessment Standards</b> 1.1 Learn about and share ideas.
	<b>Teacher's Activities</b>	<b>Learner's Activities</b>
1.	Provide learners with evaluation form and explain how they should go about completing it.	1. Complete Evaluation Form as honestly as possible.
2.	Ensure confidentiality.	
<b>Expanded Opportunities</b> 1. Learners learn to critically evaluate.		<b>Resources</b> Evaluation Form (please see Figure 1 on the following page).

*Figure 1*

## THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER PROJECT

### EVALUATION FORM

For each of the following questions choose only ONE option by placing an 'X' in the appropriate box.

1] The Community Newspaper Project was well organised.

1.Strongly agree	2.Tend to agree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.Tend to disagree	5. Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2] The facilitator's instructions and explanations were clear.

1.Strongly agree	2.Tend to agree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.Tend to disagree	5. Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3] Sufficient time was allowed for interactive participation.

1.Strongly agree	2.Tend to agree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.Tend to disagree	5. Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4] The facilitator was knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media.

1.Strongly agree	2.Tend to agree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.Tend to disagree	5. Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5] The Project has made me knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media.

1.Strongly agree	2.Tend to agree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.Tend to disagree	5. Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6] The Community Newspaper Project has changed my attitude to Chatsworth community newspapers.

1.Strongly agree	2.Tend to agree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.Tend to disagree	5. Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7] Teacher-centred lessons are better than learner-centred lessons.

1.Strongly agree	2.Tend to agree	3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.Tend to disagree	5. Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8]

<b>Choose the most interesting lesson from the list below.</b>	
Understanding Critical Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairy Tales	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deconstruction of newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>
CDA and community newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beauty Contests	<input type="checkbox"/>

**ANNEXURE E: Completed Summary Sheet: Questionnaire for Learners**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Q1	Q2	Q3.1	Q3.2,3.3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10.1
2	FE1	Chats	1	h/w, unemp,	2	2	1	a1,a2	a2,a11	2,5,7	front pg-2 know abt comm.
3	FE2	Chats	1	h/w,	2	2	1	b1,b2	a2,a10	5,7,11	adverts-2 know sales
4	FE3	Chats	1	receptionist,	2	3	1	a1,a2,a3	a7,a11,b2	1,4,15	ent.-2 know comm events
5	FE4	Chats	1	machinest,driver	2	3	1	a1,a2	a6,10,11	1,7,10	frnt pg -reality of lives
6	FE5	Chats	1	educator,stock inspector	2	2	1	a1,a2 *	a7,8,10	1,2,11	impt info abt community
7	FE6	Chats	1	h/w, general manager	2	2	1	a1,a2	a2,11,b10	1,4,12	news cont-utd on events
8	FE7	Chats	1	h/w,creditor's clerk	2	2	1	a1,b2	a2,11,13	1,7,12	frnt pg most current news
9	FE8	Chats	1	h/w,lab technician	2	3	1	a1,2,3,b4	a2,7,10,11	1,2,12	nws content-kept informed
10	FE9	Chats	1	h/w,supervisor	2	2	1	a1,2,3,b4	a1,6,10,13	1,7,15	frnt pg-hilites impt events
11	FE10	Chats	1	secretary,diesel mechanic	2	2	1	a1,2,b3	b7,9,10,11	1,5,7	frnt pg-recnt & int news
12	FE11	Chats	1	h/w,deceased	2	2	1	a1,2,b3	b2,6,7,10	5,7,10	health issues
13	FE12	Chats	1	clerk, assist in jewellery shop	2	2	1	a1,2,b3,4	15	n/a	frnt pg,ent, horoscope
14	FE13	Seaview	1	Std writer 4 SAQA, self employ	2	2	1	a1,2,b3	a11,b2,10	1,5,6	cont pgs-int & amusing stor
15	FE14	Chats	1	debtors clerk,self employed	2	2	1	a1,2	a10,b6,7	1,2,5	frnt pg-highlites main issues
16	FE15	Chats	1	h/w, QA systems auditor	2	2	1	a1,2,b3,4	a2,10,11	1,7,12	nws content-kept informed
17	FE16	Chats	1	h/w, machine operator	2	1	1	b1,2,3	a11,b2,7	1,7,15	interesting articles
18	FE17	Chats	1	machinest, despatch clerk	2	2	1	a2,b1	a7,10,b6	4,7,15	horoscope,entertainment
19	FZ1	Lamont	1	nurse, machine operator	2	2	3	6	b2,4,6,14*	1,10,14	n/a
20	ME1	Chats	1	h/w (grant),deceased	1	2	1	a1,2,3	a11,b2,6,7	2,4,12	nws content-kept informed
21	ME2	Chats	1	h/w, pastor	1	2	1	a1,2,b3	a2,b7,10,	4,8,15	motoring news
22	ME3	Chats	1	cashier,manager	1	2	1	a1,2,3	a2,6,7,11	1,4,15	entertainment
23	ME4	Chats	1	self-employed,accountant	1	2	1	a1,2,3	a2,6,7,11	1,4,12	news cont-utd on events
24	ME5	Chats	1	clerk,clerk	1	2	1	a1,2	a,2,6,7,10	1,2,5	frnt pg-most current news
25	ME6	Chats	1	both unemployed	1	1	1	b1,2	b2,7,11	5,6,7	nws content-kept informed
26	ME7	Chats	2	aunt/uncle-sales rep	1	2	1	a1,2	a7,b,5,10	1,5,7	frnt pg-most current news
27	MZ1	Isipingo	2	deceased, brother guardian	1	3	3	6	b4,14*	4,10,12	n/a
28	MZ2	Umlazi	1	both unemployed	1	3	3	*6	a2,4,11	1,4,5	advertising inserts
29	MZ3	Umlazi	1	h/w,driver	1	3	3	6	b2,8,13	2,4,12	n/a
30	MZ4	Lamont	1	both unemployed	1	2	3	6	b4,14*	4,6	n/a
31	MZ5	Lamont	1	nurse,deceased	1	4 (20)	3	b1	a2,8,9,10	3,4,12	sports-int in latest devel.
32								*Chats			
								Express	*Izolezwe		
								*free frm			
								local shop			



## ANNEXURE F: FIELD NOTES

### Lesson 1: 01/08/03 (Please see Annexure D1)

1. Arrived early at Library since lesson was after lunch break. Prior to the lesson, requested that learners report promptly. One or two stragglers but the lesson starts on time.
2. Karthi asks me why they had to report early to class. Replied that the 11A class were the 'chosen ones' and reminded them of the media project they completed with me the previous year to ascertain their media habits. The media project revealed that many had access to community newspapers and that it was that fact which provided the reason for the Community Newspaper Project which would use Critical Literacy theories to work with community newspapers. This project would contribute towards a Masters degree which I was doing.
3. Told learners that Critical Literacy was a theory that would not have heard of before, a relatively new concept in post-apartheid South Africa, but that they were already quite established theories in countries like England, USA, Australia and Canada. These theories would be explained to them at a later stage. Drew a diagram on the chalkboard with Critical Literacy on one hand and community newspapers and media on the other to show the different aspects of the project and how they would be linked. Explained that the project would last the rest of the year and in all likelihood would continue into 2004.
4. Examined context, placing the project within the framework of the South African 'miracle' that happened in 1994, which we needed to affirm in order to build the idea of democracy in action by being critical; that passive acceptance embodied apartheid education and that the South African education system was in a historical period of transition which we as educators and learners were part of.
5. The following conversation contextualises Chatsworth (Discussion Box 1):

<p>T-Let's look at Chatsworth. What do we know about this place that most of you reside in or go to school in or both?</p> <p>L1-It was a banana plantation.</p> <p>T-Yes, it was made up of a number of farms before people were relocated there as a result of the Group Areas Act.</p> <p>L2-Houses are close together.</p> <p>T- Yes, an example of apartheid town planning, like many other townships in South Africa. Streets are narrow, cobbled (paved) intended as footpaths, not for use by vehicles.</p> <p>L3-Rich and poor live together.</p> <p>L4-Rich in the main building and poor in the outhouses.</p> <p>T-Yes, some areas are more affluent than others. Also progress is noted as many have extended their original council houses to include granny flats while others remain poor.</p> <p>L5 - (African learner) - Mainly Indians.</p> <p>T-Yes, the largest settlement of Indians outside India and the races are not entirely mixed, like other townships in South Africa after apartheid ended, but there are parts of Chatsworth that are partly integrated: the Bayview area which has a large Zanzibari, community, the Bottlebrush area near Moorton and Crossmoor .</p>
---

6. Explained to learners that people living in Chatsworth or any other township in South Africa are not insulated from the media, that they live in a world bombarded by media: television, radio, magazines, information on cellular phones, billboards, internet and newspapers including community newspapers that are brought to your homes free of charge.

7. The following conversation is based on community newspapers (Discussion Box 2):

T- Why would someone take the trouble to print this newspaper and distribute it free of charge to the community?  
L1- " 'Cos it's not for nothing!"  
T- What do you mean?  
L1- You told us last year when we did the other project that newspapers make their money from the adverts in the newspapers and not from the actual cost of the newspaper.  
T- You have a good memory. All newspapers, including community newspapers, make their money from advertising space that is sold.  
L2- You're right, Ma'm, newspapers have more adverts than news!  
T- Very True. Now a full page advertisement for a large Sunday newspaper could cost tens of thousands of rands. I'll be telling you more about this from my own experiences as a journalist and columnist for Chatsworth's first community newspaper called *Chatsworth Sun* which was run by Argus Newspapers, a company that in my day also ran newspapers like *The Daily News* and *Sunday Tribune*. This company has been amalgamated into what is now called Independent Newspapers. When *Chatsworth Sun* closed there was a gap in the market for other community newspapers to be established and so you have newspapers like *The Rising Sun*, *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express*. All this we will discuss in greater detail when we deconstruct or analyse different kinds of newspapers.

8. Asked learners to examine the manner in which English, in fact all their lessons, have been conducted over the years, even by me, in a largely teacher-centred manner.

9. The following conversation is based on the manner in which English is generally taught (Discussion Box 3):

L1- The teacher is the boss.  
L2- Teachers talk and tell you to do certain things and you have to listen.  
L3- Worksheets are handed out and you have to complete the exercises.  
L4- There are a lot of notes, especially in Literature. The teacher talks and explains and we take down notes.  
L5- We do get a chance to express our views and opinions, but we would like to do this more often. Teachers are always in a hurry to complete the syllabus.  
T- All of you as a class are, almost ten years after democracy began, part of a system that is being phased out. You have escaped Outcomes Based Education (OBE) but one of the things about the new OBE curriculum is that it is learner-centred? Since we are going to experiment with Critical Literacy theories which are mainly learner-centred, how do we shift the focus to the learner in this project?  
(No response from learners.)  
T- The answer is mainly through group work.  
L6- Like the Grade 7's. My sister in Grade 7 says they do mainly group work.  
T- Yes, that's because your sister is following a new curriculum which is learner-centred. The teacher has to become a facilitator, that means you will be given various tasks and I will simply guide you through the process of completing those tasks... sometimes I'll make certain suggestions but essentially you will examine, discuss, question and debate amongst yourselves in groups... and there are no right or wrong answers. The first two segments of this project (this lesson and the next) are largely teacher-centred but when we begin Segment 3, we move to learner-centred lessons.

**Reflection: I am also guilty of this. The pressure to complete the Literature syllabus, and for learners to perform well in tests and examinations is great. We need to always keep in mind the ultimate goal, preparation for the Grade 12 examination**

10. Told learners to try a simple exercise by shifting the focus from the teacher to the learner which involved negotiating ground rules for the project since time was of the essence. I emphasised that being organised would allow the project to 'run smoothly'. The following were negotiated between myself and learners: learners were to report promptly to class; during group-work sessions learners agreed not to talk about unnecessary or unrelated matters; report-back sessions after group-work sessions should not exceed five minutes; written work, when given, should be submitted on time; each learner would keep a media folder to file resource materials, samples of newspapers, particularly community newspapers, and notes. This could be any folder or file not in use. They need not have to purchase a new file.

11. Annelene asked if this meant that there would be homework. The class erupted in a chorus complaining that they already had too much of homework in other subjects and that if they were given more homework this would burden them further. Assured them that most of the activities, group and individual, should be completed in class. Only when lessons could not be completed in a single session will tasks to be done at home, for example, filling in the questionnaire.

**Reflection: Don't want to pressurise learners - might alienate them. But will they co-operate by doing homework when it is given? I should try to ensure that work is completed in class as far as possible.**

12. The discussion was a good start to negotiation on certain aspects of classroom management so that "learner-centredness" could be achieved. We needed to extend our negotiating skills to the formation of the groups for the project. Provided the following 'non-negotiable' features to the formation of the groups leaving the actual composition of the groups up to the class: Since there were thirty-five learners, twenty-nine Indian and six African isiZulu speakers, there would have to be five groups of five Indian learners and one group of four. Each group had to add one African isiZulu speaking learner in order to provide access to the Chatsworth community newspapers. The class would have to form and be seated in their groups for the next lesson. The groups could be composed of friends, every fifth learner on the class register or they could pick numbers randomly out of a jar. I said that the method they chose really did not matter as long as it was democratically decided. Learners could also enlist the help of their form teacher.

13. Distributed questionnaires, read out preamble and told learners that they were under no obligation to complete the questionnaire or participate in the project. They could withdraw at any time. Also told learners that their responses would be treated in a confidential manner. Learners had two weeks to complete the questionnaire, that is, until the next time they had LRE.

I must request that I teach 12A English next year or worst case scenario: I will have to start the project afresh with another class next year. Don't see that happening but I must plan ahead. All activities concluded, learners were engaged, attentive and responsive. Can therefore say all objectives achieved.

## **Lesson 2: 14/08/03 (Please see Annexure D2)**

1. Visited to the 11A form room during the course of the week to remind learners to have their questionnaires completed, and for the groups to be formed. In this regard, the form teacher assisted. When the class entered the library I asked learners to sit in their newly formed groups. Since the tables in the Library were already arranged in a manner that could seat six, I had no need to re-arrange furniture at that stage. Learners took about five minutes to settle.

2. Two learners who were absent for the day were catered for in groups. I asked about the criteria used to form the groups, and was told 'friends'. Thanked learners for forming the groups in such a problem-free manner and for completing the questionnaires which I collected from all those who were present.

**Reflection: I had no problem with the way in which the groups were formed and was pleased to observe that each of the isiZulu learners, who did not have access to the Chatsworth community newspapers, were catered for and the gender balance seemed fair considering that there were fewer boys to start with.**

**Reflection: Relieved – groups formed without much hassle- anticipated that it would take longer and all who are present gave in questionnaires. Thankfully may not have to leave anyone out- after all no obligation to complete – must follow up on retrieving questionnaires from absentees.**

3. Asked learners for their views on completing the questionnaire and they said:

- L1-Similar to the last time (when learners completed the media project the previous year).
- L2-Gave me a better idea of newspapers.
- L3-Didn't like the questions where I had to write long answers.
- L4-I was forced to think.

4. Informed learners that they would receive feedback on the results of the questionnaires at the beginning of Phase 2 on the Deconstruction of the newspapers.

5. With the groups settled, I moved on to signpost Critical Literacy and its related theories. Passed out copies of Broomhall's diagram on the foundations of Critical Literacy. Started with 'Understanding Characteristics and Features of Different Text Types' and the 'Out of the Box' game. Placed box containing the following texts on the table in front. (please see Annexure D2 for diagram and list of texts):

6. Told learners that we were going to play a game and that I would be the magician that would make wonderful things materialise out of the box so that they could understand the concept of text. They seemed visibly excited at playing a game.

7. The following conversation is based on text (Discussion Box 4):

- T - What is a text? What does the word text mean. How can we define 'text'?
- L1- A book.
- L2- A text book.
- L3- *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Lee, Heinemann Publishers, 2000), (I took the novel out of the box and held it up).
- L4- *Macbeth* (Shakespeare, Stratford Series, 1991) (I did the same with this text).
- L5- *English in Context* (Hendry *et al*, 2000) (I picked that text out of the box too- laughter at the synchronicity of the learners' comments and my actions).  
(Silence).
- T- Why did you stop? We were doing so well with our 'Out of the Box' game.
- L6- Our poetry book (to which I reacted by holding up *Accents*)
- L7- Newspapers and magazines (I raised the two newspapers and the magazine mentioned above) (Silence again).
- T- This box still has more texts. What other genre or kinds of texts are in the box?
- L3- We give up Ma'm, show us.  
(I hold up the compact disc *Get Rich Or Die Trying* (50 Cent), to the excitement of most of the class, especially the boys. A group starts to sing a chorus from one of the tracks off the album, *In da Club*).
- T- Thank you for that wonderful rendition (referring to the group that started singing) but can we move on now? This is a text people (holding up the compact disc) and all the other music you may listen to and the movies you watch.
- L4- Then, Ma'm, why can't we study '50 Cent' instead of Shakespeare?
- T- Well, Karthi, you still have to study Shakespeare but nothing stops us from studying the lyrics of a '50 Cent' track in the Language and Comprehension component of the syllabus. In fact you could examine aspects of any one of these kinds of texts (I proceeded to pick my *Nokia 2100* cellphone, a packet of *Simba Sweet Chilli Fritos* chips, a can of *Coca-Cola*, an empty *Kellogg's Corn Flakes* box, out of the box). We could take a text message from the cellphone, the labels of the chips packet, *Coca-Cola* can and corn flakes box and study them as texts. Even signs, photographs, works of art, can all qualify as texts. The list is actually quite endless. I'm sure that now you understand that a text is much more than a textbook or a newspaper.
- L3- Ma'm what else is in the box?
- T- The box is almost empty. There is just one other text that we are going to use just now.

**Reflection: I was struck by the enthusiastic response just at the sight of the '50 Cent' compact disc. All learners seemed to be united in their taste in music transcending whatever racial or cultural barriers that may have existed in the classroom.**

8. The following conversation is based on Genre (Discussion Box 5):

T- Earlier, I used the word GENRE (I write the word on the chalkboard), does anyone know what the word means?  
(silence)  
L8- I think you said it was 'kind'  
T- Yes. It means 'kind' or 'category' or type. If we have to look at your prescribed Literature texts, what 'kind' of text or 'genre' is *To Kill a Mockingbird*?  
L8- It's a novel.  
T- Correct. Now what genre is this? I raise the copy of *Macbeth*?  
(no response) You see the genre written in your Literature tests and examination papers.  
L8- Is it Shakespeare?  
T- I suppose you could say that, but the genre is Drama. What other genres do you study in Literature? In other words what other sections make up your Literature syllabus?  
L9- Poetry and Short Stories.  
T- That's right. Now I think you seem to be getting 'genre'. (I raise the newspapers) What genre is this?  
Learners- (in chorus) Newspaper.  
T- Yes, but specifically 'print media'. Let's look at both the newspapers (I raise the *Mail and Guardian* (25-31 July 2003) newspaper, and *The Rising Sun* (July 18-14, 2003, with the front pages facing the learners), Each newspaper falls within a specific newspaper genre. Does anyone know?  
L8- *The Rising Sun* is a community newspaper.  
T- Correct, and the other?  
L8- Not sure.  
T- Anyone (no response). Well, it is a weekly mainstream newspaper. In other words appealing to a wider readership, not just a specific community. You will work with the different mainstream and community newspaper when you start analysing newspapers in detail. Even the newspaper itself can be divided into sub-genres. Here you worked with genre before without really knowing it when you completed the questionnaire. What are some of these genres?  
L9- Horoscopes.  
L3- Sports.  
L1- Cartoons.  
T- Yes. I think now you have the idea of what genre is. What about the cans, chips packet and corn flakes box? What genre could we place them in?

9. It was decided that the best term to use was 'packaging genre'.

**Reflection: Overall this exercise worked very well. Learners thoroughly involved. Hopefully this kind of interaction will be sustained.**

10. Regarding 'Framing and Asking Questions' learners were reminded that they are used to being asked questions by teachers in tests and examinations. Critical Literacy is a learner-centred theory, therefore, the learners must now ask questions in order to understand texts.

11. Introduced the third stage of the cycle, 'Clarifying Values' by extracting the last text from the box: *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996). I said that it was the text that embodied all the fundamental values that governed the everyday lives of all South Africans. I read the fourth point contained in the *Preamble* to the Constitution: 'We the people of South Africa, ...Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity' (*The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996:1)

12. Requested that learners look at the diversity within the class by creating a list of binary oppositions, or basically the opposites that existed in the class. The following list was written on the chalkboard by me based on learners' responses:

*Binary oppositions*

Indian	African
Hindi	Tamil
Christian	Hindu
Isizulu	English
Girls	Boys
fair- skinned	dark- skinned
Tall	short
Moslem	Hindu

13. Used the example of the binary opposition of a 'Moslem' and 'Hindu' learner to illustrate how each of us embodies specific values, for example, a Moslem learner may not eat pork because it is believed to be 'haram' (against the teachings of Islam) while a Hindu learner may not eat beef as the cow is considered to be sacred, or, may not eat meat at all as some Hindus are vegetarian. A comparison was then drawn between a person and a text, that just as every individual contains several values that make him or her unique, so too do texts contain values since they are constructed by people.

14.n The example of the front page headline of *The Rising Sun* (July 8-14/03), "*Hospital Sends AIDS Patient Home to Die*" – *Claim* (Please see Annexure D2), was used. This headline, I indicated to the class, contained the first set of values included in Chapter 1 of *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996), 'Founding Provisions' which I drew to their attention:

1. The Republic of South Africa is one, sovereign, democratic state founded on the following values:
  - (a) 'Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms' (1996:3).

15. Asked learners to focus on extracts below from the article which highlighted the fact that the patient's constitutional rights may have been violated by the hospital's alleged non-adherence to the above values:

- '...the sickly patient was sleeping on the floor with a single blanket and shivering with cold and pain.' (violation of human dignity)
- '... she saw Indian patients being given priority.'  
(violation of the right to equality)

Also, the word 'Claim' indicated that it was a one-sided version of events that had not been confirmed, as the article contained no comment from the hospital authorities.

16. The fourth stage of the cycle, 'Forming and Respecting Opinions and Beliefs' was explained using the article, "*Hospital Sends AIDS Patient Home to Die*" – *Claim* (*The Rising Sun*, July 8-14/03). I asked learners to do the following:

Imagine that YOU are the doctor referred to in the article and you believe that you had good reason to justify why you sent the AIDS patient away: the hospital was overcrowded and it was your expert opinion that nothing more could be done for the patient who had full-blown AIDS. Your personal opinion is that the article is sensationalist and does not

take into account the poor conditions and shortage of beds at the hospital. At the same time, however, you respected the views of those quoted in the article.

17. By empathising with the doctor, and positioning the doctor as respecting the beliefs of those interviewed, which were contrary to his own, learners could grasp the fourth stage of the cycle.

18. Briefly revised the main concepts of 'text', 'genre', 'values' and 'opinions and beliefs' before the lesson ended.

**Reflection: Confident that all objectives were achieved and that learners have at least a basic knowledge of what Critical Literacy is about. I made theories as accessible as I could so that I didn't bombard learners with too much academics- they seemed interested and involved.**

### **Lesson 3: 27/08/03 (Please see Annexure D 3)**

1. Intertextuality was summarised by telling learners that they needed to resist a passive reading of texts and understand that there is never a single or correct way to read a text. Used Barthes' metaphor of a text being like a piece of fabric which is woven from the *already written* and the *already read*. Illustrated this using South African soapie, *Isidingo* as an example, which, by show of hands, all the learners were familiar with. I declared to learners that if I was watching an episode of *Isidingo* for the very first time, it really would not make much sense unless I had watched previous episodes. My knowledge of the setting, characters, plot of previous episodes, would therefore form part of the intertextual link that would allow me to understand that particular episode I was watching fully. A reader or viewer attaches meaning that stems from his or her prior experiences and knowledge of texts. A text is therefore like a chain where many different ideas are linked.

2. Second, Reader Response Theory was explained in a very simple manner: that the reader is an active participant in the ideas of a text and a reader's first interaction with a text is a private moment with meanings experienced in the mind of that reader at that time. Therefore, Reader Response Theory encourages them to share their own meanings and to listen to the meanings of others in the class. This they do on an ongoing basis.

3. Third, in explaining CDA, learners were told that discourse meant discussions on ideas that people interact with in everyday life, which is conveyed through language, that it is important for them to be taught how to engage critically with language in order to become active citizens in a democratic society. CDA and CLA are closely related and deal with issues of power and language.

4. The following conversation is based on language usage (Discussion Box 6):

T-Let's examine the power relations between YOU and ME. YOU refer to ME as Ma'm or Ms. Pather. I can call you by your first name, surname and I may even insult you because of the power I have as a teacher. You don't call me by my first name and you know that if you insult me or any other teacher then you will be reprimanded or punished. Can you think of other situations where this applies?

L1-Our parents - we respect them, we don't call them by their first names.

L2-Our aunts and uncles.

L3- My pastor, older people in the community.

5. The following conversation is based on language and power (Discussion Box 7):

T- In the classroom you use formal language but informal language with your friends- slang- which sometimes sounds like another language. For example, Karthi, if after this lesson Blessing asks you where you are going this afternoon? You will say, "Hey man, I'm vying straight possie coz my ballie is coming early from graf!" (laughter) Now, if I had to ask you that question, your response will be: "I am going straight home because my father will be home early from work."

L1(Girl learner) - But Ma'm, I don't think that the girls speak that way. We do use slang but not in the way that the boys use it.

T- You're quite right, you are more likely to hear boys speak in this manner. Why do you think this is so?

L1-'Cos girls have to be 'prim and proper'.

T- A woman is viewed negatively if the language she uses is not acceptable by the standards of society about how women are expected to behave, yet this does not apply to males. Girls are generally brought up to be feminine, because that is at society expects and so that leads to passive interaction in most contexts, with males dominating. It is only when these power relations change that gender equality will exist.

L2- Not all girls are 'prim and proper', some girls can take any boy on when it comes to talking slang.

T- Exactly, those girls are taking boys on in their own territory. They are saying to boys: I'm your equal. Also, we can't generalise about girls as gender roles have changed over the years like language has changed. For example, in *To Kill a Mockingbird* the words 'negro' and 'nigger' are used. You have learnt that these are derogatory terms that made Black people feel like they were the 'underdog'. 'Negro' is no longer in use instead the 'politically correct' or acceptable term to use is 'African-American'.

L3- Ma'm but what about 'Niggas with Attitude'!

L4- On T.V. and in rap songs they say, 'What's up, Nigga'!

T- Yes, it's African-American slang, it's a way of asserting one's identity. It's an example of how language has evolved. It may not be used in a demeaning way but some people may have a problem with the use of the word. Here in the 'New' South Africa certain words are no longer politically correct in order to create a balance in power relations through the use of language -'bantu' (outdated and racist) 'crippled' (differently-abled), 'deaf and dumb' (deaf).

**Reflection: The use of slang by me, the teacher, was to learners uncharacteristic and incongruous, but worked well since it seemed to set the tone for the discussion, somehow giving learners licence to be more expressive of their opinions than usual. However, I did not allow the discussion to disintegrate into one on slang but steered it towards a discussion of language so that different examples of the relationship between language and power could be covered.**

6. The following conversation is based on cultural beliefs (Discussion Box 8):

T- In my early years as a teacher I encountered African learners for the first time in my class and on one particular occasion I reprimanded an African learner for reporting late to class and remembered telling him: 'Look at me when I talk to you!' The learner continued to look at the floor. It was only later that I discovered that I had insulted the learner as it is disrespectful in Zulu culture to look at an adult in the eye when speaking to them. I had imposed a western cultural belief: that in order to show respect, you needed to look at an adult when speaking to him or her, on a learner whose culture practiced the opposite.

L- Yes Ma'm in my Zulu culture it's also disrespectful to speak to an elder in English.

7. Informed learners that Fairclough's Three Dimensional Model (please see Annexure D6), Luke and Freebody's Four Dimensional Model (please see Annexure D4), would be experimented with in deconstructing texts in the next lesson.

#### **Lesson 4 (a): 9/09/03 (Please see Annexure D 4)**

1. Learners were told that before working with community newspapers they would first have to become familiar with some of the theories of Critical Literacy. This will be done through the examination of the concept of stories and then specific fairy tales. To introduce the concept of stories, I spoke about our lives being bound up in stories. Stories in the newspaper, stories on the bus or taxi to school, stories on television, stories learners tell as to why they don't have their homework to hand in and so on. Stories project to us aspects of the society we live in, they transmit culture and ideas. Focused on how texts position readers and how we are given a sense of self and identity through such positioning. I used the example that they all have identities as 'learners' because they participate in the discourses of education.

2. In addressing the way texts position us, the following two questions were asked:

a) 'What is the text assuming that we know and/or value?'

This question addresses the need for 'confirmation'. I used Misson's example:

'It was one of those days when....'.

'It was one of those days when thunder lurks around and you know it's going to break the clouds wide open by the time nightfall comes.'

'It was one of those days when you knew from the moment you got up that the shit was sure as hell going to hit the fan.'

Learners were able to see how the above statement invites the reader to contribute to the text using his/her own experience and were asked to write down one example of how they would conclude the sentences. The following are some of the responses that were elicited:

- It was one of those days when everything began normally but little did I know that my life would change forever.
- It was one of those days when I didn't want to get up.
- It was one of those days that seemed like I got up from the wrong side of the bed.
- It was one of those days when everything seemed to go wrong.
- It was one of those days when I felt alive, like the first day of spring after a long and cold winter.
- It was one of those days when I pulled the covers back over my head.

b) 'What kind of 'experience' is the text offering us and what is its purpose in putting us through that experience?'

Learners were told that two of the ways that this is done is through our involvement with various characters through observation, identification and attraction and anticipating how a story will end. To allow them to understand this better, and to introduce the theme of Segment 3, I asked the class what fairy tales they read in their pre-school and primary school days. Learners enthusiastically named mainly European fairy tales that included:

- *Jack and the Beanstalk*
- *Little Red Riding Hood*
- *Cinderella*
- *Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*
- *Sleeping Beauty*
- *The Three Little Pigs*

3. The following conversation emerged on gender positioning in fairy tales (Discussion Box 9):

T- How do all these fairy tales begin?  
L- (Loud chorus) 'Once upon a time...'  
T- How do these fairy tales end?  
L- '...happily ever after' (was the uproarious response that the class seemed to relish.)  
T- Now these are what we call conventions: 'It was one of those days...',  
'Once upon a time...', '...and they lived happily ever after.'  
Most of these stories work like this: a damsel (young woman) is in distress, a knight in shining armour or a Prince Charming (young man) comes to the rescue and they live happily ever after.

4. I discussion ensued about how women were positioned as weak, helpless, in need of rescue and how men, because they were doing the rescuing, were positioned as stronger, more capable, with the ability to take charge and lead.

5. Next, I explored the idea of how learners were limited in the types of stories they read which may have had a sub-conscious influence on their actions. The following conversation is based on the kinds of stories learners read when they were young (Discussion Box 10):

T- The fairy tales that you had access to as young children were European, with mainly white characters. Did you encounter any other kinds of fairy tales in your early years like Indian fairy tales and African fairy tales. Andile were there no African stories that you were exposed to when you were in primary school?  
L1- I attended an Indian primary school but my grandmother used to tell me African stories like the story of the 'Zim Zim' (Affirmation from other African learners who seemed to identify with what Andile said).  
T- Yes, Zinhle?  
L2- Ma'm, I also went to an Indian primary school and we read stories about Diwali and Rama and Sita (other learners who were in the same school demonstrated signs of agreement).

6. Some learners said that they were exposed to religious stories either by their parents or grandparents or at church, temples or Madressa (Islamic religious classes usually conducted in the afternoons). I introduced texts containing African and Indian stories which I took to class. Stories like *Madiba Magic: Nelson Mandela's Favourite Stories for Children* (2002), *Time for Telling: a collection of stories from around the world* (1992) and *Indian Stories* (1994). A discussion followed that highlighted the fact that there were stories, other than the European ones, that were more closely related to their own worlds.

7. A rhetorical question intended to make learners think about the educational choices that were made for them was posed: was the study of European fairy tales a deliberate move by apartheid curriculum planners to impose a western culture on other cultural denominations?

8. Learners were told that the following session would look at fairy tales in a completely new light.

#### **Lesson 4 (b): 16/10/03 (Please see Annexure D 4)**

1. The second session of this lesson was conducted on 16/10/03. Knowing that learners would not complete the group work in a single session, I made arrangements for learners to report early to class, during the break preceding the session, and for them to remain during the afternoon registration which followed the session.

2. Briefly revised aspects of the previous segment. The attention of learners was drawn to the fact that in order to work with new texts, they had to draw on other texts in a more complex way and that this engagement with their past knowledge of fairy tales was 'Intertextuality at work'.

3. European fairy tales like *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* were discussed to illustrate how they have influenced our lives, and shaped the way we think, especially about our gender roles. The idea of the beautiful damsel in distress as a fragile, helpless woman who a 'Knight in shining armour', or a strong, brave and handsome 'Prince Charming' will appear on his white horse to rescue after which they will ride off into the sunset together and 'live happily ever after' was explored in greater detail. This fantasy idea that is instilled in young minds creates unrealistic expectations of men and marriage, for example, reference to a 'fairy tale' wedding and the notion that beauty must conform to a specific feminine image of being thin and fair-skinned, for example: 'mirror, mirror on the wall who's the fairest of them all?'

4. Learners' prior knowledge of the plot of the original story was activated before I read a modern retelling of *The Three Little Pigs* (Muir, 1993) and *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig* (Trivizas, 1993).

Some responses from learners after the readings:

- Why can't we study fairy tales instead of Shakespeare (murmurs of approval).
- This is not boring.
- Yeah, these stories are really cool.

**Reflection: From the expression on learners' faces I could tell that they enjoyed the reading of the stories. Perhaps it was like a trip down memory lane for learners – took them back to their childhood.**

5. Learners had to briefly analyse all three stories in their groups using Luke and Freebody's (1997) Four Resources Model (please see Annexure D4). Thereafter, each learner had to complete an individual worksheet (please see Annexure D4 ) which was aimed at placing each of the stories into perspective. Finally, a group Venn Diagram (please see Annexure D4), comparing and contrasting the three versions of the popular tale had to be completed. The Venn Diagram entailed searching for the common features of the three stories. Each group was given copies of each story and each learner was given a copy of the tasks mentioned above which were explained by me as clearly as possible.

Some learners' responses at having to analyse the stories:

- L- Why can't we read more stories.
- L- Why do we have to spoil the fun with all this work.
- T- Don't worry. The exercises were designed to make you see aspects of the story in a different light, you will be able to understand better.

6. The group leader/ scribe recorded specific aspects of the deconstruction process and later completed a worksheet with group members. Groups operated democratically and rotated group leaders if they wished to.

7. The following questions from the Four Resources Model that I thought would be difficult for learners to grasp were clarified:

a) *'How do I crack this text?'*

Learners were told that they needed to view the text as a code that they had to break in order to understand it fully. What did they have to do to understand the text fully? For example, what words or expressions did they need to find the meanings of?

b) *What are the patterns and conventions that are repeated?*

The terms 'Patterns' and 'conventions' were explained. Learners were reminded of the earlier discussion: the 'Once upon a time ...' convention. This simply meant that certain ideas were repeated in the text, for example, in the adaptations of *The Three Little Pigs*, common to all three stories, was the pattern: each time a house was built there was an attempt to blow it down or have it destroyed.

c) *What cultural values are contained in this text? and What are the cultural meanings that can be constructed from this text?*

Learners thought that culture was ethnic culture, like 'Indian culture' and 'African culture' where cultural symbols were more distinct and identifiable. I explained that culture and cultural values extended to the customs, way of life, traditions, background, language of any society. British culture was prevalent in the fairy tales. Frank Muir's retelling of *The Three Little Pigs* was used as an example: The cultural values included the names of the pigs because they were born on a Christian holy day, Good Friday: 'Hot', 'Cross' and 'Bun', taken from the word 'hot-cross bun' eaten during Easter. Also, cultural meanings were contained in the description of the resident cat as being from a 'posh', British school which tells us that the kind of school one attends in Britain ensures respect and even social mobility. The mention of the teacosity with the sequined message, 'Gang Easy Wi' the tea leaves, d'ye Ken?' shows a British enunciation not easy to comprehend. 'Pop' culture was highlighted by the fact that the pigs wanted to form a rock band called: 'Bean Bag Wolfy and the Pork Scratchings'.

8. After this explanation, learners were informed to keep the responses to the questions as brief and to the point as possible.

9. When the group work began, I walked around from group to group and observed that learners struggled with the idea of getting started since they were not used to group work. I saw the need to direct each group and went from group to group guiding them.

10. Difficulty with the wording of some of the questions. Learners were able to answer the questions after I provided explanations. I worked with each group explaining questions they did not fully understand. Questions 3, 7, 9 and 10 of The Four Resources Model seemed difficult to some groups. I decided that it would be easier for learners to complete the individual worksheets during the group discussion and then go on to the Venn Diagram and Four Resources Model.

11. Groups were advised to use different colours to show the different stories on the Venn Diagram which they had to draw on large flip-chart paper provided for them. Learners were told to use key words and not full sentences to show the similarities. All groups, with the exception of one, took my advice and used different colours to represent the different texts. Thus similarities and differences could be clearly distinguished making interpretation of the diagrams during the presentation session very simple.

**Reflection: I tried to complete too many exercises in this lesson. In retrospect, I think that the Venn Diagram should have been left out since it was similar to the worksheet and time-consuming. I should have spent more time on the Four Resources Model which asked pertinent questions related to Critical Literacy and so was more meaningful, not that all was lost. The general feeling, I think, is that learners comprehended most of it. I should have looked more closely at the wording of the worksheet, as well. Learners were right. Questions 3, 7, 9 and 10 were difficult for the average Grade 11 child to comprehend. I think the problem was in the way the questions were phrased.**

**Reflection: Group work can be stressful. I had to be on my toes. Learners cannot be left to their own devices. The guidance and input from the teacher are crucial. I found that I interacted in a more meaningful way with learners and some learners who were experiencing difficulty could get assistance either from me or from other learners in the group. Also, even those that are generally quieter than others got an opportunity to speak. I saw Priya interacting with members in her group. Normally she is painfully shy. I'm not used to that buzz (noise) though. Fortunately, we are in the Library and not in the classroom.**

12. Groups were informed that they needed to complete and consolidate the activities in preparation for the report-back session that would take place the next time we met.

#### **Lesson 4 (c): 29/10/03 (Please see Annexure D 4)**

1. Group leaders were reminded, prior to this session, to have all the resources ready for the report-back.
2. The following is a summary of comments that emerged from all groups for each question of the Group Worksheet:

Q.	Summary of comments by groups.
1	T 2: Wolf is a 'softie' and a 'good guy'; T 3: role reversal.
2	T 2: suited to older readers, more difficult words eg. Commodious (p.24); Contains wit suited to adults.
3	T 2: Wolf-dismisses stereotype of being big, bad. T3: Pig is bad, wolves-victims.
4	T2: Wolf- not sly and cunning, gentle. T3: Pig- wily, wolves- sweet, innocent.
5	T2: Insight is shown into 'Wolfy' T3: Explores transformation of pig.
6	T2:Most hilarious. T3:Role reversal creates humour.
7	T1: classic, iconic. T2: Most creative of the three (detail). T3: Well written and illustrated.
8	Development of the narrative of a fairy tale is employed in all three. Also, the convention: 'Once upon a time...'
9	T2: Challenges all aspects from names of pigs to nature of the wolf and British society. T3: Role reversal.
10	T2: 'Wolfy' and pigs form a band. T3: Pig and wolves become friends.

2. The following emerged from an analysis of the Venn Diagrams that groups presented. The characteristics that were common to all three texts were:

- Each story personified animals.
- Three houses were built each time.
- There are attempts to destroy each of the three houses.
- The first two houses were always destroyed but the third was indestructible.
- The three pigs/wolves were sent into the forest by their mother albeit for different reasons.

3. The feature that was common to Texts 1, 3 only was that they showed the wolf and three pigs, while Text 2 cast a pig and three wolves. The common aspects of Texts 2 and 3 only, showed reconciliation among characters in the end. These texts also use the ideas of role reversal, with Text 2 showing the pig as evil and Text 3 portraying the wolf as a harmless 'gentlewolf' in contrast to the original story. In highlighting the similarities, differences between stories also emerged.

4. The report-back based on the Four Resources Model revealed the following:

a) Discussion of Resource 1: 'Developing Resources as a Code Breaker'. Learners generally felt that they could understand this aspect better if they used all three questions together. Groups arrived at similar conclusions: that although all three stories were different, one was the traditional fairy tale and the other two were subversions of that tale. Text 1 was used as a point of reference to show how the other texts differed from it and in what ways. Although there were similarities among each text, it was how they were different to Text 1 that set them apart and so they had to be 'cracked' separately.

b) Discussion of Resource 2: 'Developing Resources as a Text Participant', the question: *What are the cultural meanings that can be constructed from this text?* had already been addressed, however, learners added that in Text 3, the pigs played 'croquet', 'battledore' and 'shuttlecock', which were British games that were unfamiliar to them, thus constructing a British version of reality. I asked learners how they felt when they heard those 'culturally

specific' words? The following were some of the responses:

- Lost.
- It makes me want to know the meanings.
- At that point I don't understand what is being said.
- Like a break in transmission when you are watching television.

The question that elicited good discussion was: *Are boys and girls positioned differently by the text?* Many confused the question and focused on the characters in the text and not on themselves as readers and how they would react to the text. Nevertheless, the following is a conversation on gender positioning that ensued (Discussion Box 11):

**Group 1 spokesperson-** In Texts 1 and 3, except for the mother all other characters are males. In Text 2 there is the mother, Bun, one of the three pigs, and the cat.  
**T-** What roles do these three characters play? Let's hear from another group.  
**Group 2 spokesperson-** Well the mother is caring, the three pigs don't have to leave home forever like in the other stories. She sends them far away, into the forest, to practice in their band because she can't tolerate the noise they make. Bun is cleverer than her two brothers. Even the cat is seen as clever and the other animals, like the wolf, listen to her even though what she says is not right.  
**T-Text 3** is seen as affirming women since 'Bun', the female pig, was portrayed as intelligent while her brothers, 'Hot', and 'Cross', are quarrelsome and bad-tempered respectively. Now remember that the question is *Are boys and girls positioned differently by the text?* not **in** the text. So, this view of 'Bun' positions, especially female readers, as being able to identify with her character. The story also highlights essential gender differences that may make some males disagree with the way the male pigs are portrayed. Do girls and boys see the texts in different ways?

c) Discussion on Resource 3: 'Developing Resources as a Text User' focused on the fact that Text 3 was mainly suited to older readers because of its difficult vocabulary in places and the aspirations of the pigs to be rock stars, which is more suited to teenagers. However, learners felt that it was one of the best and most hilarious stories they had read in a long time, one that would have a broad appeal. Text 2 was definitely for older readers because of the language that was used and the satire that it employed. Learners were informed that when texts are constructed they are done with specific audiences in mind.

d) Discussion on Resource 4: 'Developing Resources as a Text Analyst and Critic'- two groups were able to deduce that in Texts 2 and 3, the writers intended to make us view 'taken for granted situations' differently through role reversal. The Pig in Text 3 became the 'bad guy' and the 'cute and cuddly' wolves his victims. Then, in Text 2 the idea of pigs wanting to start a band provides a different, modern perspective and the wolf is actually a 'good guy' although he follows the pattern of destroying the first two houses and attempting to destroy the third, he does not do so with malicious intent. Even his name 'Bean Bag Wolfy' has a softer 'ring' to it. Therefore, the concept of the stereotype of the wolf as the 'bad guy' is dispelled by both Texts 2 and 3.

### **Lesson Plan 5 (a): 29/01/04 (Please see Annexure D 5)**

1. Relieved to be resuming the project with the same class. Informed learners that now that they were in Grade 12, I was aware of the syllabus constraints and the Community Newspaper Project would be integrated into the English Language syllabus. However, the methodology used would be different. Lessons were conducted in my classroom and not on the library, as in 2003. Desks arranged in advance to suit group work. Media files were

returned to learners and they were given a brief feedback, below, on the results of the questionnaires that they had completed the previous year regarding their newspaper reading habits (please see Annexure A).

- *The Rising Sun* and *Chatsworth Tabloid* were each read by 20 learners on a regular basis.
- The most frequently read mainstream newspapers were the *Sunday Times* (11), *Sunday Tribune* (13), the *Daily News* (12) and *POST* (8).
- This meant that less than half the class read mainstream newspapers (and mainly weekly newspapers) on a regular basis.
- Most read the front page first followed by the Sport section and Horoscopes.
- The majority felt that community newspapers were important because it kept them 'up-to-date' with local news.
- Most agreed that the community newspaper was instrumental in shaping the views and opinions of residents on various issues affecting the community and that it had an important role to play.
- In comparing mainstream newspapers to community newspapers the majority said that mainstream newspapers were of a superior quality.
- Many believed that just by providing a free newspaper to the people, the community newspapers were giving back but that more could be done by producing better quality newspapers and organising more charity events for the people of Chatsworth.

2. The attention of learners was drawn to the fact that the majority of the class read mainstream Sunday newspapers only. The community newspapers were read more regularly by learners considering that most had access to at least two community newspapers per week. As a result, these publications had a relatively strong sub-conscious influence, shaping their identity as a people who belonged to a specific community that was largely homogenous.

3. Work covered in the previous segments, that is, the theories inherent in CDA: Genre Theory, Reader Response Theory, Intertextuality and Critical Language Awareness were revised so that learners could keep these in mind during the general deconstruction of newspapers.

4. In deconstructing the newspapers, international, national, regional and local publications were used (please see Annexure D5). The profiles of mainstream South African and community newspapers were provided to groups.

5. Learners were informed of the following:

- original text is filtered through a hierarchy including copy-editor, sub-editor, layout-editor and editor-in-chief making it possible to reject, interfere with, cut and distort the original text in line with editorial policy (this is what can also be considered to be an **intertextual chain**);
- pressure to interfere with the news may come from government or business;
- the press uses a visual channel, its language is written and it draws upon technologies of photographic reproduction, graphic design, and printing which is a frozen mode, less personal than electronic media;
- press is a profit making organisation.

6. Each group was provided with one British newspaper as these were in short supply. Groups were told to analyse three newspapers each from a different category: one British newspaper, one South African mainstream newspaper and one community newspaper. Guided learners regarding the selection of community newspapers so that not all groups chose the same community newspaper. Time was not sufficient to analyse three newspapers. Since groups had commenced with a deconstruction of the British newspapers, they were told

to complete that activity but that only one subsequent newspaper would need to be analysed. The two groups that chose the *Sunday Tribune* (16/11/2003) and *Sunday Times* (16/11/2003) respectively, as mainstream newspapers, were asked to deconstruct those newspapers only and not the community newspapers. Of the remaining three groups, one analysed *The Rising Sun* (20-26/01/04), one the *Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04) and one the *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* (15/01/04) and *The Express* (mid-January 2004) as those two community newspapers had fewer pages.

8. Learners were asked to analyse newspaper according to: ownership, front page and masthead, size, thickness, content, advertising supplements, other supplements, and overall quality. Groups had to complete group worksheets for each of the newspapers that was deconstructed (please see Annexure D5). The worksheet examined production of the newspaper, the various sub-sections within it, pictures, advertising, and other aspects. The worksheet, and the analysis of the similarities, differences, interesting or distinguishing features of the various publications formed the basis of the group presentations that would follow.

**Lesson Plan 5 (b): 30/01/04 (Please see Annexure D 6)**

1. Group leaders made their presentations to the class and at the end each group was assessed by me in the form of a rating scale (please see Annexure D5) based on the groups' overall level of analysis, understanding and the quality of presentation.

2. Deconstruction of mainstream newspapers according to groups

	BRITISH NEWSPAPERS	S.A. SUNDAY AND COMMUNITY
Group 1	The Sunday Telegraph (2/11/2003)	Sunday Tribune (16/11/2003)
Group 2	The Independent on Sunday (9/11/2003)	<i>Sunday Times</i> (16/11/2003)
Group 3	<i>The Mail</i> (16/11/2003)	<i>The Rising Sun</i> (20-26/01/04)
Group 4	<i>Metro</i> (1/06/03)	Chatsworth Tabloid (21/01/04)
Group 5	<i>Metro</i> (19/11/2003)	Chatsworth Sun Shopper (15/01/04) and <i>The Express</i> (mid-January 2004)

4. The following is a summary of a comparison between two South African Sunday newspapers (Discussion Box 12):

T- Let's compare the two South African newspapers first.  
 L1- They are similar to each other in size, bulk, advertising, news content and the supplements (*Sunday Times Lifestyle* and *Sunday Tribune's SM Magazine* are similar and the *Extra* and *Herald* are for Indian readers).  
 L2- But I think the *Sunday Times* (16/11/2003) is better, it is more colourful and has a nice magazine.  
 L3- The *Sunday Tribune* (16/11/2003) has more news about KwaZulu-Natal.

5. The following is a conversation based on a deconstruction of British newspapers (Discussion Box 13):

T- What about the British Sunday newspapers?  
 L1- I think *The Sunday Telegraph* (2/11/2003) is the best.  
 L2- No, *The Independent on Sunday* (9/11/2003) looks classy. I think it's for rich and intelligent people. The articles are so long and there are hardly any pictures and less advertising than other papers.  
 T- Did you notice that the British newspapers don't have advertising inserts like the South African papers.  
 L3- *The Mail* (16/11/2003) is like a gossip newspaper.  
 T- That is why it's called a tabloid and the size is smaller. Also, the headlines take up more space than the articles. It is sensationalist, it contained many stories that covered scandals, for example, 'Blair faces relationship smear in aide's divorce' in reference to the British Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair.  
 L4- And that picture – Ma'm, that is bad! [referring to a picture of a man covering a woman's breasts with his hands in *The Mail* (16/11/2003)]  
 T- Do you think that it's fine to publish a picture like that in a newspaper?  
 L4- I think that it's embarrassing, especially if your parents are around.  
 L5- Like when you're watching T.V. with your parents and a love scene comes on- it's very uncomfortable.  
 T- What about the look of the British newspapers compared to the South African newspapers?  
 L6- The British newspapers are narrow compared to the South African Sunday papers.  
 T- Yes, although they are also broadsheets, their width is smaller.  
 L7- The paper seems so smooth and of a better quality than the South African papers.  
 T- Did you also notice the way they are bound? The British newspapers are more compact.

6. The following is a brief conversation based on Chatsworth community newspapers (Discussion Box 14):

T- Let's examine the community newspapers quickly.  
 L1- *The Rising Sun* (26/01/04) is the thickest.  
 T- Even if you remove the advertising inserts, the newspaper still has more pages than the other community newspapers, although quite a bit of it is still advertising.  
 L2- Ma'm, *The Rising Sun* has more adverts than any of the other newspapers, even the overseas ones.  
 T- What does that tell you?  
 L3- *The Rising Sun* owners are very rich.  
 T- You may be right. Remember what I told you earlier, newspaper companies don't make their money from the price of a newspaper but from advertising. What about the other community newspapers?  
 L4- *The Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04) has sixteen pages and *The Express* (mid-January 2004) and *Chatsworth Sun Shopper* (15/01/04) have only eight pages of mainly advertising.

7. Group assessments based on my overall interaction with the groups during this group work session and not only on the five-minute presentation by group leaders:

- Group 1 → 3-3-4-4 T (14)
- Group 2 → 3-3-4-3 T (13)
- Group 3 → 3-3-3-4 T (13)
- Group 4 → 3-3-3-3 T (12)
- Group 5 → 2-2-3-3 T (10)

**Reflection: Groups 1 and 2 had a very good understanding of text. Four out of five groups had an average understanding of discursive practice. The presentations of**

Groups 1 and 3 were excellent with ideas conveyed clearly with their group worksheets completed in greater detail. Group 5 not as committed as other teams. Identified three boys who preferred to speak rather than write. The other members attempted to help. As facilitator, I found myself spending more time assisting Group 5 than any of the other groups. However, not disruptive and did not compromise the project in any way.

### Lesson Plan 6 (a): 20/02/04 (Please see Annexure D 6)

1. The three most popular community newspapers were chosen for learners to deconstruct: *The Rising Sun*, *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *Chatsworth Express*.

Reflection: I looked forward to the opinions and observations regarding these publications of isiZulu speaking learners who were not residents of Chatsworth.

2. The following Critical Literacy Theories were further simplified in order for learners to use them with the CDA model in a more practical way during the deconstruction of community newspapers:

Intertextuality: *intertextual* chain social context and text affect each other which in turn structure that is used. For example, one will use formal language structures in writing a business letter as opposed to informal language usage in constructing a letter to a close friend.

Genre Theory: best way to understand various genre of texts is to closely examine text consumption (which is part of the CDA model). How do learners from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds interact with language in a text?

Reader Response Theory: The reader is no longer a passive recipient of the ideas in a text but an active participant.

3. Each learner was given a set of worksheets and three sets of questions based on each dimension that simplified the 3-D CDA Model (please see Annexure D6). Groups used the worksheets to direct the deconstruction of newspapers. Also given a sheet of large chart paper on which three huge embedded boxes had to be drawn so that comments of group members and answers to some of the questions for each dimension could be written in to show how *Text*, *Discursive Practice* and *Social Practice*, were connected. The group scribes were asked to use different colours to indicate similarities and differences.

4. The community newspapers were deconstructed by groups as follows:

- Group 1- *The Rising Sun* ( 21-27/10/03)
- Group 2- *The Rising Sun* (11-17/11/03)
- Group 3- *Chatsworth Tabloid* (21/01/04)
- Group 4- *Chatsworth Tabloid* (4/02/04)
- Group 5- *The Express* (mid- January 2004)

5. Prior to the group deconstruction, a brief discussion on the following was conducted to assist learners with their analyses:

- (a) Discourse as Text: examined the verbal and visual aspects of the newspaper as a whole.
- (b) Discursive Practice: text production, distribution, and consumption: analysed the market within which community newspapers operated.

(c) Social Practice: examined social and cultural contexts.

Briefly discussed the history of Indians in South Africa and mentioned the publications that constituted the Indian press in South Africa, for example, *Post*, *Sunday Tribune Herald* and the *Sunday Times Extra*. The history of Chatsworth was also briefly discussed. Learners could refer to books like *The Poors of Chatsworth* (Desai, 2000), *From Canefields to Freedom: A Chronicle of Indian South African Life* (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2000), *The Indentured Indian in Natal: 1860-1917* (Henning, 1993), and copies of Chatsworth's first comprehensive community newspaper, *Chatsworth SUN*.

5. Observed that tasks would not be completed by the end of the session as all groups had not completed Questions 2 and 3 on *Text* and the questions on *Discursive Practice* and *Social Practice*. Decided that since the composition of the community newspapers had been covered in the previous segment and the analysis of individual articles and pictures from community newspapers were to follow in the next phase, Questions 2, 3, and 4 of *Text* should not be attempted. The questions on *Discursive Practice* and *Social Practice* should also be left out as a class discussion would follow the report-back during which the important aspects of these sections would be covered. Group scribes recorded the answers to each question in writing and presented a summarised version during the report-back session. Learners had to complete only Question 1 of *Text* and the Critical Discourse Analysis chart before the next session.

#### **Lesson Plan 6 (b): 23/02/04 (Please see Annexure D 6)**

1. Made arrangements for learners to remain during the lunch break so that the report-back session could be meaningfully concluded. Selected only three of the five groups to report back, one on each of the three newspapers since two were working with *The Rising Sun* and two with *Chatsworth Tabloid*. The selection was based on my observations of which group had more in-depth, meaningful information on the publications although the groups did not differ significantly in their level of analysis.

**Reflection: What began to emerge at this stage was that the groups, having been structured democratically, were constituted of learners of similar aptitudes and attitudes. Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 were more committed to the tasks than Group 5. I guessed that Group 5 had asked to analyse *The Express* because it was the leanest newspaper but they only went as far as the other groups in their discussion. I had intended to again use the group assessment sheet but since all group work tasks would not be completed, this also had to be forfeited.**

2. Groups that did not report back supplemented the information presented by the selected groups. I did not provide reasons why I selected specific groups to present but made it appear as if it was a random choice, however they were based on the previous group scores. Group leaders of Groups 1, 3 and 5 were asked to present using the CDA chart with responses written within the appropriate boxes.

3. Responses to Question 1.1: Group 1:

*School-girls' killers given life sentence (p2)*  
*ABH and iTalk celebrates World Hunger Day (p12)*  
*Crossmoor residents stand-up against crime (p4)*

Group 2 added: *Chatsworth: A drug dealers dream?*

*Response from R. K. Khans against allegations*  
*Charitable organisations reaps rewards of CAC (Chatsworth Athletic Club)*

No errors in the headlines of the two editions of *Chatsworth Tabloid* and *The Express*. Common errors made in the headlines were mainly related to concord or the use of the apostrophe. Each error was discussed and corrected. Discussed the use of the headline: *Response from R. K. Khans against allegations*. A common error by people of Indian origin, for example, ‘Games’ for ‘Game’ in reference to the large retail outlet.

4. Responses to Question 1.2 on the sections found in Chatsworth community newspapers were collated from the feed-back of all five groups and reflected below:

<i>The Rising Sun</i>	<i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i>	<i>The Express</i>
News	News	News
Advertising	Advertising	Advertising
Advertorials	Advertorials	Advertorials
Letter to the Editor	Cupid’s Corner	Astrology
Health and Beauty	Lifestyle	Classifieds
School News	Usha Uncut (column)	Sport
Events Guide	What’s On	
Star Guide	Your Stars with Elma	
Classifieds	Classifieds	
Sport	Sport	
Motoring	Crime Round-up	

*The Express* was devoid of news and genres other than advertising. The other two newspapers carry more articles but are still dominated by advertisements and advertorials. Pointed out to learners that the ‘Health and Beauty’ genre was made up of advertorials of businesses and the ‘Classifieds’ section could also be seen as advertising. The *Chatsworth Tabloid* did not publish ‘School News’ or a ‘Letters to the Editor’ column at the time, but fulfilled a social responsibility by publishing a ‘Crime Round-up’ column.

5. Response to Question 1.3: Advertising dominated each of the community newspapers.

6. In response to Question 1.4 is a list of words, shown below, that are relevant to Chatsworth and Indians that are used in community newspapers:

<b><i>The Rising Sun (21-27/10/03) and The Rising Sun (11-17/11/03):</i></b>
Punjabi, saries, kurthi top, halaal, Diwali, Deepavali, Ramadaan Mubarak, agarbathi, dhall, vedda, ghee, Lakshmi, Arena Park, Bayview, Crossmoor, Woodhurst, ABH, Rajbansi
<b><i>Chatsworth Tabloid (21/01/04) and Chatsworth Tabloid (4/02/04):</i></b>
Andhra culture, Raam Bhajan, Bharatha Natayam, sharara, Fragrance Street Market, MF, Visvin Reddy, Lotus FM, Bhangra sessions
<b><i>The Express (mid-January 2004):</i></b>
Kavady, harmonium, thabla, dholak

The majority of African learners were confused by the words on the list. Siya, an isiZulu learner, said that he had gone to school with Indian learners from Grade 1 but for the first time he realised how much he did not know about Indian culture. Some Indian learners, too, had not heard words like ‘dholak’ before.

The definitions listed below encouraged a lively class discussion:

The Punjabi, sari, kurthi top, sharara - garments worn by Indian women
Halaal - kosher food for a person of the Islamic faith to eat
Diwali /Deepavali - reference to the Hindu Festival of Lights
Ramadan Mubarak- the month-long fast observed by people of the Islamic faith
Agarbathi- incense
Dhall-dried split pea, a staple dish among South Africans of Indian origin
Vedda- a flat chilli-bite made from ground dhall
Ghee- form of butter from which the salt has been removed
Lakshmi - Hindu goddess of wealth and prosperity
Arena Park, Bayview, Crossmoor and Woodhurst - Chatsworth neighbourhood Units 6, 2, 11 and 10 respectively
ABH-acronym for Aryan Benevolent Home, a home for children and the elderly that has a rich and long history.
Rajbansi- a controversial Indian politician- leader of the MF (Minority Front), who was minister in the House of Delegates and who reinvented himself after apartheid and is still active in politics. He regularly features in <i>The Rising Sun</i> and <i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> , using these publications as mouthpieces for his political views.
Visvin Reddy- equally controversial local politician who crossed the floor from the Minority Front to the Democratic Alliance to the African National Congress.
Andhra culture refers to the culture of Telegu-speaking Indians who originated from the South Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. The Raam Bhajan being part of this culture is a session of song and the playing of Indian drums as a thanksgiving to God.
The Bharatha Natyam - an ancient classical Indian dance form.
The Fragrance Street Market - a place where informal traders can sell their wares.
Radio Lotus - a national radio station serving the Indian community.
Bhangra - a form of modern Indian dancing, usually to songs from Bollywood movies.
Kavady - a South Indian Hindu religious festival associated with penance through reverence to Hindu deity, Lord Muruga.
The harmonium, tabla and dholak - all Indian musical instruments.

7. Response to Question 1.5: Learner had been told not to count people that appeared obscure in pictures, or those who appeared in advertisements who were clearly not community members. The approximate number of people counted by each of the groups is as follows:

Group 1 - <i>The Rising Sun</i> (21-27/10/03)	- 229
Group 2 - <i>The Rising Sun</i> (11-17/11/03)	- 171
Group 3 - <i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (21/01/04)	- 31
Group 4 - <i>Chatsworth Tabloid</i> (4/02/04)	- 67
Group 5 - <i>The Express</i> (mid- January 2004)	- 29

*The Rising Sun* had almost seven times more heads than the other newspapers, a way of ensuring the popularity of the brand.

8. In discussing Discourse as Text, the Diwali issue of *The Rising Sun* (21-27/10/03) was used to show intertextuality at work in terms of what the publisher assumes about what the reader knows and values? This issue was bulkier than normal because of a wide array of advertisements for:

- Food items especially those used in the making of Indian sweetmeats
- Prayer goods and lamps
- Traditional Indian garments, clothing and jewellery sales
- An endless variety of fireworks

This issue of *The Rising Sun* also contained a series of Diwali messages in full-colour advertisements from the KwaZulu-Natal Ministries of Health, Transport and Works as well as messages from community and religious leaders. Also brought to learners' attention, *Chatsworth Tabloid's* (4/02/04) Valentine's Day Special issue with numerous advertisements relating to that event. Pointed out advertisements in this issue for items like silk and plastic flowers, mugs, little teddy bears and ceramic Valentine's Day ornaments. Assumption that Chatsworth is a community where kitsch sells. Feature issues also occur at other times during the year: Back to School, Easter, Eid (Muslim religious celebration), Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day and Christmas. The items advertised also target a specific class of people.

The example of the advertisement and advertorial for the skin lightener Vedifair Fairness Cream (*The Rising Sun*, October 21-27 2003) (please see Annexure D6) was discussed. Perpetuated the idea among some Indians and also Black South Africans, that fair skin is associated with beauty. This was linked to earlier discussions on fairy tales and gender. In addition, examined the classified sections of all three newspapers which carried advertisements for herbalists and faith healers highlighting the superstitious beliefs that some sections of the community believe in.

9. A discussion of *Social Practice* looked at the different publications (books and newspapers) mentioned earlier pertaining to South Africans of Indian origin. Learners were particularly fascinated with, *From Canefields to Freedom: A Chronicle of Indian South African Life* (Dhupelia, 2000). An examination of this text gave impetus to the discussion on Indian South Africans (Discussion Box 15):

- T- Yes, Zinhle?
- L1- The picture on page 9 (of indentured Indian women who were farm labourers carrying baskets on their heads) reminds me of African women in the rural areas.
- T- Many of the pictures show you that the lives of indentured labourers were not easy. They were basically treated like slaves. By the way, does anyone know when Indians first came to South Africa?
- (Silence) Indians arrived by ship on the shores of Durban in 1860 from different parts of India.
- L2- You know Ma'm I never gave this much thought, 1860 wasn't that long ago. I kinda always think of myself as a South African. I don't really think that I'm Indian, India is just this place far, far away. I know that my forefathers came from there but it's hard to picture.
- T- Andile?
- L3- Ma'm, I know Indians came from India a long time ago but that's it. You don't really think about it. We know that we are different especially from a cultural point of view but that's it.
- T- Tell me, Andile about your experiences of interacting with Indians at school.
- L3- Well, that's a difficult one. Although African and Indian learners get on very well during class time, some of us have been together for years, during the breaks it's different, Indians 'hang out' with other Indians and African learners with other African learners.
- L4- I always thought Indians were rich, business people, but when I came to this school, I saw that Indian learners are from working class homes and some are very poor.
- T- So, that's the stereotype of Indians. It's far from the truth. How do you feel about reading the Chatsworth community newspapers?
- L- Some of it is okay. I get to know about the community in which my school is but I think that it will have more meaning if you are from Chatsworth, then you will understand it better.
- T- Zinhle, what do you think about the community newspapers.
- L- Well, I find parts of it interesting especially if there are pictures of Indian clothes and actresses. I'm into the Bollywood thing. The girls are always lending me Bollywood movies, but I agree with Andile, you have to live in Chatsworth to understand it fully- all those words we discussed earlier, I didn't know most of them.

10. The majority of Indian learners said that they viewed themselves as South Africans first, that apart from Bollywood movies, the food, Indian garments, religion and language which constructed them as 'Indian', India was a place far away that they could not imagine living in. I went on to give learners a brief History of the 'Indian Press' in this country and its role in perpetuating the culture and identity of Indian South Africans. Learners could see that the community newspapers targeted a specific market: Indian South Africans living in Chatsworth almost to the exclusion of other groups of people.

### **Lesson Plan 7: 02/03/04 (Please see Annexure D 7)**

1. Began with a discussion on beauty contests in general on the following aspects:

- types of beauty pageants
- famous beauty queens who used their titles to advance their careers like former 'Miss World' Aishwarya Rai who is now a sought after Bollywood actress
- Proms and Debutantes Balls, which had become an established tradition in most South African schools including Community Secondary, are similar to beauty contests
- various stereotypes practiced in society, for example, those pertaining to Jews, Blacks, Indians, Coloureds and gender were linked to the idea of beauty pageants.

2. The lesson focused on a beauty pageant exclusive to the Indian community, Miss India South Africa. Four of the five newspapers below published pictures of the outgoing Miss India South Africa in different poses and wearing different 'Bollywood-style' outfits by the same fashion house specialising in exclusive 'Indian' garments:

Each group was given copies of the following issues of the newspapers and each learner was provided with photocopies of all five texts:

*The Rising Sun* (12-18/08/03) - Text 1

*Chatsworth Tabloid* (13/08/03) - Text 2

*The Express* (Mid-August 2003) - Text

*Sunday Times Extra* (10/08/03) - Text 4

*Daily News* (7/09/2003) - Text 5 (Carried a picture of Miss India South Africa, in Western clothing, receiving an award)

3. The first task involved groups examining each text and then completing the table containing statements about each.

- Statement 1: all five groups had this correct. Texts 1- 4 appear on the front page.
- Statement 2: All groups agreed that the first four texts focused only on the physical beauty of the outgoing Miss India South Africa while Text 5 shows her receiving a 'Woman of the Year' award for her contribution to uplifting the community.
- Statement 3: The first four texts constructed Miss India South Africa in a glamorous, Bollywood mode.
- Statement 4: learners agreed that the first four texts appealed mainly to Indian South Africans. because of the garments that were worn and the publications in which they appeared. Some also believed that Text 5 appealed predominantly to Indians because there were two people of Indian descent in the picture. Others said that the appeal was broader as the picture appeared in a paper that was not exclusively for Indian people.
- Statement 5: Straightforward response, however, some learners were able to deduce that the fact that the pictures appeared in all three community newspapers around the same time with captions affirming that 'Suhaag House of Fashion' was one of the sponsors of the Miss India South Africa pageant, was an advertising ploy with the possible underlying message: if you too want to look like a 'Miss India South Africa', buy a garment from Suhaag.
- Statements 6: not all learners agreed, some felt the garments were distinctively Indian.

- Statement 7: The following conversation is based on this statement (Discussion Box 16):

L1- I think that the way Miss India South Africa is dressed is the way members of the Indian community dress to certain functions.

T- What are your views, Zinhle?

L2- Ma'm if the shawls are removed from each outfit, they wouldn't look eastern and the outfit in Text 4 is just too revealing. (Most of the girls seemed to agree).

L3- I don't think the way she is dressed promotes Indian culture. Cultural clothes are not so revealing.

L4 (Boy) - I think she looks 'sexy'.

L5 (Boy) - The outfit is 'hot'.

L6- I think I would wear a dress like that. I don't see a problem with it.

T- You need to think about whether casting Indian women, especially, in a Bollywood mode constructs a specific image of them that is not necessarily correct. It stereotypes people's understanding of who Indian South Africans are.

- Statement 8: Miss India South Africa was positioned very differently in Text 5, as a community activist in a suit and not like a beauty queen, like a completely different person, a business executive. Explained that very often people are positioned differently according to the garments they wear as in the case of Miss India South Africa.

4. The second task intended that respondents complete an individual task that required the answering of a series of questions on each of the texts that was not for assessment purposes but to contribute to a subsequent class discussion after which they would complete a creative task, as homework, involving role reversal. However, due to the restrictions on time and the upcoming controlled test, learners requested at the outset, that the homework component of the task be set aside. I agreed to do this as they were told at the beginning of the Project that there was no obligation to complete any task. The homework aspect was read out and discussed so that the idea of role reversal could be reinforced. Since there was an overlap with some of the questions in the preceding class discussion, the forum that followed focused only on Questions 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the task.

- Question 4: learners felt that Texts 1 and 2 had very brief captions while texts 3, 5 had more substantial captions that also covered Miss India South Africa's award as a 'Woman of the Year'. Text 4 was anchored by a more substantial article that covered all aspects of her reign including the 'Woman of the Year' award.
- Question 6: The size of Texts 2, 3, 4 and 5 could be due to the general popularity of Sorisha Naidoo not only as Miss India South Africa but as a local radio disc jockey. I informed the class that given her popularity, the huge pictures were intended to enhance the readership of the newspapers.
- Question 7 and 9: these questions were considered to be related and so were addressed together in the following discussion based on participation in the Miss India S.A. Pageant (Discussion Box 17):

L1 - I don't think that I can enter this competition because I'm an African girl.  
 L2 - None of the boys can participate- obviously.  
 L3 - Although I'm an Indian girl I don't think I stand a chance because I have a short hairstyle and I'm dark in complexion.  
 L4- It's sad to say that in the Indian community many think that only if you are fair skinned you are beautiful.  
 L5- And most Indian girls and women have long hair. My mother says that when she was young girls were not allowed to have short hair styles.  
 T- By show of hands tell me how many of you will not be allowed to participate in this pageant (about twelve learners raise their hands). That's almost half the class that would be excluded for various reasons mainly race and gender. So these pageants can perpetuate discrimination by being sectional, the title 'Miss India South Africa' tells you that. You have also said that it conforms to a stereotypical view on beauty, fair skin, long hair and so on.  
 L6- But Ma'm, I won't mind participating in this pageant because it opens doors for you. Just look at Sorisha Naidoo, she's a radio DJ, she won so many prizes, she won the 'Woman of the Year Award'. Others who won the competition are now in good positions.  
 T- That is definitely another perspective to this pageant.  
 L7- Next year I would like to participate in the Mr India South Africa pageant for the same reason. I think that if you win you become famous and that gives you the advantage over others.  
 T- I think that would apply mainly if you want to follow a career in the entertainment or hospitality industries.

- Question 8: None of the learners knew who owned the rights to this pageant and how do they benefit from the contest. I notified them that the Miss India South Africa pageant was part of a Worldwide Committee and that a former journalist was the chairman of the South African pageant which is intended to promote Indian culture, but it also generates an income for the organisers.

5. Learners were invited to think about whether this beauty pageant could be considered to be a cultural event or not.

6.

**Reflection: The clothes worn by Miss India South Africa embodies the fusion of Indian and Western cultural artefacts which, through the medium of Indian film, has created a 'Bollywood culture'. The community newspapers, in endorsing a particular fashion house that specialises in Bollywood fashion (because it's financially viable), are in effect promoting the discourses of 'Bollywood'. Also, the use of vocabulary like 'sexy' and 'hot' by the boys are not terms that are usually used in reference to cultural garments. The pictures have been produced to result in such sexist responses from males**

### **Lesson Plan 8: 11/03/04 (Please see Annexure D 8)**

1. Tasks planned for this lesson were not too ambitious and all questions were completed by learners. The texts selected for analysis of beauty pageants for very young girls were:

- \* *The Rising Sun*, 13-19/05/03 – Text 1
- \* *Chatsworth Tabloid*, 6/08/03 – Text 2
- \* *The Rising Sun*, 26/08 - 1/09/03 – Text 3

2. In examining potentially damaging cultural and gender stereotypes that are perpetuated by the media through the promotion of the sexualisation of very young girls in these beauty pageants, I wanted learners to focus on the following aspects:

- that the publishers, in invitations to participate in these pageants that appeared in their newspapers, were addressing the parents and not the little girls;
- a detailed examination and comparison of texts was intended to show how the little girls were constructed provocatively and that they were socialised from a young age to conform to stereotypes of the way girls should behave;
- in showing only Indian girls, other races may be reluctant to enter;
- that the publisher stood to gain financially by organising these pageants.

3. The list of statements affirmed by all groups provided the impetus for the following conversation on Texts 1, 2 and 3 (Discussion Box 18):

L1- These girls are made to look like little versions of big girls.  
 L2- Too sexy for their age, look at the way they are posing.  
 L3- They get 'big ideas' before their time. That's why teenage pregnancy is increasing!  
 L4- ...and child abuse.  
 T- Another factor you need to look at is that when girls become obsessed with their appearance at an early age they may believe from early on that a woman is defined by her appearance only and not by her worth. Children should be allowed to enjoy a wholesome childhood. There is no hurry to grow up.

4. A list of seven questions were asked to help direct the class discussion:

- Question 1: All groups said that the publisher of the newspapers and the pageant organisers were the speakers. Three groups were able to infer that it was not the young girls that were spoken to, but rather their parents, especially the mothers, who are attracted by prizes like overseas trips and jewellery as incentives. It was pointed out that very often these children are too young and are unable to make decisions for themselves and the real role-players, the parents, see their dreams of becoming beauty queens realised through their young daughters.
- Question 2: the connotations of "Little Miss..." are of being a prim, feminine young girl, a smaller version of older women or beauty queens.
- Question 3: is addressed in the following conversation on participation in the 'Little Miss...' contests (Discussion Box 19):

L1- If I had a little daughter I would allow her to participate.  
 L2- So would I. I will take pride in dressing her up and seeing her participate.  
 L3- It will build confidence in my child.  
 L1- If the prizes are good, why not!  
 L4- I won't allow my daughter to participate. I think it's stressful to put a young child through that, not to mention the dangers.

- Question 4: Whilst agreeing that the organisers did not deliberately exclude anyone from participating, the fact that only the pictures of young Indian girls are published, learners did point out that this preclude people of other races from participating.
- Question 5: learners acknowledged that the organisers had an ulterior economic motive in running these pageants: advertising, endorsements and increased readership, as these pageants appeal to a large section of the Chatsworth community.
- Question 6: introduced the pictures of the crowning of the Miss India South Africa 2004 and her princesses (*The Rising Sun*, 19-25/08/03; *Chatsworth Tabloid*, 20/08/03) (please see Annexure, D 8) and asked learners to observe these pictures alongside the picture of "Little Miss *Chatsworth Tabloid*." To show learners, that the pageant for young girls was a miniature version of the one for older girls. I also asked learners, in examining the texts, to ask who was behind the lens, prompting the girls to pose in specific ways?

5. Some learners expressed strong views about young girls being depicted in provocative poses in the community newspapers. Some felt that these pageants should be discontinued. They were encouraged to write letters to the editors of the community newspapers expressing their opinions.

**Lesson Plan 9: 12/03/04 (Please see Annexure D 9)**

1. The consolidation of the Community Newspaper Project was concluded in a short period of about thirty minutes taken from a mainstream English lesson. Twenty-eight learners who were present participated in the single activity of this lesson which was the completion of the Evaluation Form which comprised of seven statements and a multiple-choice question that I considered to be important. This consolidation process required that learners reflect on the experience of being involved in the Community Newspaper Project and being exposed to Critical Literacy for the first time. The strengths, weaknesses, and highlights of the Project were outlined culminating in a brief discussion of each.

2. Learners were told not to append their names anywhere on the form to ensure that their identity was kept confidential.

3. The responses to the seven statements on the evaluation form were as follows:

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1] The Community Newspaper Project was well organised.	3	23	2	0	0
2] The facilitator’s instructions and explanations were clear.	20	8	0	0	0
3] Sufficient time was allowed for interactive participation.	0	18	5	5	0
4] The facilitator was knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media.	7	21	0	0	0
5] The Project has made me knowledgeable about Critical Literacy and print media.	0	22	4	2	0
6] The Community Newspaper Project has changed my attitude to Chatsworth community newspapers.	5	17	3	3	0
7] Teacher-centred lessons are better than learner-centred lessons.	12	9	3	4	0
<b>KEY: 1-Strongly agree 2-Tend to agree 3- Neither agree nor disagree 4-Tend to disagree 5- Strongly disagree</b>					

4. During the short discussion that followed the completion of the eight statements, some responses to Statement 7 were justified by learners who said that they did not prefer learner-centred lessons because it forced them to think and work, they preferred teacher-centred lessons because the teacher provided notes and worksheets which they used to study for tests and examinations. With learner-centred lessons they were not so sure what to expect.

5. The choices in response to Statement 8 were as follows:

Understanding Critical Literacy	0%
Fairy tales	36%
Deconstruction of newspapers	0%
CDA and community newspapers	43%
Beauty Contests	18%

6. Not surprised that learners found 'CDA ...' and 'Fairy tales' most interesting as they were the most engaging even for me as facilitator.

7. During the discussion learners said that they enjoyed the project as it made them see things differently. For example, how gender relations are affected by stories like fairy tales, why they did not speak to their teachers and parents in slang. In relation to the community newspapers, Annelene said that she 'counted heads' each time she read the paper and Karthi added that he automatically looked for errors when he read the community newspapers.

8. Was content that I successfully concluded the project with the sample of learners that I intended to use from the beginning.

## ANNEXURE G

### Ethical Clearance Certificate



**UNIVERSITY OF  
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17 OCTOBER 2008

MS. S PATHER (202520408)  
LANGUAGES, LITERACIES, DRAMA & MEDIA EDUCATION

Dear Ms. Pather

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0640/08M**

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been approved for the following project:

*“The use of Critical Literacy theories as an approach to teaching English as a Home Languages to Learn in the FET phase at a Durban Secondary School utilizing community newspapers”*

**PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years**

Yours faithfully

**MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA**

cc. Supervisor (Prof. RJ Balfour)  
cc. Mr. D Buchler

