

Speech and Drama Curriculum Development:

The Perspectives of
A Selection of Drama Teachers in
Kwazulu Natal

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CONTENTS

	Page No.
ABSTRACT	3
DECLARATION	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
CONTENTS	6
CHAPTER 1	
Introduction:	
1.1 South African Educational Context	9
1.2 Educational Transformation	12
1.3.1 Reasons for focus of study	13
1.3.2 Research Questions	13
1.4 Choice of Qualitative Paradigm	15
1.5 Writing Style	17
1.6 Structure of Dissertation	17
CHAPTER 2	
Review of Literature	
2.1 Curriculum and Curriculum Construction	19
2.2.1 An interpretation of knowledge as a social construction	22
2.2.2 The Development of the Subject Speech & Drama in KwaZulu Natal	24
2.3.1 Teachers and the Curriculum	30
2.3.2 Teachers' Mediation of the Curriculum	32
2.4 Curriculum Change	34

CHAPTER 3

Research Design and Research Process

3.1	Getting into the skin of the Qualitative Researcher	37
3.2	Focussing on a suitable topic	38
3.3	The use of the Interview as a tool for Research	41
3.3.1	Sampling	43
3.3.2	Gaining Access	44
3.3.3	The Interview Schedule	46
3.3.4	Mediation of the Interview Schedule	49
3.3.5	Interview Context	51
3.4.1	Interviewing within the context of a school	57
3.4.2	Interviewing within the context of a teacher's home	58
3.4.3	Transcription of Tapes	60
3.5	Analysis of Data	61
3.5.1	Thinking about the Data	63
3.5.2	Data Crunching	65
3.5.3	"Watching them emerge surfacing like dolphins"	67

CHAPTER 4

The perspectives of Speech and Drama Teachers

4.1	The Eurocentric Syllabus	69
4.2	Teachers as Mediators of the Syllabus	74
4.3	Redefining Drama	80
4.4	Minor Themes	95
4.4.1	Emergent Tensions	98
4.4.2	Examinations – 'The tail that wags the dog'	98
4.4.3	Direction vs Open-endedness	101
4.4.4	"Too much Rhetoric too little action"	102

ABSTRACT

The researcher has attempted to gain an understanding of how Drama teachers perceive the teaching of the curriculum and curriculum change. The data were obtained through the use of the qualitative mode of engaging in research.

The researcher, who is also a Drama teacher had come to experience the need for teachers to be given an opportunity to express their views on curriculum as the area of curriculum is complex and always in need of reappraisal. Also, teachers needed a medium through which they could share their perspectives on curriculum.

The researcher collected the relevant information by using the interview context as a means of data collection. Ten Drama teachers responded to questions focussing on curriculum teaching and curriculum change. The Drama teachers' perspectives were recorded and analysed.

Marxist theorists like Bowles and Gintis(1986) view teachers as mere state functionaries and agents of the system. Drama teachers in this study contradicted the view of teachers as technicians within the system. They were not reflective of typical teachers. Rather Drama teachers challenged and mediated the curriculum, they did not accept and abide by the syllabus document and their classroom practice was determined by the immediacy of their particular teaching context.

Finally through engaging in this research study the researcher has achieved the following objectives:

1. An understanding of the view that knowledge is a socially constructed concept.
2. Has provided a medium through which the perspectives of Drama teachers are heard.
3. Has provided an invaluable experience of documenting the processes of qualitative research.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the whole of this thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R.L. Naidu', written in black ink.

R.L. NAIDU

January 1998.

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CHAPTER 5

Analysis of the Data and Conclusions

5.1	Analysis of the Data	103
5.2	Revisiting the Research Process	114
5.3	Conclusions on the Research	120

APPENDICES	123
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REFERENCES	173
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The following areas are covered in the first chapter of this dissertation:

- 1.1 A background to the South African educational context is provided with specific reference to the relationship between education and apartheid.
- 1.2 The social reconstructionist perspective is given focussing specifically on the need to transform South African society through education. People's Education as an example is briefly looked at.
 - 1.3.1 The reasons why the focus of the present research study is on teachers and their perspectives is outlined.
 - 1.3.2 The research questions underlying this research study are outlined.
- 1.4 The focus on the choice of the Qualitative Paradigm for engaging in this research is discussed.
- 1.5 There is brief discussion on the writing style used in the writing of this dissertation.
- 1.6 The structure of the dissertation is outlined.

1.1 A Background to the South African Educational Context

Jansen notes that there are few states in the modern world system which have experienced the intensity of conflict focussed on the school curriculum as in the case of South Africa (1994, p1).

Not until very recently has South African society undergone fundamental changes for the reconstruction and development of a more just and equitable society. Historically, we have been a society bedevilled by racism, sexism and class inequalities. And

schools have been the places where the ideology of the apartheid state was perpetuated and reinforced.

Since 1948, the South African government has practised social engineering on a far greater scale than most other countries (Burman 1986, p5). The Population Registration Act, No.30 of 1950, together with Proclamation 123 of 1967, introduced nine categories into which everyone in the country had to be classified (Burman 1986, p5). The Group Areas Act, No. 41 of 1950, further contributed to these divisive controls by specifying that people had to live in separately allocated areas. Schooling was also affected by divisive controls and until the advent of the recent (1990) models of educational change in admission policy for white government schools, pupils were educated in different schools for different race and language groups. Burman shows how the nature of white children's education in government schools was further prescribed: it was to be 'Christian' and 'National', as defined by the government (Burman 1986, p5). This was obviously designed to entrench certain values based on the philosophy of separate development. In 1967 the Minister of Education, Arts and Science defined these terms during the debate on the National Education Policy Act No. 39 of 1967:

My interpretation of the 'Christian character of education' is that education shall build on the basis of the traditional Western culture and view of life which recognizes the validity of the Biblical principles, norms and values...By 'National' it is understood that education shall build on the ideal of the national development of all citizens of South Africa, in order that our own identity and way of life shall be preserved, and in order that the South African Nation may constantly appreciate its task as part of the Western civilization (Burman & Reynolds 1986, p15).

Teachers and the school curriculum were used to ensure that the state and its hegemony were maintained without too much resistance from the ground.

Yet, when one studies the role that education has played in the perpetuation and reproduction of racism and apartheid, it becomes apparent that reproduction and social

engineering were not achieved in practice. South African schools were also sites of resistance and teachers and pupils were not mere state functionaries, rather they reflected that they were critical enough to question, interpret and to consciously choose to mediate the official curriculum. The following eloquent statement articulated by Cape Town students in 1980 reinforces the above:-

They decide what we are taught. Our history is written according to their ideas. Biology and Physics are taught in our schools but which we cannot apply to our everyday lives. We are not told that most diseases of the workers stem from the fact that they are undernourished and overworked. We are taught biology, but not in the terms of the biology of liberation, where we can tackle the concept of 'race' to prove there is no such thing as 'race.' We are taught geography, but not the geography of liberation. We are not taught that 80% of Africans are dumped on 13% of the land... We are taught accountancy merely to calculate the profits of the capitalists (Molteno, 1987, p5).

Although the above quotation reflects resistance to the curriculum it must be acknowledged however that a lot of the resistance was in the form of boycotts, marches and sit-ins.

South African society and education are presently in transition. It is a society involved in building a new nation and a new citizenry that will reflect the values of hope, human dignity, equality and democracy. For these values to be introduced and inculcated within the attitudes and behaviour of people, schools have to be places where the above transformations take place. It is the researcher's view that it is incumbent on all South Africans, especially teachers, to work deliberately to exorcise and lay to rest the phantoms of apartheid. Davidoff and Van den Berg reiterate this in the following statement:-

Schools are part of society, and are politically important institutions. Part of the task of rebuilding and transforming our society will have to be performed in schools. We, as teachers, have to be very sure that what we are doing helps rather than hinders the process of building a new society. There is no way we

can argue that, because we are educationists, we can keep ourselves out of politics (1990, p7).

1.2 The Viewpoints of the Social Reconstructionist and People's Education

Giroux, a prolific writer and social reconstructionist, argues cogently for the need to use schools as places for reconstruction:-

The reconstructionists viewed schools as deeply implicated in producing those aspects of dominant culture that served to reproduce an unjust and unequal society. At the same time, they recognized that schools were not merely bastions of domination that operated according to the logic of the state. Schools were also seen as contradictory sites, torn between the ideological imperatives of liberal democracy and the dominating values and practices of monopoly capitalism. Inherent in these contradictory ideologies were opportunities for political intervention and struggle. One of the central aims of the social reconstructionists focussed on usurping pedagogical opportunities in schools for learning about the relationship between democracy and empowerment. For the social reconstructionist, schools were not viewed as the only sphere for educational work, but, at the same time, public schools were seen as a crucial sphere around which to fight for the development of a particular kind of democratic citizen (1989, p8-9).

Giroux goes on to add that, moreover, that citizenship education was also about empowering students to struggle against relations of power and privilege that transformed them and others into instruments of oppression (1989, p11).

An important example of educational principles within the South African context that reflect Giroux's basic premises of transformative education is People's Education. People's Education is premised on the integral relationship between education and the broader society - both in progressive educational organisation's understanding of how apartheid has impacted on education and in the understanding of how the transformation of education is related to broader societal transformation. Sisulu argues as follows for the positive impact of People's Education:

People's Education means education at the service of the people

as a whole, education that liberates, education that puts people in command of their lives...every initiative must come from the people themselves, must be accountable to the people and must advance the broad mass of students...in effect this means taking over the schools, transforming them from institutions of oppression into zones of progress and people's power (Sisulu, 1986, p3 in Guiding Principles for NEPI, 1991).

It is not within the scope of the present research to delve into the complex relationship that exists between schooling and the economic base in society. However, the arguments covered thus far in this chapter all point in the direction of the potential that teachers and students possess for enabling and facilitating change. The above arguments allow for people to take control of their lives and become active participants in the processes of change. This is a view that the researcher vehemently supports.

1.3.1 Why the Focus on Teachers?

1.3.2 The Research Questions

Having read widely the researcher had come to know that very little research energy has been spent on studying the teacher's views and perspectives within the school. The researcher was also aware of how knowledge about teacher's own meanings which they assign to their pedagogical practices could be used effectively in the developing of new educational policy initiatives for the transformation of South African schooling system. It was with these thoughts in mind that the researcher decided to engage in research that gleaned teachers' perspectives on curriculum and curriculum development.

Teachers and their viewpoints have often been neglected and by-passed within the educational milieu. A contradiction that often surfaces is that, although there is general acceptance that teachers play a crucial role in education, yet at the same time they are not given adequate recognition or power to implement and to facilitate change. Giroux's (1989) vision, however, of the teacher as a 'transformative intellectual' offers a much more empowered interpretation of the teacher and places the control for change or transformation within the hands of the teacher. He argues thus:

I have argued throughout this book, that the historical precedent for educating teachers as intellectuals and making schools into democratic sites for social transformation might begin to define the way in which public education and the education of teachers could be appropriately perceived today [sic]. I wish, in other words, to build on this precedent in order to argue for the education of teachers as transformative intellectuals. As I have pointed out previously, the term “transformative intellectuals” refers to one who exercises forms of intellectual and pedagogical practice that attempt to insert teaching and learning directly into the political sphere by arguing that schooling represents both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. I am also referring to one whose intellectual practices are necessarily grounded in forms of moral and ethical discourse exhibiting a preferential concern for the suffering and struggles of the disadvantaged and oppressed. Here I extend the traditional view of the intellectual as someone who is able to analyze various interests and contradictions within society to someone capable of articulating emancipatory possibilities and working toward their realization. Teachers who assume the role of transformative intellectuals treat students as critical agents, question how knowledge is produced and distributed, utilize dialogue, and make knowledge meaningful, critical, and ultimately emancipatory (1989, pp174-175).

Therefore one of the aims of this dissertation was to become the medium through which the voice of the teacher was represented and heard. Although the researcher concedes that it was a very humble attempt at achieving the above, it would nonetheless aim to celebrate the perspectives of teachers towards the aspects of teaching and learning they lived through daily and came to know and experience.

After reflecting on teachers, and their participation within the curriculum, the researcher arrived at a list of pertinent questions. These questions captured some of the complexity of the teaching and learning context within the school. All these questions were subsequently used as issues that were focused on during the interviews with the drama teachers.

The following are research questions that the researcher asked about teachers and curriculum. Most of these questions became the issues focussed on during the course of the interview dialogues with the teachers. They are also significant in that they form the rationale and premises upon which this dissertation was written:

1. What are the educational ground rules used by teachers? What teaching methodology are they employing in their classrooms?
2. How do teachers interpret the curriculum they are teaching? To what extent are they governed by the constraints of the curriculum or to what extent are they free to interpret the curriculum in their own way?
3. Where are teachers in terms of curriculum receivers, modifiers or transformers? Do they mediate and resist curriculum? Is the potential for transforming the curriculum within the reach of the teacher?
4. How do teachers perceive the pupils they teach?
5. What is the ideology of the teachers regarding the teaching and learning of curriculum?
6. How do teachers perceive change, especially change in curriculum? What are their interpretations of curriculum and curriculum change? Are they ready for change?
7. Where are teachers in terms of their view of knowledge? Do they see knowledge as a social construction or do they favour the positivist view of knowledge?

1.3.2 Why the Choice of the Qualitative Paradigm?

This dissertation has two foci. On the one hand it gives focus to teachers' perspectives towards curriculum and curriculum development, and on the other hand it explores the

terrain of the qualitative research paradigm. The researcher made a conscious choice to experience and engage in the qualitative mode of doing research. The reasons for the above choice will be further exemplified and clarified in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

The researcher was wary of the 'objective notion of knowledge', ie. the scientific mode of analysis where truths are presented as absolute and universal. She was suspicious of the dominant ideology that knowledge 'was out' there waiting to be given or received. Rather, she supported arguments that captured the notion of knowledge that lay within the control of people. A decision was made by the researcher to conduct the study in a qualitative paradigm. While the primary focus was to explore the terrain of teachers and curriculum, a secondary aim was to reflect on the experience of using qualitative methods in this type of research.

The critiques of positivism, associated with traditions such as symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), phenomenology (Berger and Luckman, 1967) and ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967), argue that there is a fundamental difference between the study of natural objects and human beings, in that the latter themselves interpret situations and give meanings to them. The researcher considers the implications of this and argues that any worthwhile sociological explanation must be related to the actual ways in which groups themselves interpret their social situations. This interpretive paradigm for social science, as it has come to be called (Wilson, 1971), has major implications for the practice of research. It requires researchers to observe and interact with the subjects of their research:

In short, one would have to take the role of the actor and see his world from his standpoint. This methodological approach stands in contrast to the so-called objective approach so dominant today, namely that of viewing the actor and his action from the perspective of an outside, detached observer...the actor acts towards his world on the basis of how he sees it and not on the basis of how that world appears to the outside observer (Blumer, 1971, p21).

Vulliamy, Lewin & Stephens argue that in educational research, these approaches generally combine an interpretive theoretical framework with the use of qualitative research techniques in focussing on teachers' and students' perspectives and on the process of classroom and school interaction. This perspective sees human actions and institutions as 'social constructions' - created by people - rather than as the product of external forces which mould individuals in ways which can be predicted following the canons of positivist social science enquiry (1990, p8-9).

Chapter Three of this dissertation provides more details of the actual processes involved in engaging in qualitative research and shows the above arguments in praxis. It also allows the reader to view the many reflections of the researcher involved in the qualitative mode.

1.4 The writing style used in the writing of this dissertation

The style used in the writing of this dissertation was that of 'the third person.' Although the researcher acknowledges that writing in the first person provides a more personalized account of the research, she decided to abide by the more formal and traditional style of third person. Chapter Four of this dissertation, however, has a more relaxed and conversational style as this chapter aims at capturing the voice of the Drama teacher. Chapter Four attempts to allow the perspectives of the Drama teachers to come through in their unaltered words. It is for this reason also that the researcher decided to demarcate the perspectives of the Drama teachers in italics.

1.5 The structure of the dissertation

- Chapter Two of this dissertation consists of the selection of theory made by the researcher. The theory has been used as a background to the findings of the research and therefore correlates specifically to Chapter Four.
- The content of Chapter Three of the dissertation has been covered earlier in this chapter (at the bottom of page 8).
- Chapter Four represents the perspectives of Drama teachers towards the Drama curriculum and curriculum development.

- Chapter Five comprises of the analysis of the data, reflecting on the research process and conclusions on the research.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter outlines the theoretical constructs underpinning the research design. The literature review was grounded within the emergent themes of the data. Even though the researcher had read widely before proceeding into the field, she first completed the fieldwork and the analysis of the data and then allowed this to provide the rationale for the basis of the theoretical framework. This may appear to be illogical, but on deeper reflection it became apparent that the reporting on teacher perspectives and the analysis of the themes in Chapters Four and Five could be used to set the parameters for the literature review. The following are the broad areas tackled in this chapter:

- 2.1 A consideration of curriculum and the implications of curriculum construction within the present research study.
- 2.2 An interpretation of knowledge as a social construction, with specific reference to Speech and Drama.
- 2.3 Teachers and the curriculum, with special reference to the teacher's mediation of the curriculum.
- 2.4 Curriculum change.

2.1 Curriculum and Curriculum Construction

Curriculum and instruction are the very heart and soul of schooling. Eisner, writes:

Clearly, there are few issues that are more central to the experience that students have in schools than the content of the curriculum and the ways in which it is mediated (1993, p38).

It is with the above emphasis on curriculum that the researcher decided to explore the contested terrain of curriculum.

The concept of curriculum is contested and complex. Goodson (1994) acknowledges the above conflict and complexity within curriculum study when he argues as follows:

One of the perennial problems in studying curriculum is that it is a multifaceted concept, constructed, negotiated and

renegotiated at a variety of levels and in a variety of arenas
(1994, p229).

It was not the researcher's intention to provide any hard and fast definitions of the concept curriculum, rather an attempt was made to understand the mechanics of curriculum making. It was interesting and challenging, however, to ponder on the alternative reading provided by the Post-Modernists in their new interpretation given to the all too familiar reading of curriculum as a racecourse that requires finishing:

One of the most recent positions to emerge on the curriculum horizon is to emphasize the verb form of curriculum, namely, *currere*. Instead of taking its interpretation from the race course etymology of curriculum, *currere* refers to the running of the race and emphasizes the individual's own capacity to reconceptualize his or her autobiography. The individual seeks meaning amid the swirl of present events, moves historically into his or her own past to recover and reconstitute origins, and imagines and creates possible directions of his or her own future. Based on the sharing of autobiographical accounts with others who strive for similar understanding, the curriculum becomes a reconceiving of one's perspective on life. It also becomes a social process whereby individuals come to greater understanding of themselves, others, and the world through mutual reconceptualization. The curriculum is the interpretation of lived experienced (Slattery, 1994, p33).

The term 'curriculum' subsumes the terms syllabus. Marsh and Stafford provide a distinction between the above two terms:

A syllabus is typically a listing of content which will be examined, although sometimes it is garnished with a small number of general aims and objectives and some preferences for particular types of student activities. By contrast, a curriculum is all of this and more. A curriculum will include a listing of content, but there will also be a detailed analysis of other elements such as aims and objectives, learning experiences and evaluation, and explicit recommendations for interrelating them for optimal effect (1984, p3).

It is unnecessary to separate curriculum documents from curriculum practice or process. Such a dichotomy would be very dubious and unnatural because it suggests that teachers need consciously to separate the means from the ends (Marsh & Stafford, 1984).

Heubner argues that the curriculum is not merely the content or curriculum guide, but the totality of the learning environment within which that content becomes accessible to students (in Apple and Weis, 1983, p115). Woods (1980) very eloquently describes the curriculum as follows:

A curriculum area is a vibrant, human process lived out in the rough and tumble, give and take, joys and despairs, plots and counter-plots of a teacher's life. It is not simply a body of knowledge or set of skills (in Goodson, 1988, p71).

In the light of the data analysis in Chapter Five the researcher was, also, very aware of the view that the curriculum is a social construction and a matter for choice rather than an objective commodity that exists beyond the interventions and interpretations of the teachers and the pupils. Green (1971) describes the dominant view of the curriculum as "a structure of socially presented knowledge, external to the knower, there to be mastered." But, against this she juxtaposes a notion of curriculum as "a possibility for the learner as an existing person mainly concerned with making sense of his own life world" (in Goodson, 1988, p13).

Young makes some very salient points on the curriculum:

The 'curriculum as fact' needs to be seen as more than mere illusion, a superficial veneer on teachers' and pupils' classroom practice, but as a historically specific social reality expressing particular production relations among men. It is mystifying in the way it presents the curriculum as having a life of its own, and obscures the human relations in which it, as any conception of knowledge, is embedded, leaving education as neither understandable nor controllable by men (1977, p237).

Sarup (1978) reinforces the above argument as he views knowledge as socially constructed and socially located in a society.

Goodson (1988) argues that the dangers of studying only the written curriculum are manifest, for as Rudolph (1977) has warned us:

The best way to misread or misunderstand a curriculum is from a catalogue. It is such a lifeless thing, so disembodied, so unconnected, sometimes intentionally misleading (in Goodson, 1988, p17).

Ultimately, any study of the curriculum has to acknowledge that the curriculum document is interpreted, it unfolds in processes within the classroom, that the teacher and pupils are constantly making the curriculum relevant to the contextual realities and richness they are immersed in, and finally, curriculum is a creation and a construction rather than the naive acceptance that it is an objective reality.

2.2.1 An Interpretation of knowledge as a social construction

In an influential work, Berger and Luckman (1966) argue that all knowledge is socially constructed and that all ideas have a social origin. What was relatively new in this work was the argument that it is not only “academic subjects” which are socially constructed, but equally so is the significant area of common-sense, everyday knowledge. The origins of this thesis are discernible in Berger’s earlier (1963) work, succinctly expressed in the proposition that “reality is socially constructed” (1966, p4).

Kincheloe argues as follows to reinforce the above:

A critical constructivist position assumes that there is no knowledge without a knower. Before we say anything else, the knower is a living human being. (1991, p26).

Kincheloe goes on to argue that:

Critical postmodern teachers are not politically neutral, as they identify with a critical system of meaning and all of its allegiances...
On a daily basis teachers choose to include some forms of knowledge

while excluding others from the curriculum, they legitimate particular beliefs while delegitimizing others (1991, p26).

Goodson contends that:

Once we begin to investigate schooling and school knowledge as a social construction, the unproblematic “givenness” of much curricula scholarship and educational policy begins to emerge in a clearer light (1994, p1).

Penny *et al* reinforce the above view point when they suggest that if curriculum is viewed as an objective and neutral “given” instead of a problematic social construction, schools will continue to display a meritocratic facade which obscures the ideological and political functions of culture (1992, p36).

The above arguments cogently point to the extent to which no “knowledge” should be taken as a given. All knowledge is a social construction. Although the above arguments challenge the notion of ‘objective’ and ‘factual’ curricula, it was necessary to look at the positivist viewpoint in order to understand this perspective of knowledge that was once dominant.

Goodson represents the above viewpoint in these terms:

The previously pre-eminent positivist enterprise aimed to discover the social laws which underpinned everyday reality. This sociology followed a philosophy of science which had as its major objective the seeking of objective facts about the social system and beyond the perceptions of the people who inhabit that system pursuing wide-ranging laws and truth (1988, p24).

Muir’s arguments reinforce the above:

Western, industrially and scientifically orientated culture favours a positivist interpretation of knowledge: that knowledge of most worth is objective and can be firmly established by the scientific method (1980, p45).

The publication of *Knowledge and Control* in 1971 proved to be a pivotal point in rekindling interest in the social organisation of knowledge. Young's main argument was that the selection of knowledge made available in schools should be made a problem for critical examination rather than being taken for granted. The curriculum, as Young pointed out, is a social invention like other social inventions, like political parties or new towns or the motor car and the curriculum arises, resists and changes according to social interests and values (in Muir, 1980, p50).

Apple and Weis maintain that schools were seen as places that not only "processed people" but as institutions that "processed knowledge" as well (1983, p16). The socially constructed view of knowledge was in accordance with the researcher's own experiences in education. Apple and Weis argue the above lucidly in the following:

The symbolic resources organized and transmitted in the schools were not neutral. Instead, they were better thought of in ideological terms, as the cultural capital of specific groups which - though this culture did have a life of its own - functioned to recreate relations of domination and subordination by "positioning" subjects within larger ideological discourses and relations. The culture of school, hence, was a terrain of ideological conflict, not merely a set of facts, skills, dispositions and social relationships that were to be taught in the most efficient and effective way possible (1983, p17).

Wexler argues the above very clearly:

When removing the cloak of neutrality by reversing the cognitive social process of converting values to facts without reversing this process, we would have nowhere to begin (1981, p2).

The above arguments bring us to the next area of analysis i.e. the Speech and Drama curriculum as a social construction.

2.2.2 The Development of the Subject Speech and Drama in KZN

It was necessary to consider the historical emergence of the subject, as this provides a focus of the historically-produced choices within Speech and Drama.

In Natal, the subject first appeared at the University of Natal in Durban.

Elizabeth Sneddon was able to launch Speech and Drama as a discipline in the faculty of Arts in the 1940s because it met the requirements of an established philosophy of education (Dalrymple, 1987, p36). Dalrymple goes on to describe that when Sneddon introduced Speech and Drama at the University of Natal, her approach was in keeping with the ethos of the university, that is, the course would preserve and transmit the western cultural heritage in the field of theatre studies (ibid).

The Department of Speech and Drama at the University of Natal was founded by Elizabeth Sneddon in 1949 and this was the first South African University to accept Speech and Drama as an academic discipline for degree purposes. Sneddon pioneered the Department with indomitable faith in a discipline she defined as ‘the tool of thought, invented by man for the purpose of achieving a civilized way of life’ Dalrymple (1981, p12). She also stressed the importance of the spoken word and described drama as ‘the art form of the craft of speech’ (1978, p16). She said: ‘Drama is speech used to the utmost limit of man’s ability to convey his vision of what constitutes a civilized world’ (1981, p15). She did not hesitate to claim that Speech and Drama is a controlled human study, a claim that had already been made by ‘English Literature’:

As a discipline, Speech and Drama is both vigorous and strenuous in physical, intellectual and emotional terms, for it involves the whole being of the individual. As a challenge, the development of skill in communication has no rivals for its goal in the individual’s realization of the many directions in which the quest for truth can lead him. It is the source from which all other academic disciplines derive (ibid, p9).

Dalrymple argues that the course Sneddon devised was firmly rooted in the prevailing ideology of liberal humanism that was embraced by the Department of English. She goes on to add that although the proponents of Speech and Drama claimed autonomy from Departments of English, arguing that the acquisition of skills in communication,

the performance of plays before an audience and the study of plays across linguistic boundaries, were the basic dynamic of the study. The discipline did not shed the underlying premises of the Department of English when it gained autonomy. Dalrymple describes the key elements of the ideology of liberal humanism as expounded by the Leavisites as follows:

The development of the unique individual, the imperishable truths of the human condition and the civilizing influence of the study of the humanities that underpins Speech and Drama (Dalrymple, 1987, p15).

At the time of the fieldwork, it is necessary to acknowledge that the Speech and Drama syllabus taught at secondary schools in Natal was a watered down version of the original creation by Elizabeth Sneddon. (Refer to examples of syllabi provided in Appendix E).

The plays set for reading in the drama syllabus indicate that the study of drama, like the study of literature, means the interpretation of a canon of 'great works.' Eagleton's interpretation of this aesthetic and reception process is pertinent:

The pill of middle-class ideology has to be sweetened by the sugar of literature (1983, p26).

Dalrymple (1987) argues that certain periods in history - the 'Golden Ages of the Theatre' - have become reified and selected plays from these ages form this canon of the works of 'distinguished playwrights'. Books such as *Theatre Through the Ages*, *A Concise History of the Theatre* and *Golden Ages of the Theatre* abound, giving legitimacy to western cultural imperialism. These books form part of the list of theatre history text books provided for schools. Dalrymple cogently argues as follows:

The cultural history of the English ruling clan is the heritage of English speaking South Africans and, in a clear case of colonial dependency, we have clung to this heritage with great tenacity and imposed it on the indigenous population supported by notions of 'universalism.' We have been able to genuinely believe in the importance

of the nurturance and transmission of this cultural heritage. In the same way as the English ruling clan was able to simply 'jump' over early English literary history when defining 'literate culture' we have jumped over and greatly prejudiced the culture and the history of our own land and people in our definitions of cultural history (1987, p16).

Hoosain has engaged in a critical analysis of the Speech and Drama texts studied in Indian schools and argues as follows:

In addition [sic] the facticity of a eurocentric text, and treating the values, feelings, experiences, intuition and central themes as universal natural and timeless, generates a feeling in pupils of being culturally disinherited victims. Since the language of those in power is English, the upwardly mobile candidate believes that a mastery of English and imbibing the values embedded in the living discourses found in the teaching situations can lead to self empowerment and freedom within the dominant political and economic institutions. In this regard, schooling serves an integrative functionalist purpose since pupils are not taught to critique the received values. Yet this false emancipation is individualistic and in the imagination only for this reason [sic] my illusion of emancipation is due to absorbing eurocentric literary sensibilities. Such sensibilities and feelings are class-bound and cannot be passed off as objective, all encompassing and universal (1992, p8).

Sneddon claims that:

Interpretation, in active terms of the works of distinguished Playwrights, is a key feature of education and essential for the spiritual well being and refreshment of the individual (1981, p15).

From this perspective, to be educated is to be cultured and to be the possessor of superior values and a refined sensibility, both of which are manifested through a

fulfilling engagement with 'good' literature, art, music and so on. Sneddon stated that one of the aims of taking a course in Speech and Drama was:

The development of an artistic sensibility which means the realization of form and content and the power to interpret it in terms of prose, poetry and drama, all of which are forms of public speaking (1978, p10).

Hoosain argues that the treating of culture as an outside, 'above us' cultural commodity, impoverishes and subverts the growth of a genuine local aesthetics rooted in the cultural traditions of the local community (1992, p14).

Dalrymple (1987) maintains that studies in the humanities and arts tend to confine themselves to a selected eurocentric tradition which may include the works of a few African writers. This approach succeeds in reinforcing notions of the superiority of western culture and the inferiority of the pupils. Manganyi points out that the disciplines are generalized and presented as if they each have their own independent history of western thought virtually incomprehensible to students who are never presented with a totality, but always with autonomous disciplines called History, Philosophy, Sociology or Speech and Drama. Each discipline is thus seen as verified as if it were self-evolving and internally developed (1982, p10).

When Sneddon argued that the subject Speech and Drama can result in 'civilizing' pupils, she was immediately opening herself to being critiqued for an adherence to 'High Culture' or a definition of culture that went beyond the identification or acquisition of the masses of black people who were not born into the 'ideal' western cultural context.

Dalrymple states that it was Matthew Arnold who most forcefully developed the concept of 'culture' as the pursuit and study of perfection. The obvious implication in the above line of thought is that Western society as a totality is civilized in contrast to 'barbaric' or savage societies (1987, p39). Dalrymple argues that Sneddon's preference for civilization indicates a colonial pre-occupation with the preservation of 'civilization'. She goes on to add that white South Africans' attempt to preserve

European culture in order to cling to their civilized identity (1987, p44). Tunmer adds to the above argument on civilization:

The word 'civilization' has long bedevilled rational thought about relationships between Europe and Africa. The polarization of the issue into a civilized - uncivilized dichotomy has prevented a clear analysis of the similarities and differences between African and European culture. Furthermore, by describing European culture as 'civilization' one unconsciously tends to see it as unchanging and as final (cited in Hoosain, 1992, p24).

Hoosain argues that traditional drama teaching and learning relies heavily on eurocentric texts to impart theatre skills to the 'black' learner. He goes on to add that:

We need to recognise some assumptions arising out of this text bound culture. To what extent are we contributing to the cultural dominance of the west by letting children uncritically take on foreign cultural forms like absurdist theatre? (1992, p11)

Hoosain has also argued as follows on the issue of 'high' culture:

Since Speech and Drama is taught as a school subject or a body of knowledge with clearly outlined behaviourist objectives, the child's view of culture is that aesthetics is connected to excellence, part of an elite High Culture group and a part-time activity restricted mainly to school. The subject is perceived by others in the school culture as belonging to those who wish to achieve refinement and white 'upper' class style (1992, p13) .

The above analysis points to the view that the drama curriculum at the time of the research - 1992 was steeped in eurocentric choices and, that if it were taught without a critical approach that challenges the above bias, the teacher would serve as a functionary of the dominant group in society.

2.3.1 Teachers and the Curriculum

After attempting to gain a wide reading in the area of teachers and the curriculum the researcher has to acknowledge that research spent on the above area was limited. Even though the teacher's critical and crucial role within curriculum matters is obvious, ironically researchers have not committed adequate time or energy to researching this.

Another contradiction that was apparent in the study of teachers was that teachers are marginalized from curriculum planning and development even though they are most centrally placed to become an important player within curriculum matters. The researcher must however acknowledge that more power and decision-making have been awarded to teachers in recent times. People in curriculum planning need to address the following cogent questions: Who are the 'real' participants in the learning process? Who needs to take crucial decisions regarding the learning and teaching of pupils? Contemplation on the above brought to light the urgent need to draw teachers into the curriculum debate. Carl reinforces the above when he argues that teachers dare not stand on the periphery and be onlookers in regard to things which are done for them and decisions taken for them, but they must be active participants in the process of relevant curriculum development (1995, pv).

But, research reflects that historically teachers in South Africa have been imposed upon by outside specialists and have been given a back seat in curriculum matters. Although Barrow is not a South African writer, he provides his perspectives that are relevant to teachers and the curriculum in South Africa.

There are two main aspects to my view of the centrality of teachers in the teaching enterprise: first, that the individual teacher's judgement and decision-making be acknowledged to play a very large part in curriculum decisions relating to particular classrooms and by extension that teachers within a school should play a prominent part in school curriculum planning. Secondly, that as a consequence, teachers should be thoroughly initiated into curriculum theory, but in a specific manner that does not necessarily resemble what goes on in many current teacher preparation in-service programmes (1984, p261).

Carl also argues that curriculum development is not the jealously guarded domain of specialists and “those who know”, but teachers have a cardinal role to play as they are directly involved in classroom practice (1995, pv). Stevens & Wood argue that the most important resource a school has is its teachers. Innovation cannot be forced from high up in the administrative hierarchy. If a project is to succeed the ideas have to come from the teachers (1992, p381).

Cornbleth states that ironically, the professionalization of curriculum reform can serve to de-professionalize teachers. When reforms are designed by experts, teachers are expected to carry out the expert’s directions with at most minor modifications to accommodate local settings. She calls for researchers to make an account of the development of presumably teacher-proof curriculum materials in the 1960s. She goes on to argue that this situation is reminiscent of Harold Ragar’s lament more than 60 years ago that while teachers should have been the major designers of curriculum in their classrooms, they were not able to do so, and were therefore in need of the assistance of curriculum specialists (1990, p159). All of the above viewpoints reflect the inherent contradiction that even though teachers are in the most appropriate position to play a more meaningful role, they have been side-tracked by experts.

South Africa presently faces tremendous challenges, several of which are related to the curriculum. These challenges manifest themselves at various levels and in various areas, that is from national level to within the classroom. It is imperative that the voice of the teacher in curriculum matters is acknowledged and taken into account with regard to the curriculum. Carl notes that the core aspect which arises here, is that the teacher must not be a mere implementer but a development agent who is able to develop and apply the relevant curriculum dynamically and creatively (1995, p16).

Many researchers have argued the need for teachers to become reflective practitioners. They argue that reflection allows for the growth and professionalism of the teacher to be developed. Grundy makes a discerning comment on the issue of a reflective teacher:

When teachers work in ways which promote the importance of reflection and judgement-making, their actions seem to have a quality of prudence or wisdom.

which is different from the qualities of effectiveness and efficiency associated with the technical interest (1987, p97).

Giroux (1992) also calls for the need to redefine the role of teachers, but as 'transformative intellectuals'. The following is his interpretation of 'transformative intellectuals':

The need for teachers to have an understanding of their own self-formation, have some vision of the future, and to view the importance of education as a public discourse and have a sense of mission in providing students with what they need to become critical citizens.

He goes on to elaborate:

To talk about teachers as intellectuals is to say they should have an active role in shaping the curriculum and they are aware of their own theoretical convictions and are skilled in strategies for translating them into practice (1992, p15).

Giroux's viewpoints have already been introduced in the Introduction of this dissertation. The above arguments are an extension of the arguments introduced in Chapter One.

2.3.2 Teachers' Mediation of the Curriculum

Hogan notes that it is difficult to separate educational issues from larger political issues (cited in Apple & Weis, 1983, p4). Freire argues that schools have a political agenda even though this is denied, on the one hand innocently; on the other hand, cleverly, by those who are either naive or very astute (in Shor, 1986, pxvi). In order to understand the above complex relationship, it becomes necessary to step back from perceiving schools as places that only seek to maximize the achievement of pupils. Apple and Weis challenge the prevailing interpretation of schooling and argue that instead of a psychological and individualistic perspective, we need to interpret the schools more socially, culturally and structurally (1983, p5). This interpretation brings forth a number of pressing questions: What is it that education does in the larger context? When it does, who does this benefit?

But, Apple and Weis maintain, teachers and students can act against dominant ideological forms (1983, p19). These arguments are pertinent because it shows that hegemony requires the consent of the dominated majority and as Appel and Weis argue:

It can never be permanent, universal, or simply given. Thus even the educational system itself, in both its internal culture and its relations to the wider society, is not simply an instrument of domination in which the powerful groups control less powerful ones. It is the result of a continuing struggle between and within dominant and dominated groups. (ibid).

It becomes much clearer that students and teachers can act against dominant ideological forms.

Johnson argues that the kind of ideological hegemony 'caused' by the increasing introduction of technical control is not 'naturally' pre-ordained. It is something that is won or lost in particular conflicts and struggles (1979, p70). Thus, when analysing the school contexts, the notion of reproduction has to be analysed in conjunction with the struggles, dysfunctions, contradictions and resistances that are also happening within the school.

Apple provides an interesting example from his research that points to the manner in which teachers succumb on the one hand and resist on the other hand:

On the one hand, teachers will be controlled. As one teacher said about a set of popular material, "Look, I have no choice. I personally don't like this material, but everyone in the district has to use this series. I'll try to do other things as well, but basically our curriculum will be based on this. On the other hand, resistances will be there. This same teacher who disagreed with the curriculum but used it, also was partially subverting it in interesting ways. It was employed only three days a week instead of five days that were specified. As the teacher put it: "Listen, if we worked hard we'd finish this stuff in two or three months and besides it's sometimes confusing and boring. So I try to go beyond it as often as possible, as long as I do not teach what is in

the material to be covered by this series next year (1983, p159).

2.4 Curriculum Change

As will be seen in Chapter Five in the present study Drama teachers challenged and mediated the curriculum, they did not accept and abide by the syllabus document, and their classroom practice was rather determined by the immediacy of their particular teaching context. They also showed an awareness of the links between society and education, and as a result based their challenges and mediations on the above connection. Many theorists have argued at length on the issue of resistance within the school context.

The main themes of the Literature Review are about the empowerment of the teacher and facilitating processes so that she can become a participant in changing the curriculum. Also the teacher needs to develop the faculties necessary for sharing and changing visions and focuses within education. From experience within the school and educational climate, the researcher had come to know that what was called curriculum development was really a superficial process of periodic renewal, or the updating of texts and a rewording of statements of educational aims and objectives in the syllabus. The above prevailing notion of curriculum development and change is inadequate, narrow and stagnating.

The researcher strongly supports Stenhouse's (1980) claim that the teacher is very much a part of curriculum development and that there is no curriculum development without teacher development. Carl also argue that curriculum must not be seen as extraneous but as a living thing embodying critical processes. The teacher is the practitioner of curriculum, and an agent of change not simply the agent of delivery (p185, 1995).

Change is a very necessary and important process. Yet it is a process that does not take place too readily or too easily. Wedekind argues that even though changes have taken place in broader South African society, not many manifestations of this change have been felt in curriculum matters. '... Essentially, despite minor syllabus reform, very little has changed, since the installation of the new government at the time of this

research study (1995, p18).’ The researcher however acknowledges that new curriculum initiatives have been instituted and will be implemented in the future i.e. the OBE and Curriculum 2005. Many researchers have argued for change to take place in curriculum and with teachers especially in the South African educational context.

One of the rationales upon which this dissertation has been written is the recognition of the argument that the potential for action or change and its delivery is within the ambit of human agency. And as a result, change in the curriculum context will therefore rest with the teacher, pupils and other significant stakeholders of education. Pennefather argues that the role of the teacher as researcher critically evaluating education practices, in collaboration with teacher, pupils and relevant others, can play a vital part in working towards developing more relevant education for a changing society. She goes on to add that there is a clear need to encourage teachers to engage in research in their classroom, in an effort for teachers to become more critical of their classroom practices in order to improve on them. Also, it is of vital importance to encourage classroom research by teachers themselves rather than rely on the outside researcher, who has very little contact with real school practices (1991, pp118-119). If research is undertaken by teachers themselves, critically examining their classrooms is an ongoing process, real change is far more likely to emerge than if research is undertaken by outsiders and teachers are then expected to implement change of which they have had no part.

Pennefather also argues that in a changing society, teachers are going to have to develop a more creative approach to their work. And that they will need to take greater responsibility for initiating and sustaining change in schools (1991, p123).

Carr and Kemmis also argue for teachers to be involved in research if educational change is to materialize:

Thus, the primary purpose of critical research activity for teachers is teacher empowerment. This empowerment involves teachers providing themselves with skills and resources that enable them to reflect on educational practice. Democratic educational research performed by teachers creates teaching practice that is more theoretical in that it is

supported by reflection and grounded in socio-historical context.

Teachers as researcher gain skill to interrogate their own practices, question themselves on their own assumptions and to understand contextually their own situations (1986, p123).

The above quotation focuses on the need for teacher empowerment before they are enabled for processes of change. The following two writers, Carl and Grundy also provide lucid definitions on empowerment that allows for teacher development and change.

In order for teachers to become involved in curriculum planning and development, they need firstly to become ‘empowered.’ The following is a succinct definition of empowerment as provided by Carl:

Empowerment is that process of development and growth through which a person goes which enables him/her to take independent decisions and to act autonomously with a view to making a contribution towards the development of his particular environment. This process is coupled with the development of applicable skills, attitudes and knowledge within a positive and democratic climate. These persons are therefore regarded as professionals in their own right as they are able to make a contribution to change through their particular power (1995, p70).

Grundy’s definition of empowerment also clarifies the concept of empowerment, ‘Empowerment is the ability of individuals and groups to take control of their own lives in an autonomous and responsible way.’ (1987, p19).

Educational change, curriculum change and change in the perspectives of the teacher are all intrinsically linked. The arguments and theories covered thus far all point to the premise that the educational context is to be democratized so that teachers can play a more valuable role in contributing towards curriculum change. An empowered teacher is in a position to facilitate change. The researcher concurs with the famous quote proposed by Stenhouse (1980) that curriculum development is about teacher development.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH PROCESS

In this chapter, the researcher provides detail of the many decision points and moments in the course of the research process where crucial decisions had to be made. Practical and personal aspects of the research process are addressed. This discussion captures the variable fortunes and flavour of the research process and reflects on their significance. The researcher acknowledges Walford's view that the reflexive style in research writing allows the reader to be better able to assess the validity, reliability and generalisability of that particular research (1991, p5).

3.1 Getting into the skin of the qualitative researcher

Even before the research process formally began, the researcher was plagued by insecurities and many moments of complete lack of confidence. These anxieties were the result of delving into the unfamiliar terrain of research. Initially there was a strong sense that the roles of Teacher and Researcher were mutually exclusive. The researcher was a novice, and had always regarded herself as a teacher rather than a researcher. Also, the school environment did not cater for teachers to engage in any self-initiated research. Research was not part of the school culture and teachers were not enabled to participate in research in their classrooms. As a result the researcher viewed research as unfamiliar and had come to believe that research lay in the arena of the academic experts.

But through the process of dialogues with the supervisor and an engagement with the literature, the researcher grew confident and began to view the research process as a critical, reflexive and professionally orientated activity which could not be divorced from the teacher's professional role.

The qualitative model of social research was employed. Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) maintain that qualitative researchers argue that by and large much social research neglects the medium through which social reality is expressed and understood. Qualitative or interpretative research therefore takes seriously the question of language and meaning and gives priority to first unravelling actors' descriptions of events and

activities in a qualitative fashion rather than focussing upon observers' descriptions in a quantitative fashion.

The researcher accepted that the choice of qualitative research was most feasible as she was intent on gaining an understanding of and getting to know the complexity of interpretations and the perspectives of drama teachers in relation to the drama curriculum and curriculum development.

Sherman and Webb (1988) add to the many voices on qualitative research. They contend that qualitative research implies a direct concern with experience as it is 'felt', 'lived' or 'undergone'. The aim of qualitative research is to understand experience as closely as possible to the participants who feel it or live it. Although the researcher acknowledges and appreciates the precise and clear description of the quality of qualitative research, she realized that the present research was too small - scale to be able to capture the above qualities in a definitive way. Nevertheless, every attempt was made to represent and capture the 'felt', 'lived' and 'undergone' experiences of the drama teachers as was represented in their dialogues with the researcher.

Ultimately, the aim of any research is to understand things better. Rorty (1982), however, believes that understanding is ambiguous. It can mean 'explanation' or 'interpretation'. Rorty believes that we seek explanation when we want to predict and control. But if our aim is to interact with each other, rather than control, researchers need to act as interpreters, so we can converse more effectively (cited in Sherman and Webb, 1988). The researcher interpreted the dialogues with the drama teachers within their context of teaching rather than impose her own explanations on them.

3.2 Focussing on a suitable topic

Walker maintains that research into educational practice is not as straightforward as it may first appear and problems do not always present themselves in a ready-made fashion, but rather need working and reshaping into a form that is amenable to research (cited in Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989, p39). The researcher began with many

grandiose expectations and there was an initial intention to want to achieve too much in a small scale research project. However, involvement in the research process allowed the researcher to develop humility.

It was the initial intention of the researcher to study the role of the speech and drama subject advisor within H.O.D. (House of Delegates) schools. The main reason for this focus was that teachers at the time (1990) were engaged in fiery debates around the issue of teacher appraisal. In 1990, teachers in H.O.D. schools began an ardent defiance campaign, and as a result the subject advisors were not permitted entry into schools. Teachers believed that the system of teacher advisor was too authoritarian and based on undemocratic principles. They were also calling for an immediate re-evaluation and re-definition of the role of the subject advisor.

After engaging in dialogues with the supervisor the researcher understood that the focus on the subject advisor was inappropriate, as the researcher was assuming and also pre-supposing that the subject advisor was needed within the culture of the school and curriculum development and that her role just needed redefining. The researcher concluded that a more appropriate focus would be teachers' perspectives of the speech and drama curriculum and more specifically their perspectives on curriculum development, and within this focus, the role of the subject advisor would be covered.

As the researcher was a speech and drama teacher who had been teaching the subject at matriculation level for the past eight years, the change of focus provided an area that was immediate, accessible and relevant to her.

Deeper reflection on the new focus provided more important reasons as to why this particular focus was challenging and also close to the heart of the researcher.

As the researcher is a teacher first and foremost, she believed that there was a dire need to represent and to provide a medium through which the voice of the speech and drama teacher could be heard. From the researcher's experience with the teaching of the subject, she concluded that there was also need to focus on curriculum

development as the syllabus document had remained stagnant with no intrinsic changes at all, since its inception.

Another important motivation as to why this area of research was so pertinent for the researcher was that, historically, within the South African education system, the creative arts education ie. speech and drama, dance, music and visual arts had been continuously marginalized and under severe threat of becoming extinct. This reality created an interesting paradox; even though Speech and Drama is a relevant subject and could be used to promote active and critical thinking, this subject was being phased out of the school curriculum. Active and critical thinking is a fundamental skill that has to be nurtured by the curriculum as it enables the learner to participate effectively in the world.

The researcher used the interview as a means of collecting the perspectives of the drama teachers. A conscious attempt was made in the interview schedule (Appendix A) to direct teachers' responses by eliciting their thoughts around the issue of "Drama under Threat." The National Arts Policy was launched in December 1992 as a means of focussing on the importance of the Arts in our society and also as an attempt to protect the Arts. The following aims taken from a paper sent to educators in the art field points to the importance of the Arts in a future democratic South Africa.

The Arts are integral to any truly healthy society. They are important means for communities and individuals to affirm, challenge, explore, question, celebrate and attempt to understand their existence within particular realities. Premised on freedom of expression and critical, creative thought, the arts have a vital role to play in the democratisation of our society. Where the arts are integrated into - rather than excluded from - overall processes of social development, this leads to a more holistic and thus higher quality of life where the material, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs of human beings are catered for.

South African music, dance, film, theatre, literature and visual art and craft have great potential to link us to other parts of the world, so broadening our consciousness and invigorating our own cultural life.

However, the Arts are not considered to be a political, economic, developmental or educational priority at the moment and in the face of current housing, medical and employment needs, financial resources for the Arts - from the private and public sectors as well as from international donors - are becoming increasingly scarce.

It is clear that unless the arts community itself takes responsibility for its future and for that of the Arts in general, the Arts will continue to be neglected or limited by ill-informed state policies or party political emphases, conventional development priorities and narrow economic concerns. It is important then, that the arts community comes together to assert its common interests and to organise to ensure the future of the arts (Ndebele, 1992, p3).

3.3 The use of the interview as a tool for research

There are many methods of data collection within the qualitative research paradigm. The researcher initially decided to employ the method of participant observation, which she believed to be the most "authentic" of all the research methods. After deliberation and reading she decided to use the arguments of Powney and Watts who maintain that research becomes a process of interaction between the researcher and the researched. Constant reference to the overall research plan and the major goals is essential at all preparatory stages, since it provides the rationale to the method of data collection (ibid, 1981, p14). The researcher concluded that the most suitable method to employ in order to ascertain the perspectives of the drama teachers towards their curriculum and curriculum development, was the method of interviewing.

Powney and Watts (1981, p1) see research interviews as conversational encounters to a purpose. Hitchcock and Hughes (1989, p79) reinforce the above view, defining interviews as 'talk' to some purpose. There is agreement in the literature that the interview is a purposeful conversation usually between two people, that is directed by one in order to get information from the other. Powney and Watts (1981), make an interesting observation about the interview; they say that if interviewing is thought of

as a means of collecting talk, then it is perhaps important to remember that talk is dynamic - a quality it loses as soon as it is collected in any way. It is somewhat, as Whitehurst (1979) observes :

like catching rain in a bucket for later display. What you end up with is water, which is only a little like rain (cited in Powney and Watts, 1981, p16).

The decision as to what type of interview to use in this research process was not simple. Terminology in the literature describing the various types of interviews is arbitrary. The terms 'structured', 'semi-structured' and 'un-structured' are not clear-cut and their meanings tend to overlap. For example, the researcher acknowledges that within the 'structured' interview there is still room for open-ended questions, and for "follow up" questions. This does not imply control to the extent that this control negates the sensitivity of the researcher to the meanings of the respondents. And, ultimately, there is no interview without the researcher's control. The researcher used the distinguishing criteria of Powney and Watts to solve the problem of describing the type of interview used. They maintain that the major distinction between interviews is wherein lies the locus of control for what happens throughout the interviewing process. (1987, p17).

The researcher decided to use the respondent interview. According to Powney and Watts (1987, p18), the main characteristic of this style of interviewing is that the interviewer retains control throughout the whole process.

Powney and Watts further argue that there are two important parts to respondent interviews. Firstly, the interviews carry the connotation that there are a set of questions that are to be answered, even if the questions are not in a prescribed order, so that the interviewer can arrive at some point at the major issues involved. Secondly, and more importantly, it is the interviewer's issues that matter.

The choice of the respondent interview was appropriate because the researcher intended the interviewees to respond to specific issues and it is she who overtly directed the proceedings. Yet, at the same time she did not control to the point of

excluding the spontaneous meanings of the drama teachers that needed to emerge over and above this control.

3.3.1 Sampling - Whom does the researcher interview?

At the time of the research there were sixty drama teachers teaching in Indian secondary schools in both the Pietermaritzburg and Durban areas. It would have been ideal to interview all the drama teachers. However, the constraints of time, energy and cost prohibited the use of large numbers. The researcher therefore decided to make use of a sample. Vulliamy, Lewin & Stephens maintain that since sampling is inevitable in any research, because one cannot study everything, it is important to be clear as to the purpose of such sampling (1990, p114). Ten teachers were selected from the total population of drama teachers. The method of selection was based on specific criteria. Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) describe the above method as quota sampling where the researcher interviews a specified percentage or quota from categories of people identified in a population. Here, attention is paid to keeping equal numbers of men and women, comparable ages, years of teaching experience, and so on, of the people forming the sample (1989, p81). Delamont (1992) argues that the method used to gain the group of informants is not that important. What is crucial about sampling in her view, is honesty and reflexivity, and the most important things are to record how the sample was drawn, and to think carefully about how the selection/recruitment has affected the data collected from them (1992, p70).

The researcher made a concerted effort to ensure that within the quota of ten drama teachers, the following areas were represented: gender, experience in teaching the subject, the level of professional qualification and teaching either in the Pietermaritzburg or Durban area. Three male drama teachers were selected, and included in the sample of ten. This she believed would effectively represent the male drama teachers' perspective (if such a perspective did indeed exist). Eight of the drama teachers interviewed were teaching in the Durban area, while two were teaching in the Pietermaritzburg area. Teachers with varied levels of teaching qualification were selected, eg., a teacher who had obtained a degree and teaching diploma was included in the sample as well as a teacher who had obtained his Masters degree. Vulliamy, Lewin & Stephens make a very significant point on sampling, a

view that the researcher was able to concur with in retrospect, ie. “A decision might be made to interview a particular teacher, not because it is thought that this teacher’s responses will be typical of others but because they are likely to cast the most light on an emerging idea (1990, p114). The researcher concedes that the above is only possible if she knew the drama teachers well. This issue of familiarity will be elaborated shortly. The other person interviewed was the speech and drama subject advisor. There was only one subject advisor in charge of the subject and the teachers of the subject, and as a result there was no choice to be made. It is necessary however, to clarify why the researcher chose to interview her. Although it was previously mentioned that the key voices focussed on in the present research were the speech and drama teachers, it was, however, necessary to include the voice of another significant player, as a contrast. The researcher also believed that she (the subject advisor) could become one of the templates against which the perspectives of the drama teachers could be compared and contrasted. In retrospect, the subject advisor’s perspective served as an interesting relative perspective.

3.3.2 Gaining Access

As a result of having selected the sample very specifically, the ten teachers were identified according to the set criteria used in the sample, contacted telephonically, and asked if they would be willing to share their perspectives on curriculum and curriculum development. All but one of the teachers were willing to participate. The exception said that she was much too busy, and that she had no “extra time” to share her views by participating in an interview. It was unfortunate that this perspective was not represented in the sample, ie. the perspective of a person who lived in a seemingly confined routine and with a single focus may have provided interesting data for analysis. Wax (1990) gives another useful piece of advice relating to this:

The scrupulous fieldworker makes a conscious effort and, if need be, forces himself to talk to the people whom he dislikes, mistrusts, or despises (or who dislike, mistrust, or despise him) and, in like manner, he listens to and tries to understand the things he does not want to hear. He does this because, the more numerous and varied are the people with whom he talks, the greater is the possibility that he will learn to understand the whole situation thoroughly and accurately and the better will be his final analysis and report

(Wax in Vulliamy, 1990, pp 111-112).

Because the researcher lived in Pietermaritzburg and had to travel to Durban to interview the teachers, she decided to complete the task of interviewing within a two week time period. The two week period of interviewing also allowed time for the researcher to reflect on the interviews and make field notes. This allowed for the process of data analysis to begin while in the field. This time constraint also demanded that the researcher interview some teachers during the course of the school day, and some teachers at their homes after the school day.

During the process of seeking permission and gaining access into the field, there was one instance of conflict. The researcher telephoned each of the identified respondents and asked whether they were willing to participate in the research. This was done after describing to each of the respondents the focus and scope of the intended study. Once the respondents had given their consent to participate in the research, the researcher asked if she should speak to the principal of their school in respect of entry into the school, or if they were in a position to organise the interview context within their school. Five of the teachers said that they would organise the permission for the interview within the time period given to them by the researcher. These teachers obviously believed that they possessed a certain amount of status, power, and control within the context of the school as they were able to negotiate the researcher's entry into the school context. On the other hand, five of the teachers asked the researcher to mediate between them and their principals in organising the researcher's entry into the school. The researcher telephoned the principal, conveyed to her the nature and objectives of the study, and proceeded to seek her permission to interview the drama teacher from her school during the course of the school day. The principal was annoyed and angry. She (the principal) felt strongly that the time during the school day was solely to be used for the purpose of teaching, and was not to be side-tracked. She also believed the teacher's time was totally under her control and accountability. The literature had provided the researcher with examples of "gatekeepers" attitudes; however, the reality of having to deal with this herself proved to be very intimidating. It was necessary to report on the above as the

researcher believes that the principal reflected an example of the attitude that researchers often confront in their interactions with people in power.

Sara Delamont reinforces researchers' concerns when she argues that bureaucracies have their own time-tables and are unlikely to be able or willing to adjust to the researchers (1992, p80). The teacher that would have been interviewed at that school was replaced by a teacher of similar qualities from another school. Having encountered the above conflict, the researcher decided to tread warily, hence forth, and with the benefit of hindsight, also decided to approach the rest of the principals with more circumspection. But, fortunately the above conflict did not repeat itself as all other principals contacted were co-operative, willing and even personally interested to share in the research process in whatever way they could.

The two teachers from Pietermaritzburg were interviewed in their drama classrooms after the school day; and the subject advisor was interviewed in her office during a mutually negotiated time frame.

3.3.3 Interview Schedule

An Interview Schedule was used (Appendix A). Firstly, the interview schedule enabled the researcher to stick to the focus of research consistently through all interviews. The interview schedule also provided the researcher with a guide or focus covering significant areas that had to be focused on during the course of the interview. The plan of the interview through the interview schedule provided the medium through which structure, focus, relevance and logic could prevail. Ultimately, the interview schedule motivated within the researcher a renewed spirit that allowed her to proceed confidently into the unfamiliar terrain of research. Before going into the field to conduct the first formal interview the researcher engaged in a pilot interview with a drama teacher from Pietermaritzburg. This was an invaluable exercise that allowed for meaning and clarity of the Interview Schedule to be tested. Certain areas on the Schedule needed more probes, and these were added. The researcher also learnt that she needed always to be in control of the interviewing process. More

learning and reflections also took place after the first and second interviews had taken place.

The interview schedule focussed specifically on three broad areas :

1. Teachers' perspectives on the present speech and drama curriculum;
2. Teachers' perspectives on speech and drama curriculum development, and
3. Teachers' perspectives on the role of the subject advisor within curriculum development.

It was decided that the researcher should tackle each of the above areas with more focussed questions set on them, and also include a list of probes that would enable her to gain specific insights into the various chosen themes. These probes also functioned to remind both the researcher and the respondent of the relevant detail that had to be covered. And, if, at any point in conversation the respondent felt unable to proceed spontaneously, these probes allowed for focussed stimulation around pertinent themes. Ultimately, the probes were effectively used to penetrate more deeply, and therefore, ensuring that simple yes/no responses were avoided.

The underlying principle upon which the interview schedule was created, was open-endedness. This quality was needed, especially within the paradigm of qualitative research that insists that the researcher cannot at any stage impose her views and perspectives onto her respondents.

Vulliamy pointedly describes the differences in the style between qualitative and quantitative paradigms of research:

Qualitative researchers generally recommend very much more open-ended research designs than are typically found in quantitative studies. In the latter, an interview schedule is devised before entering the field for the main research, and its style often approximates that of a questionnaire, with pre-coded responses (such as 'yes/no') and interviews tend to be standardized with each respondent being asked the same questions in the same order. The intention is to be able to summarize responses in statistical form.

In qualitative research, the aim is to “get inside” the perspectives of the respondents and to generate hypotheses from such perspectives (1990, p100).

Bogdan and Biklen also reinforce the above when they argue that in keeping with the qualitative tradition of attempting to capture the subjects’ own words and letting the analysis emerge, interview schedules and observation guides generally allow for open-ended responses and are flexible enough for the observer to note and collect data on significant dimensions of the topic (1992, p77).

It is necessary to clarify why the researcher began with questions on the strengths and weaknesses of the syllabus. At the outset, in Chapter 2, the researcher argued that the word syllabus is not synonymous with curriculum, and that the syllabus is really a small part of curriculum. Also, the syllabus is stagnant and static in the absence of the interactions and interpretations of the teachers. Yet, the researcher acknowledges that the drama syllabus, ie. the document, does provide a pragmatic entry into discussions on the drama curriculum. Probes on the Interview Schedule allowed the discussions to develop beyond the above and to capture the interactions between teachers and pupils, the more intricate unfoldings of teaching and learning in the school contexts and the processes involved in curriculum.

After having conducted the interviews, the researcher was in a position to make retrospective assessments on the purposes served by the interview schedule. During the first two interviews the researcher was very dependent on the schedule. This obviously reflected her insecurity within the new role of research, as she did not want to deviate from the schedule lest she wandered off into irrelevant areas. But, by the third interview, as a result of experience and with the benefit of hindsight, the views of the respondents were allowed to become the stimulation for the flow of the conversation. Although the interview schedule provided the basic structure of the conversation, it was used less and less as the researcher’s confidence with the interviewing process increased. Thus the interviews became less directed. Vulliamy, Lewin & Stephens (1990) reinforce the above experience when he argues that the central concern with all qualitative research is to avoid the imposition of an inappropriate framework by the researcher on the researched and to maintain the

connections between the processes of theorizing and the world view of the research subjects (1990, p86). Logan (1984) adds to the above issue when he proposes that as interviewers we need constant self monitoring to reveal to what extent we are still guilty of importing into and imposing our categories onto interviewees (in Powney and Watts, 1987, p24). It must, however, be stated in no uncertain terms, that the same issues were dealt with in all the interviews.

3.3.4 Mediation of the Interview Schedule

The above focus of “mediation of the interview schedule” shows the extent to which the interview schedule was not ‘strictly’ followed in a similar manner through all the interviews. Even though the researcher employed various strategies to direct each of the respondents towards the research focus, it was ultimately the respondent who determined the texture of the interview. This may appear contradictory, but in the unfolding of the interviews the researcher allowed the respondents to talk spontaneously but ensured that they maintained the focus of this research study.

The researcher decided to study the transcripts and choose examples that pointed to instances where the researcher had to play different roles in respect of the following:-

1. To bring the respondent back to the research focus.
2. To empathize with and to support the respondent, so that the respondent was gently prodded along.
3. To summarize what the respondent had said in order to determine whether the researcher’s interpretation of the respondent’s meaning and the respondent’s intended meaning were in concurrence.
4. To call for clarification from the respondent in instances where the meaning of the respondent’s response was not lucid.

The following are examples taken from the transcripts depicting the above:

- * *You have touched on it a bit earlier in the conversation, what is the status of the subject within your school?*
- * *We will come to the issue of who is going to be developing the syllabus shortly, but right now we are still on the issue of the weaknesses of the syllabus.*
- * *You are saying some very valuable things but it's just that the structure of this interview schedule governs me to direct you in a more specific way.*
- * *You have covered many areas over and above my giving you the various probes, but there is one very specific aspect of the syllabus that you need to respond to...*
- * *I get what you are saying, now let's give you another focus.*
- * *So you don't really see the need for this drama syllabus, is that what you are saying?*
- * *So, what you are saying, Katy, is that as much as you think there is emphasis on the final product, there is too much focus on that to the extent of neglecting certain critical skills that need to be inculcated. Okay, let's give you another focus...*
- * *Basically what you are saying is that there is a tension that exists between creative methodology and the teaching of the content at a critical ideological level?*
- * *What you are saying is that the power of learning lies with the teacher and ultimately it's the critical practitioner that can innovate.*
- * *What does "close to the children's lives" mean ?*

- * *Can you provide more feedback on what you mean by the term “elitism”?*
- * *What is your interpretation of a “Drama” student?*

The above examples reflect very clearly that meaning cannot be taken as given and that it is always negotiated, defined and redefined within context. It is always necessary to clarify meaning as language is complex and within the control of the people using it. The issues of meaning and interpretations will be dealt with more fully, under the section of Data Analysis in this Chapter, where the researcher considered, specifically, the issue of knowledge as a social construction.

3.3.5 Interview Context

Hitchcock and Hughes describe the interview as a complex piece of social interaction, and it was important for the researcher to be aware of what might be described as the “dynamics” of the interview situation (1989, p88). The following are some of the dynamics that were considered both before and during interviews: Researcher effects, characteristics of the researcher, characteristics of the respondents, and the nature of researcher-respondent relationship. Powney and Watts reinforce the above in their view that the interview is as complex as any other social interaction and interviewer bias cannot be avoided (1981, p36). It was the researcher’s intention to recognise the influence of a variety of social, cultural and linguistic factors that influence and ultimately shape the unfoldings within the interview process.

At this point in the research process, it becomes necessary to acknowledge the familiarity trap within which the researcher had placed herself. Delamont (1992) argues that the problem of over-familiarity is a central one in qualitative research (1992, p40). She goes on to cite Howard Becker’s description of it, i.e. :

I have talked to a couple of teams of research people who have sat around in classrooms trying to observe and it is like pulling teeth to get them to see or write anything beyond what ‘everyone’ knows (ibid).

All Drama teachers belong to a “family” of Drama teachers. This quality of togetherness and closeness stems from the following factors: The total number of teachers teaching the subject is relatively small. A number of orientation meetings are held each year to share ideas on methodology and the content of teaching the subject, and the meeting contexts allows for the drama teachers to become better acquainted with each other.

The literature, however, warns the novice researcher of the issue of familiarity within the context being researched. Delamont (1992) cogently states that novice and experienced teachers would benefit from adopting the aims of researchers fighting familiarity. She goes on to say that many social settings and especially educational institutions are too familiar (1992, p42). This is also reinforced by Bogdan and Biklen’s view that :

Conducting a study with people you know can be confusing and upsetting. Becoming a researcher means more than learning specific skills and procedures. It involves changing your way of thinking about yourself and your relations with others. It involves feeling comfortable with the role of “researcher”. If people you know are your research subjects the transition from your old self to your researcher self becomes ambiguous (1992, p61).

The nexus of the researcher as interviewer and the researcher as drama teacher, presented a double-barrel of bias, subjectivity and self-fulfilling prophecies. The conjunctive effect of the above roles played by the researcher had to be checked constantly through the process of reflexivity. The researcher also decided to make a concerted effort to monitor closely the issue of familiarity. In retrospect, the researcher appreciated the valuable advice provided by Delamont and Bogdan and Biklen. There were many moments in the interviews where the researcher had to make a conscious effort to remind herself that she was a researcher and not a fellow drama teacher. Another problem that researcher faced was, to what extent were the drama teachers reacting and responding to the researcher as their ‘known’ colleague, rather than to the question posed? After reading the interview transcripts it became clear that the quality of the responses pointed to teachers having thought deeply as most responses were substantial enough and captured the complexity, nuances and

ambiguities of the teaching processes. (This will be reflected in Chapter 4 under “Teacher Perspectives”).

Ultimately, the issue of familiarity resides together with the issue of empathy. At the one extreme, familiarity poses a problem, yet at the same time at the other extreme, intimate knowledge of the respondents creates valuable moments of intense empathy and understanding within the interview context. Hitchcock and Hughes reinforce this point when they say that qualitative researchers point towards the importance of the establishment of rapport, empathy and understanding between interviewer and interviewee (1989, p85). As a result of the researcher being familiar with the respondent, the researcher knew each of the ten teachers by their first names. Calling the respondents by their first names allowed for more empathy and human contact to be established.

Hitchcock and Hughes state that the main sources of bias and influence upon interviews is generally regarded as being the personal characteristics of the interviewer (1989, p87).

The researcher also found that in some of the interviews, the drama teachers felt threatened and intimidated by the shift in role of their colleague, ie the shift from fellow drama teacher to interviewer and researcher, and as a result it became unclear as to whether they were issuing academic rhetoric to please the researcher or whether they were responding honestly to the issues at hand. It must be noted however, that the researcher was sensitized to the above atmosphere of a potential threat and quickly responded by attempting to create a more relaxed atmosphere that replaced the above fears by more positive feelings. Powney and Watts effectively describe the respondents’ need to want to adopt an appropriate role, that is, aided and abetted by the interviewer, and they try to please by giving the kinds of information and replies that they believe the interviewer wants (1981, p47).

Because the interviews took place in two different contexts, viz the context of the school and the context of the drama teachers’ home, the researcher decided to describe one interview from each of the contexts. But before specifically describing

these two different interview contexts, a summary of the common steps taken within all interviews is provided.

Most Drama teachers interviewed were articulate, reflective, perceptive, responsive and willing to talk, and some of them even wanted to take total control of the interview. The latter proved to be slightly problematic, even though the researcher had to concede that the above response resulted in gaining the teachers' framework and their perspectives on the many issues within which curriculum and curriculum development were embedded. The researcher, however, had constantly to remind teachers to be more specific and directed as there were times when they wanted to proceed uninterrupted even though the conversation was drifting well away from the point of issue. The researcher was able to conclude that drama teachers displayed a "hunger" to reflect upon their professional lives in the presence of their colleague who was now wearing the new hat of researcher. This need to want to talk reflects much of the loneliness and isolation of Drama teachers within the culture of teaching. There was also a need within the drama teachers to want to unburden themselves to someone who was willing to listen. Ultimately the interview session allowed the teachers to catharsize. "Egocentrism" would be too strong a word to use to describe the behaviour of the drama teachers, rather drama teachers interviewed displayed a strong sense of confidence and self-assurance. The reader will be able to identify with some of the above when she reads the perspectives of the teachers in Chapter 4.

Vulliamy, Lewin & Stephens provide valuable insights into the establishing of a rapport :

I developed an approach to interviewing in which I attempted to establish rapport as quickly as possible and build a relationship of common concern for problems in science teaching. I used the stance of an embattled colleague (that is someone with similar professional concerns and problems as the interviewee.) (in Vulliamy, 1990, p121).

The researcher has again to acknowledge that the creation of empathy and rapport are vital ingredients for good interviewing. It was easy to nod in agreement, smile and

also laugh at the contextualized jokes, reinforce and accept most of what the drama teachers were saying. It was easy, to get into the stance of an “embattled” colleague, as the researcher is a Drama teacher. On the other hand, Delemont (1992) argues that the teacher researcher researching and conducting interviews with colleagues does present peculiar ethical and analytical issues. The teacher researcher interviewing fellow teachers is simultaneously teacher and a researcher.

This dichotomy is often very difficult to manage since it requires the teacher to be both an interested party but not so interested as to take matters for granted (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989, p91).

In retrospect, the researcher learnt that while a good rapport needs to be established with respondents, this does not on the other hand entail complete identification with them.

The researcher made use of a conversational style in the interview. Goetz and LeCompte (1984, p131) confirm that most qualitative researchers prefer to conduct interviews in the conversational mode of everyday interaction. Lofland (1971) emphasizes that this mode communicates empathy, encouragement and understanding (cited in Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

At the beginning of each interview, the researcher clarified the nature and intentions of the research. All interviews took place with the respondent and the researcher facing one another, in most cases across a table. Tape-recording was one of the methods used for recording the interviews.

Each respondent was asked whether the interview could be taped so as to enable the researcher to remember everything that was said and to analyse the responses more closely. None of the teachers refused, rather, they were willing to be tape-recorded and most of them asked to listen to themselves once the interview had been concluded.

The researcher also took down notes as the interview progressed. This note taking consisted of jotting down the main features and exchanges of the interview. It must

be acknowledged that both note taking and tape- recording introduces more tension and insecurity into an already contrived encounter. Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) have argued that note-taking and recording are not simply different ways of recording data but actually constitute different ways of going about research. Walker's comments make the difference clear:

Note-taking draws the researcher into the interpretation early in the study and in one sense makes the researcher more of a person in the eyes of the subject. Tape-recording lends itself to a recessive process by burying it in the editing and selection of extracts from transcripts (Hitchcock & Hughes 1989, p95).

Writing about the research process right at the outset is necessary, as this forms the beginning of thinking about the research.

Punch (1986) states that pivotal to the whole relationship between the researcher and the researched is access and acceptance (cited in Burgess, 1989, p60). The above relationship contains a number of ethical implications about openness, commitment and confidentiality. Burgess maintains that the relationship implies a respect for the right of the individual whose privacy is not invaded and who is not harmed, deceived, betrayed or exploited (1989, p65).

The question of confidentiality did arise, although it was not a major problem in this research: e.g. some teachers wished to make critical comments about the activities of fellow drama teachers and also, on the role played by the subject advisor, but did not want to be quoted directly. The researcher assured them that she would be using pseudonyms in her research report in order to protect the identity of the teacher.

However, as Barnes (1979) remarks :

Confidentiality is at risk from the very moment when the scientist is told or allowed to see something that would be normally hidden.
(cited in Burgess, 1989, p70).

There were situations during interviews when the teachers told the researcher things that were "just between ourselves" or "in confidence" when the tape-recorder was

still on. In other instances, the researcher was asked to switch the tape-recorder off. The teachers then proceeded to provide details which they did not wish to be made public. Burgess poses an interesting question. If the information is confidential why is the researcher being told? He goes on to provide an even more interesting response to the question :

In a Catholic school such interviews are often likened to confessions which imply an opportunity for individuals to unburden themselves. However, it is really a transfer of a burden from them to me (1989, p70).

The information given in these situations provided valuable data towards gaining insight into the realities of teaching and learning and the researcher used this information but with discretion.

Mutual trust is involved in the interview relationship and it would have been short-sighted if the researcher had exercised discretion insensitively.

3.4.1 Interviewing Within The Context Of A School

Before proceeding to describe an example of an interview within the school, and an interview within the home of the teacher, it is necessary to mention the pilot interview conducted. Before the researcher began the formal interviewing process she engaged in a trial interview within which she gained knowledge on how the interview would proceed. As a result of the pilot interview she reviewed some of the areas on the interview schedule. Teachers initially negotiated the researcher's entry into the school context with the principal of the school. Once the researcher had arrived at the school, the person who mediated between the principal, drama teacher and the researcher was the secretary of the school. After examining closely all the instances of the researcher's entry into the different school contexts, the researcher can confidently conclude that the gatekeeper of the schools was the secretary. This was the result of the strict protocol that was maintained within the schools. She had so constantly mediated between the principal and visitors who came to the school, that she had learnt the rules, to the extent that there were times she stopped consulting the principal and assumed his power.

In retrospect, access to the teachers was gained by polite, well-handled conversations with the secretary. The secretary asked the researcher to wait for a few minutes as the teacher was due to return soon. Once she returned and began to set up the interview context, the researcher became progressively more and more aware of the immense confidence and control that this particular teacher had within the context of her school. She was able to enlist the co-operation of his fellow teachers and very smoothly and efficiently organised the interview within the “quiet” context of library.

The researcher then commenced with the interview that proceeded relatively well, except for a few interruptions and disturbances, i.e. the school buzzer went off at every 35 minute intervals, pupils came in and interrupted the teacher with messages for the teacher and during the lunch break the pupils were very vociferous on the grounds. The above disturbances naturally affected the quality of the recordings.

As a result of the researcher being present within the school contexts, she was able to capture the varied flavours and fortunes of this situation, i.e. the setting of the school, the relationships that the drama teacher shared with her colleagues within the school, the power possessed by the teacher in the school, the drama classroom, the constant movement of pupils to their various classrooms, the ‘power’ of the secretary. In retrospect, interviewing within the school context enabled the researcher to read more deeply into the perspectives of the teachers as the backdrop of pulsating school activities provided a vital and relevant context to the interviews.

3.4.2 Interviewing Within The Context of the Teacher’s Home

Interviewing within the context of the home was very much less pressurized and urgent compared to interviewing within the school context. With the pressure of the accountability within the school removed, the teacher was more relaxed and comfortable. The teacher proceeded with no interruptions or unnecessary disturbances. The researcher was, however, able to pick up interesting clues that reflected the extent to which the teacher allowed the school and her teaching to permeate her life at home. e.g. the drama books on the bookcase, the collection of video-tapes of various Shakespearian and other relevant plays that were produced, photos reflecting the memories of plays produced at school and the drama excursions

undertaken. It was obvious that this particular teacher was committed to teaching drama.

The above data were examples of the unrecorded data that were (technically) reported and it was less obvious. These data were not officially recorded but used to provide a context for each of the dialogues with the teachers to be interpreted. It must be recorded that five of the interviews were conducted within the school context and five of the interviews were conducted within the context of the teachers' home. Stenhouse (1980) calls these kinds of data the researcher's 'second record'. Also the more elusive data, what Hull (1984) calls a 'black market' of records of events and on the spot interpretations, the accumulated knowledge of participants' meaning systems - only some of which appear on the written record (cited in Powney & Watts, 1981, p17). At this point the researcher acknowledges that there are even more data that were not recorded, but were nevertheless used in the process of interpretation and making meaning of the teachers' perspectives. These data, because they were unrecorded, were used at a more tacit, hidden, or even subconscious level.

Kincheloe makes the following very pertinent points on the importance of contexts within qualitative research. His arguments further reinforce the importance of acknowledging the context within which the research is taking place:

One of the most important aspects of qualitative research is its concern with context. "Context stripping" is an unfortunate feature of science, and as such, scientific methods which do not consciously work to avoid this stripping distort the reality they attempt to portray. Human experience is shaped in particular contexts and cannot be understood if removed from those contexts " (1991, p144).

Sherman & Webb (1988) reinforce the above argument:

The contexts of inquiry are not to be contrived or constructed or modified; they are natural and must be taken as they are found (1988, p5).

Shimahara, also maintains that qualitative research is the study of events as they 'evolve in natural settings' or 'contexts in process' (ibid). Thus, if the researcher

wants to maintain the research in as naturalistic a setting as possible, contexts must not be constructed or modified. The researcher maintains that she should have organised all interviews within the context of the school, as the atmosphere of “urgency” within the school context was more relevant to the drawing of meaningful correlations between the perspectives of the teachers and the school context as compared to the more relaxed and ‘laid back’ context of the home. Ultimately, the school is the natural environment, as curriculum and curriculum related matters unfold here.

As a result of all the readings done on interviewing and the interview context, and after engaging in the above contexts, the researcher maintains that the respondents do not always say what they mean in so many words. Social meanings are complex and are not revealed by a dictionary-like translation of responses. Given the above arguments, the researcher notes the valuable insights provided by John Lofland (1989), insights that the researcher was able to empathize with, and in retrospect deemed these insights to be an ideal conclusion on the topic of interviewing:-

I would say that successful interviewing is not unlike carrying on unthreatening, self controlled, supportive, polite and cordial interactions in everyday life. If one can do that, one already has the main interpersonal skills necessary to interviewing. It is my personal impression, however, that interactants who practise these skills (even if they possess them) are not numerous in our society (in Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989, p85).

3.4.3 Transcription of the Tapes

All interviews were transcribed. Delamont describes transcription as a very time-consuming task. She goes on to specify that one hour of a tape recorded interview will take six hours to transcribe roughly, and this is without any of the linguistic features that are recorded for conversational analysis (1992, p158). The researcher had assured her typist, that, if at any point in the conversation, she could not make sense of what was being said, she should leave blank spaces, which would later be filled in by the researcher after she had listened to the tapes more intently. The researcher checked each transcript by listening to the cassette and ensured that the

transcript did reflect the recording faithfully. Also, if the typist had made an error or had left something out, the researcher corrected this. The researcher also added the following to the transcripts. An example of the transcript is (Appendix B):

1. The respondent's use of pauses.
2. A description of the tone used by the respondent.
3. A description of emphasis and stressing of words used by the respondent.

The task of transcribing was very time consuming indeed, and the process took over three weeks to complete.

3.5 Analysis of the Data

Delamont (1992) uses a very appropriate metaphoric title for her chapter on analysing data that points to how enduring and important analytic work in qualitative research is: "*Beauty lives though lilies die.*"

The following succinct definition by Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p120) provides insight into what analysis entails:

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others. For most, the end products of research are books, papers, presentations, or plans for action. Data analysis moves you from the rambling pages of description to those products.

The researcher was sustained by a combination of intellectual excitement and tenacity, her feelings evoked by the belief that she was really using the data to allow themes and ideas to emerge. She was also very aware of allowing the perspectives of the drama teachers to emerge, rather than impose her categories of interpretation into the data

and she attempted to follow closely the advice and arguments provided by the following authors. Husserl (1960) argues that:

We should set aside all previous habits of thought, see through and break down the mental barriers which these habits have set along the horizons of our thinking and in full... freedom proceed and lay hold of those genuine problems still awaiting fresh formulation which the liberated horizons on all sides disclose to us... these are hard demands, yet nothing less is required (cited in Sherman and Webb, 1988, p123).

Spradley (1979) reinforces the above when he says that:

Before you impose your theories on the people you study, find out how these people define the world (cited in Powney and Watts, 1987, p13).

Logan (1984) adds his voice to the above perspective by suggesting that we should delay developing our theories of social meaning until after analysing the patterns found in informants' actions and the meaning in their statements (ibid, 1987, p13).

The researcher was wary not to allow materials to pile up unanalysed, and unread. She engaged in constant reading over and over again of the field notes and interview transcripts. The reading and re-reading of the above ensured that the researcher became familiar with the data. The process of becoming familiar with the data cannot be side-tracked, underplayed or marginalized. It was very important and necessary that the researcher engaged in the above process vigorously. Familiarity with the data reduced the feelings of being overwhelmed by the complexity of the data. The following authors' description of their immersion within their data was something the researcher was easily able to identify with, because ultimately, it was necessary to share an intense relationship with the data and the researcher has to become mentally saturated with it for the purposes of allowing the perspectives of the drama teachers to emerge.

Nias employs an interesting gardening analogy to reflect the extent of her immersion within her data in the following: ...one rakes the data into such a fine tilth that ideas germinate easily (cited in Walford, 1991, p162).

Reynolds (1991) reinforces the depth of immersion needed for ideas and themes to emerge from the data, when he argues as follows :

...the extent and quality of the information I collected challenged me to search for and eventually find connections and relationships between apparently isolated ideas. In seeking not to drown in the data, I found unexpected reefs at my feet (cited in Walford, p162).

Another question that needed clarity was the following: i.e. was ongoing analysis done by the researcher or did the researcher engage in analysis once all the data was collected? Bogdan and Biklen provide a distinction between the above two processes in the following :

In one approach, analysis is concurrent with data collection and is more or less completed by the time the data is gathered. This approach is more commonly practised by experienced field workers. If you know what you are doing it is most efficient and effective. The other mode involves collecting data before doing the analysis (1992, p154).

Although the researcher did engage in ongoing analysis she must concede, however, that her neophyte status within the qualitative research paradigm limited the extent to which the above analysis was employed. An example of where ongoing analysis was used was in the adaptation of the interview schedule. As the researcher grew more confident about interviewing the teachers and as she developed hindsight about the interviewing process, she was enabled by the latter to adapt, and change the interview schedule according to the relevant issues raised by the teachers around the research focus. As new insights emerged from the teachers, a few additional probes were included in the interview schedule. But, most of the data analysis officially began in retrospect of the data collection process.

3.5.1 Thinking About The Data

The following three processes i.e. speculation, venting and theorizing were all different ways used by the researcher for thinking about the data.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p164) advise researchers not to be afraid to speculate.

They argue as follows :

The lack of confidence one usually feels on the first research attempt often makes one too cautious about forming ideas. Worries about getting details and facts straight can hold a researcher down. We do not suggest that facts and details are not important, for ideas must be grounded in the data, but they are means to clear thinking and to generating ideas, not the end.

The following two writers also remind us about the process of forming ideas. Mills (1959) stipulates that facts discipline reason; but reason is the advance guard in any field of learning (in Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p164). Glaser & Strauss (a central figure in the development of qualitative analysis) makes an interesting distinction between good ideas and findings:

Good ideas contribute the most to the science of human behaviour.

Findings are soon forgotten, but not ideas (Glaser & Strauss, 1978, p8).

Another suggestion provided by Glaser (1978) concerns *venting*. He describes the above process as follows:

Ideas and understanding will come to you on a regular basis as you go about your research. You are likely to become excited by this creative process. It can be exhilarating. Mulling over ideas creates the energy you may want to vent.

The researcher was easily able to empathize with the above feelings evoked by venting, and she spent many solitary hours writing about the data in order to sustain the venting.

Goetz and LeCompte provide an insight into the process of theorizing, another thinking process that the researcher was able to identify with:

Theorizing is a cognitive process of discovering or manipulating abstract categories and relationships among those categories. It is

the fundamental tool of any research and is used to develop or confirm explanations for how and why things happen as they do. The formal tasks of theorizing are perceiving, comparing, contrasting, aggregating, and ordering, establishing of linkages and relationships and speculating (1984, p167).

In retrospect of the data analysis process, the researcher contends that writing about the data is a vital discipline that encourages interrogation of the data and facilitates creative thinking.

3.5.2 “Data Crunching”

As a result of her readings, the researcher had become aware of how easily qualitative researchers became buried under their piles and piles of fieldnotes and transcripts. Delamont cogently states that too much data can challenge the skills of a mountaineer (1992, p205). As the present research was small-scale, the researcher had not accumulated mountains of data. However, she was able to empathize with the feeling of helplessness in response to unanalysed data. Also, to a novice researcher, even a modest amount of data was perceived as intimidating. The first task was to reduce the data. Goetz and LeCompte (1987) make use of an interesting term that covers the above process i.e. “*Data Crunching*.” After the researcher had gone through the former process of familiarization with the data, she then engaged in the task of summarizing each of the transcripts onto a double page. The summary of each transcript was done in the following way :- categories were taken from the interview schedule and the following columns of categories were drawn :

- 1.1 strength of the syllabus
- 1.2 weakness of syllabus
- 1.3 subject development
- 1.4 status of the subject within the school
- 1.5 the role of the subject advisor

Over and above the above categories, many other themes emerged, themes that teachers focussed on irrespective of direct probing through the use of the interview

schedule. The researcher created a separate column on the double page to accommodate other important emergent themes (see Appendix C) for an example of the summary). On the front and back pages of the summary the researcher reflected on the particularities of each of the teachers' assumptions about the process of teaching and learning, for example (teaching the child first, the examinations are all powerful and the teachers are agents for change).

Also, page references of more important and meaningful quotations were also noted on the above pages.

All the emergent themes were then put onto a chart (Appendix D) and each time a teacher supported a theme, it was ticked. Ultimately, the ticks allowed the researcher to view at a glance the commonalities and variance within the data.

The researcher also kept a notebook which she had entitled "Very important insights on the data". Five pages in the book was given to the views of each teacher. As the researcher read and re-read the transcripts and gained clearer insights and realizations about the data she jotted these down in the notebook under each particular teacher. The following examples taken from the above notebook reflect the way in which the researcher wrote about the data, i.e:

- In Farouk's interview, the researcher found it difficult to maintain control and to proceed systematically through the interview schedule. The researcher mediated the interview schedule to suit the nature of the dialogues between the respondent and herself.

Ultimately, this particular teacher was really challenging the researcher. Irrespective of the interview schedule, the teacher gets back to her underlying assumption for teaching i.e. the syllabus needs to be grounded in the pupils' world and culture.

- It was interesting to note that Charles was very apologetic throughout the interview and kept saying that he was sorry.

- The more experienced the teacher was, the more sceptical she became of the power of drama or education to become the panacea for the ills of society and she acknowledged that drama was just one of the influencing contexts in the life of the pupil.

3.5.3 “...Watching them Emerge Surfacing like Dolphins...”

The above heading has been taken from Merrer’s description of data analysis (cited in Walford, 1991, p51).

All the processes described thus far are indispensable, the researcher had to go through each one in order to arrive at the stage where themes emerged easily from the data. In other words, in order to make the necessary inter-connections and links between the data, the researcher first went through all the former processes.

The researcher then made a list of all the emergent themes on a chart. The list of themes was long and went into approximately twenty-five themes. The researcher was in a dilemma. Could she write about all the different themes individually? After studying the themes more deeply, she realized that the themes did not exist in isolation of each other, rather there were intrinsic interconnections and mutually inclusive overlappings between the themes. Also, disjunctions, contradictions and tensions existed within the themes and between the themes. After organising the themes in various ways, the researcher eventually arrived at three overriding themes which appeared to incorporate more or less all the other themes. Finding connections and links between the data was a “mind boggling” experience. Miles’ (1983) description of qualitative data as an “attractive nuisance” is apt and holds true (cited in Schratz, 1993, p142). (The interlinks between the themes will be dealt with more intensively in the introduction of Chapter Four).

The researcher had to consciously avoid the categories of the Interview Schedule controlling the structure of the analysis. There was a strong urge to super-impose the categories from the interview schedule onto the data, as the interview schedule was one of the ways that was, initially, used to organise the data. In retrospect, pre-

determined categories can become a nuisance, as they work towards confining the researcher's vision, and there was a strong tendency to want to read the data in such a way as to reinforce the categories in the interview schedule rather than to allow the themes to emerge from the data.

Qualitative data is rich, colourful and complex (Bogdan and Biklen, (1992); Goetz and LeCompte (1984); and Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) and it was the researcher's aim to represent the above qualities in the most valid and reliable manner. In order to unravel some of the complexity of the data, the researcher had to immerse herself in the data. The image of drowning one's self in the data is an appropriate one. In retrospect, data analysis was facilitated by the researcher sharing an intimate relationship with the data. When reading Chapter Four the reader will come across long quotations that represent the voice of the drama teacher. Schratz argues that by paying more attention to the original voices of the actors, researchers make room for a broader view of social reality in their research (1993, p1) . He elaborates on the above by arguing that in order to achieve this, the research instruments have to be tuned to enable the study of educational practices as closely as possible without destroying the authentic meaning for the people involved (ibid). The researcher respected the original voice of the drama teachers and has allowed them to speak for themselves by using the rich density of meaning inherent within the direct quotation.

A very important choice was made by the researcher in the way in which she decided to interpret and analyse the data. In the introduction and in Chapter Two, the researcher made reference to the premise that knowledge is a social construction. Yet again, the above basic premise needs to be addressed. Throughout the data analysis phase, the researcher was aware of the pertinent reality that meaning was not perceived as objective and given but, rather, meaning was interpreted. In the final analysis, the researcher concedes that she made a choice in the method used to analyse the data, and is willing to accept and concede that any other person analysing the data could make different choices.

CHAPTER 4

THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE SPEECH AND DRAMA TEACHERS

Emergent Themes

Three themes emerged from the data. The three major themes that emerged are as follows:

- 4.1 The “Eurocentric” syllabus
- 4.2 Teachers are mediators of the syllabus
- 4.3 The need to redefine and change Speech and Drama
- 4.4 Minor Themes.

Each of the themes do not exist in mutually exclusive categories, rather they overlap and they feed into each other. Each theme does not have a monolithic quality.

Themes are riven with conflict, variety and ambiguity. At the end of the report on each of the themes, an attempt has been made to link the themes with each other.

Ultimately, it was the researcher’s aim to reveal the complexity of the phenomena in the data and through ‘thick description,’ the researcher hoped to achieve validity in reporting on the data (Geertz, 1973). The researcher was bent on allowing the voice of the drama teacher to come through loudly and clearly. It was inevitable, that as a result of reporting on ten different voices, one had to focus on meanings in a way in which the reader is able to see the contradictions, tensions, differences, as well as the overriding similarities.

4.1 Eurocentricism - “The Imposition Of An Alien Western Heritage”

All drama teachers, except one, agreed that the syllabus was eurocentric and steeped in a western cultural choice that was foreign and alienating to the pupils. The theme of eurocentricism was an overwhelming and powerful one, and, one which was repeated consistently in the dialogues with the teachers. But, there were differences in the levels of interpretation that teachers applied to the concept of eurocentricism. On

the one hand, five of the teachers used the term loosely and supported their view by citing peripheral examples of eurocentricism within their teaching experiences. By contrast, the other five teachers interpreted eurocentricism as an intrinsic choice within which all aspects of drama teaching were immersed i.e. they interpreted eurocentricism to be more than just content bias; they saw it manifested in the approach teachers used in teaching, in the character of examinations, and also in the perceptions that teachers held towards their pupils. Kooby, a teacher who represented the first category, which the researcher had chosen to call the “restricted” category to facilitate the distinction between the two groups of teachers, interpreted the term “eurocentric” as follows :

“I still think to a large extent we are eurocentric, especially in the Principles of Drama, a section where the plays we study are very difficult for the kids to identify with ... The kids are intimidated when they see Shakespeare - immediately they see something that doesn't apply to them. When they study plays by Indian writers - there is an immediate link or connection as compared to them studying “Our Town” or “Everyman”.

Even though the researcher acknowledges that the terms used i.e. “elaborate” and “restricted” brings the theorist Bernstein (1977) to mind, she however used these terms by giving them her own meaning. It is worth mentioning that the words “elaborated” and “restricted” were chosen to represent the difference in the depth with which teachers responded to the word eurocentricism. Teachers in the “elaborated” code were the teachers that aligned themselves with the viewpoints of the critical theorists. This area will be returned to in Chapter Five of the research.

Sally, a teacher representing the second category i.e “elaborated” category of teachers interpreted it as such :

“Basically, I see very few strengths because the syllabus is very isolated in a sense that it has very few links - real links with the students that it is being levelled at. For instance, culturally there are very few links. The syllabus is highly eurocentric stemming from a consciousness which is so western in its origin; stemming from rituals, traditions; conventions and ideologies

which are very distanced from the students' perception, background, from the entire students' being..."

Lynn, another teacher, from the "elaborated" category reinforced the above views and reflected the extent to which she believed that eurocentricism was prevalent in the syllabus:

"It is far too orientated towards the product and towards the notion of the great plays of the western tradition and very little emphasis is given to play devising or to creativity that would lend itself to the development of South African theatre."

Charles, yet another teacher from the "elaborated" category who was clearly concerned with the eurocentric bias, irritably said, *"It has become very, very British, not even eurocentric, totally British. That's perpetuated now in our school system."* The above teachers also felt that the choice of western bias subtly spelt out to the child that it (the western influence) was good for the child and that it had a "civilising" influence. Two teachers linked the term eurocentric to elitism. Addis provided the insight into the marriage of the above terms :

"Elitism in a sense that it is far too academic and eurocentric. It is far too alienating in its conceptualization. The syllabus deals with things like Theatre History, Principles of Speech, dance and movement - all of these are not in the child's daily world/life experiences. Also the theories from which they are grounded or from which they are developed are all elitist.."

Three teachers and the subject advisor stressed that the South African component within the syllabus was a feeble and unconvincing attempt to make the syllabus appear more credible. They went on to argue that the inclusion of the South African component in the syllabus was tokenism and a mere grafting on, for the sake of appeasement. The following words of the subject advisor reflect the above issue:

"The whole business of doing South African theatre in standard nine; or as an alternative you can do Eastern Theatre is a real slap in the face, it is very insulting, it was obviously just tagged on in the last minute".

Rasi also stressed how unconvincing the above attempt was:

“Fugard in the syllabus does not make it South African. One tiny piece - Black theatre in standard nine doesn't make it a people's culture.”

Despite the use of direct probing on the part of the researcher, one teacher did not focus on the above theme of eurocentricism at all. She stood out as an exception to the rest of the drama teachers who all argued that the syllabus was eurocentric. The researcher probed as follows:

“Do you think that much of the content of the syllabus is relevant to your pupils in terms of choice of textbook, in terms of History of Theatre section etc?”

However, she did not perceive relevance in terms of value bias, rather she interpreted relevance as a link to the child's 'general' experiences. In retrospect, the researcher questioned whether this teacher had taught the subject with the interpretation of knowledge as neutral rather than as a social construction. It is necessary at this point to note that the term “eurocentric” had been used often in drama meetings as half the teachers made reference to feeling insecure about employing the “overused” term. The question that remained however, was, why did this particular teacher negate the above issue even though it was one that was obvious and often spoken about at drama meetings?

Eight of the ten Drama Teachers who stressed the irrelevance of the western heritage also called for a more South African flavour to be included in the syllabus. Katy argued thus:

“... in terms of losing some of its eurocentric bias, it needs to get more indigenous. We have this weird idea that drama does not exist in the South African context, that we are mere imitations of things that have gone by, whereas there are some very, very skilled and talented people in our country whom we just don't focus on; not just people, but also drama movements.”

Addis also argued strongly in support of the above viewpoint:

“African Theatre is not even an integral part of the syllabus... How can they in this day and age actually negate African theatre?”

The oppressor is ringing in our minds. Those children who leave after matric are going to leave with the lasting impression that theatre never existed in Africa, it originated and only happened in the west.”

The subject advisor also added her view on the above issue:

“I don’t think that pupils should have to choose between the South African situation and Eastern contributions to drama, they should study both. The South African component should be given far more attention, it should form the basis for work both in theory and practical.”

Sally added her perspective on the above issue :

“I cannot see how important it is to study Oscar Wilde or Goldsmith in this day and age - in this crucial transitory period that we are going through. There is so much of material here that needs to be studied. There is so much here with which you can prepare your students, to educate them about a sense of community awareness; about street children, squatters, drug-abuse, South African politics, and about Phoenix, Chatsworth and Umlazi.”

Ultimately, the more experienced drama teachers also focussed on specific underlying issues within which the theme of eurocentricism was embedded, i.e. they drew strong correlations between eurocentric content and the resulting alienation from the child’s experience. They also asserted that eurocentric content was emphasized over and above the teaching of the child first.

Two of the most experienced teachers, and teachers who had been teaching for over fifteen years, saw the syllabus as an “alien” document that was imposed on them. They voiced their regret at not having been part of the process of making the relevant choices and of not being part of designing the syllabus. Rasi expressed the above point pertinently:

“... it did not evolve out of our own practice or exercise in engaging each other, our students’ and teachers’ voices are lost.”

Another teacher, Farouk, mentioned the word eurocentric, but went on to say that content alone was not the important issue, rather it was the approach of the teacher to teaching it that became relevant. The following are his words on the above issue.

“...it was not enough for me to hear people talk about it being too eurocentric, because the opposite side of the coin was the afrocentric notion. So it didn't matter what kind of ethnocentric texts were being used. You can use a eurocentric text or an afrocentric text, it does not matter to me. But what's more important for me is the way in which we approach the text. That's where the value and function of critical teaching comes in.”

All teachers who saw eurocentricism as problematic went on to add, that when the syllabus was not working for them, they made a concerted effort to move beyond this constraint, by making it more relevant in their approaches used in teaching it. This concluding point brings the researcher to the next theme; that of teachers mediating the curriculum.

4.2 Teachers As Mediators Of The Syllabus

At the outset, it must be acknowledged that even though the researcher has tackled the theme of eurocentricism first, the second theme that of teachers reporting on their mediations of the syllabus was the more overriding and all encompassing one. All ten Drama Teachers reported that they mediated the syllabus. They ‘interpreted’ it, they ‘imbibed’ it, they ‘threw it’ out, they ‘worked with some parts’ and ‘forgot’ the others; and, they made it ‘relevant’ to their pupils. Ultimately, all teachers reflected that, to varying degrees, they interacted with the syllabus and saw it as something that could be ‘gotten around’ if it did not work for them and their pupils. The following are quotations of various teachers who reflect the extent to which they interacted with the syllabus and mediated it :

“The only way that the child is going to learn these values is through the teacher's influence in the practical work; the syllabus itself does not prompt it, the syllabus has to be interpreted by the teacher.

There has to be a lot of flexibility and a lot of imagination from the teacher in response to the syllabus.

The whole approach to the syllabus depends entirely on the teacher and how that teacher feels towards it. Whatever text you're doing you want to relate it to now and you want to relate it to what's going on and you should try to find the relevance for it within the present system."

Charles' response, showed the extent to which a teacher was prepared to abandon an irrelevant syllabus:

"To be quite honest with you, lots of times I forget about that syllabus. I do what I want to. I remember right at the outset there was even a guideline on what you should do, in which period,... I ignored all that and I did what I thought was needed at that specific time."

Farouk reflected very concisely the extent and the degree to which he mediated the syllabus in the following line:

"I debunk it and go off into creating my own".

Although all teachers mediated the syllabus, it must, however, be acknowledged that the degree or the extent of this mediation varies. The underlying characteristics that governed the variation were the experiences and academic qualification of the teacher. The data reflected that the more experienced and qualified the teacher was, the more the teachers spoke about the leeway that was adopted by the teacher in the classroom environment and the more confidence was displayed in terms of how they responded to interpreting the syllabus.

A very significant issue that emerged within the theme of teachers' mediation of the syllabus was the specific focus that teachers placed on the role played by the teacher within the curriculum. Eight of the drama teachers stressed the indispensable role played by the teacher in the interpretation of the syllabus and in the unfolding and outcomes of the syllabus. One teacher, Kooby, kept repeating a phrase that captured the above issue: "Ultimately it depends on you as a teacher." Katy also reflected the above issue when she expressed the following:

“ ... if you look at the creative drama section it is what the teacher puts in and what the teachers wants to achieve that determines the correlation.”

Another teacher said that the syllabus depended very much on the teacher and how much effort the teacher could put into it.

Charles, also depicted the extent to which the teacher is the focus of syllabus interpretation in the following:

“It depends finally to a large extent on the teacher. I could take any syllabus and teach it using an approach that allows critical learning to take place. What I’m trying to say is, that I could take the most appalling syllabus and make magic out of it.”

Five teachers spoke specifically about the theme interpretation of the drama syllabus. They all maintained that the syllabus was quite sterile without the interpretation of the teacher. The words of Rasi reinforced the above point:

“If you follow that syllabus without interpreting it yourself and without making internal adjustments then obviously that syllabus is going to be quite sterile.”

The above argument on interpretation of the syllabus is reinforced in Chapter Five under the section ‘Knowledge Construction’.

An interesting correlation between teacher mediation of the syllabus and change emerged. Although it has already been stated and also substantiated that all teachers mediate the syllabus, these mediations needed to be put to closer analysis. It became clear that although seven of the teachers’ mediations were reportedly strong and they argued that these mediations were also impacting on their pupils. However, they remained fixed in the reproductive mould of teaching i.e. they mediated in terms of making the text more relevant to the pupil and they also mediated by employing a more creative teaching approach that resulted in their pupils becoming better interpreters of the text. The above mediations, however, do not reflect fundamental change or attempts to recreate the syllabus, or a shift in focus from perceiving the child as

interpreter of meaning to a creator of meaning. Three of the most experienced teachers and who had also engaged in further studies (each of them had a degree, a teaching diploma and either Honours in Drama or Education, and one teacher completed his Masters degree in Education) challenged the former prevailing norm. This group of teachers will be focused on more specifically under the heading – A' Typical Sample – Chapter Five. The latter group of teachers reflected that they mediated the syllabus to the extent of redefining drama and changing much of what was in the syllabus. Although this may appear to be unlikely at first glance, deeper analysis of the transcripts showed that teachers who mediated in the above manner also provided concrete examples to reinforce and to support their claims. The following are quotations of the teachers that depict mediations reflecting transformation of the syllabus and curriculum. Sal described her mediation as follows:

“What I found most meaningful in my entire eight to nine years of teaching drama, is when something developed totally out of the child’s experience. The educational value that was found there was far, far more interesting; if we worked with a ritual which was familiar to the students and we went through the entire preparation, and the psychological preparation for ritual was in that whole term – and then we did the ritual and we put that into an audience-performer situation where we had an audience to watch that ritual and then we analysed the whole performance of it, and then we found a theory to suit it and went on to find out what technique has been used in terms of a theatre art technique or a type of theatre and we found the whole experience far more meaningful than starting from the known – like the known being something that is given to you like, possibly Shakespeare’s theatre, the Globe, Restoration theatre or a text. It was far more beneficial to create your own text.”

Rasi provides a clear description of the procedure she and her pupils engaged in, to create texts stemming from the pupils’ experiences :

“I’ve done the Std Eight and Nine syllabus where you teach them about the poems e.g. narrative, lyrical etc. I tell my students to master the poem, learn how to speak it etc. At the end of the day I wondered why are we doing this. It is so artificial to have somebody standing out there and saying a poem.

Who does that in real life? I think what we need to do is something that gets them down there to operate it – to doing it themselves – to doing something that interests them. In Std Eight I ditched the idea of the poems and I went into workshopping a play. We took simple themes, like taking the religious books and selecting some dramatic moment, incident or episode and made it relevant to today and looked at those issues with new eyes. For example if Mohammed was faced with the arrogance of the Arabs - now do we have similar parallels here, where do new ideas come in? Where somebody comes in with justice and hope etc. How is he received? Let's start taking that in and let's work it with the new ideas and let's speak the way we normally speak instead of speaking in "fancy flowery" languages. They wrote out the scripts and they loved it because they were working together and because they were creating. When they came out with the product at the end of the day they 'went to town' with costumes, props and today's 'hip' clothes. They enjoyed that work, they engaged themselves with each other. They looked at the written scripts that they had developed and were satisfied. To me standing out there and speaking a poem is an exercise in futility."

Farouk also provided clarity on the method he employed in his teaching :

"It's such a pity that you have such limited time, because what I would like to have done was to take you to the Std Eight class so that they would have demonstrated to you how to use another set of criteria of language, of audience, by using the language of the people - of the language of those in power, audience - what kind of an audience does this work appeal to; to upper well-to-do people, to working class people. Is the genre being employed here eclectic? Is it tragic? Is it a comedy? What is it? Then, ask the questions whose ideology, whose world is being presented?"

Then you look at representation; how are women represented, who's making the choices; how are men represented; how are people of colour represented; how are politically franchised/unfranchised people represented?"

The above teacher was also interviewed about his approach to teaching and an article depicting his Teaching Methodology appeared in the 'Post' – a Durban Indian newspaper.

The above three teachers also reflected in their dialogues that education was intrinsically linked to society and that the structural forces impinging on the educational arena had to be reckoned with before any fundamental changes in education could be effected.

The following viewpoint resulted in an interesting tension i.e. even though these teachers were implementing change in their classrooms, they were still wary of the outside forces bearing down on their microcosm of teaching.

Sally's metaphorical description reflects the above dilemma :

"It is the system - if things have to change drastically I don't believe in changing the frills; the underskirt has to be changed as well."

The above teachers also kept coming back to their basic premise of education i.e. the necessity to teach the child first, but also in a way that was directed by their underlying and governing philosophy of education. The kind of learning that takes place in the classroom must pre-figure the kind of society you ultimately want...

"A drama student is much more than just an interpreter of poems etc. She is one who has the ability to see the contradictions in society and can talk about it confidently; and who can seek humane alternatives to that. A drama student must also be able to see that there is need for getting involved in social issues; and must see the whole act of learning as political."

It was clear that the force with which the teacher mediated the syllabus depended on the teacher's interpretation of education and teaching. The teachers who drew strong parallels between society and education, and who ultimately, assessed the educational outcomes of their teaching in terms of change were more forceful in their talking about their mediation of the syllabus.

It is necessary at this point to acknowledge that, even though all ten teachers in the sample reflected mediation to varying degrees, the subject advisor's views were in stark contrast to the teachers' perspectives. The last group of three teachers reflected that their mediations resulted in alternative ways of interpreting and redefining the drama curriculum (the word 'syllabus' is too confining) and as a result of the strength of their mediations, they were able to create new realities over and above the 'problematic' syllabus. These mediations by teachers depict concerted attempts to change the quality of teaching their subject.

The last group of three teachers reflected that their mediations resulted in alternative ways of interpreting and redefining the drama curriculum (the word "syllabus" was too confining) and as a result of the strength of their mediations, they were able to create new realities over and above "problematic" syllabus. These mediations by teachers depicted concerted attempts to change the quality of teaching their subject.

The following one-liners taken from the transcripts capture in a nutshell the relationship shared by the teachers with their syllabus:

"The syllabus is fundamentally flawed."

"I'll take it and rehash it."

"I ditched the syllabus."

"The syllabus does stink at the moment."

"I don't follow that "hash" of a syllabus breakdown."

"Scrap the whole thing"!

"I debunk it and go off into creating my own.."

4.3 Redefining Drama - "To Remove Much of the "Speech" from it

The third major theme that emerged, was the need to redefine the subject Speech & Drama. All ten teachers agreed that the subject was negatively perceived by pupils, teachers, leadership within the school and people within the broader context of the school but, eight of the teachers together with the subject advisor concurred that the status of the subject was dependent on the strength of the teacher within the culture of the school, while the other two teachers argued that people's perception towards the

subject existed over and above the role played by the teacher within the school. Teachers reported that the more professional, involved and reflective the educator was, the more they were able to stand their ground and create positive perceptions towards the subject in the climate of the school. All teachers called for different types of action to be taken in order to reinterpret and redefine the subject.

The following “one-liners”, taken from the data, reflect some of the perceptions of people within the school:

“It is a joke.”

“Drama is something you do as a last resort.”

“No real learning takes place.”

“Drama is a jorl.”

“Screech and Trauma!”

“Fun and games.”

An issue within the above theme is that of the status of the subject within the school and the “battle” waged by the teachers to establish and maintain enthusiasm for the subject.

Six teachers spoke very specifically about how they had to ‘work hard’ and “battle” at changing the perceptions of people within the school towards their subject. Katy described her intervention thus :

“I am wary that I have to constantly promote the importance and value of drama in the school. I think that I’m scared that it will actually diminish in its value in the way people see it. Whenever there is a significant day in the school’s culture e.g. Arbour Day or Culture Day, I use drama to get messages across to the pupils. In this way I show them that drama is not just laughs and entertainment.”

Sally described her response to the perceptions within her school:

“Initially it was seen as a joke, until I decided to have a talk written out and copies handed out at a staff development meeting, where I was given about thirty to thirty five minutes to address the staff on Speech

and Drama. This was done very formally to set the tone. The teachers were given a paper on what Speech and Drama is all about. They were also given a blank sheet of paper on which they could jot down questions that they needed answers to. This somehow destroyed a lot of the cobwebs, myths, mis-apprehensions and quirks that the staff held towards the subject.”

Kooby, also, described his responses to the perceptions towards drama in his school:

“In my school, I always get comments like, “Hey, are you sure you’re teaching today !” Drama is seen as fun. Initially I used to laugh with them. But, now, instead of getting angry, I point out to them the processes we are engaged in, in the drama classroom. It’s quite a major thing when everyone thinks it’s a big joke, but slowly it’s changing and every year, I always choose different people to help me with the annual school concert, and they are always surprised at the amount of work that is involved.”

Two of the most experienced teachers, who were also male, did not experience any threats to their subject. According to them the subject was well established, and there was support and commitment from the staff, pupils and the administration towards the subject.

As a result of her experiences in visiting the various schools, the subject advisor was in a position to provide a relative perspective on the status of the subject within the different schools:

“The status of drama differs from school to school, it’s as exciting as the teacher, it is the teacher who either makes or breaks the subject. This is something which I discovered this year when I have gone around to schools questioning why the subject was dying out in numbers. Even though all teachers face the same problems i.e. it is a new subject, it does not have the same academic responsibility as other subjects, no ideal facilities, it is a “Cinderella” subject. But, in spite of the problems, in some schools the subject is alive,

it's dynamic, everyone in the school is aware of drama. It is the teacher's responsibility to establish a good relationship with management and to build the necessary respect for the subject."

The subject advisor's views confirm the teachers' belief that ultimately it is the hard work and commitment of the teacher within the school's culture that creates the positive feedback towards the subject.

One particular teacher, Veny, complained steadily throughout the interview about the 'bad' attitude of the administration towards drama. Yet, she omitted to provide evidence of any attempts on her part to change the above perceptions. The following are her views :

"It is obvious that the subject is really suffering severe repercussions at school because of the way it is labelled by the school administrators. They seem to have a concept of the subject as being one of fun and games. They don't seem to understand the nature of the subject and appreciate the nature of the subject. In fact they go to great lengths not to promote the subject at school: to persuade pupils against doing the subject."

The subject is as strong as the teacher. The more forceful and steadfast the teacher is in maintaining that subject, the more positive the feedback is towards it from various others within the school.

Teachers reflected that they made different choices in the approach they adopted in the teaching of the subject. The subject can be taught at different levels, each one reflecting the interpretation that the teacher held of drama. The following is a list of choices made by the teachers in respect of their slant given to the teaching of the subject:

1. Drama for performance
2. Drama for education
3. Drama as a methodology
4. Drama for general education.

Even though six of the teachers reportedly taught drama as a process skill, the eventual gain was in the final product/performance. Charles vividly represented the perspective of this group of teachers:

“I’ll tell you that I get a tremendous boost, and a tremendous sense of satisfaction when I see those kids performing and I assess the process of work done in the final product. You know we all do this in the fourth term, this whole production number. And, when I see that coming together, and especially if it’s successful; well that gives me a kick as nothing else does.”

Katy was part of the group of teachers who challenged the above interpretations of drama and she called for an alternative interpretation :

“I think we’re very much of a performing arts school or we try to be. If you look at the concentrated emphasis placed on that matric examination and even though we talk about life experiences, at the end of the day you’re looking at the product, you’re looking at how well these kids can articulate, how well they can sell themselves, how well they can present themselves. What is far more important than this is the whole idea of drama as in theatre in education and not as in drama for acting. We are definitely not teachers in a Performing Arts School.”

Lynn, another teacher, called for a change in focus within drama teaching. She was involved in an Aids project workshop with teachers outside the confines of the school and she spoke about the enthusiasm shown towards drama as a methodology:

“I ran a teachers’ workshop yesterday and there was sensitivity to the fact that drama can be a tool - an educational tool. We’re looking at drama across the curriculum and then drama for Aids education... there is a great sense of excitement about what you can achieve, what you can do through the workshop... I mean we’ve done nothing of “Speech and Drama”. We haven’t talked about Shakespeare or the western side - we’ve done nothing of that. We’ve been looking at workshopping ideas through improvising, through tableaus and

through forum theatre etc... it's very effective, it really is."

The above experiences of Lynn show us how drama can become re-conceived and used as an invaluable educational tool. Yet, her positive perceptions towards drama are not the prevailing image of the subject.

At a regional meeting of all Drama teachers held in Durban in May 1992 the subject advisor called for people controlling education to change their perception towards drama. She said that at the moment, the educationists at the top saw drama as a "talent subject" that only selected or gifted pupils could engage in. The above prevailing view has also resulted in the rationalization of the subject. The subject advisor describes the view of the people controlling education as follows :

"I've been told to my face "that drama is just a frivolous extra" and if parents want it then they must pay for it, our department can't pay for it."

She went on to argue :

"...but they fail to see the need for drama as general education, they fail to see that drama can be used by every teacher and by every child, so that people will come out with communication skills, social skills, with the ability to express themselves through this particular medium."

Three drama teachers challenged the subject advisor's view and argued that the drama teachers were to blame for the subject being marginalized, and that the blame should not be levelled at people outside the teaching circle. Sal shares her views on the above issue :

"I think that the fault lies with us or those who have created the subject. We have really asked for rationalization because of the way we have devised the subject, it is so elitist, non-realistic, non-pragmatic - it is almost like a fantasy. So if you conceive drama as artistic and elitist, they obviously think it has to be marginalized."

Another issue that five of the teachers focussed on was the difficulty they faced in attempting to 'sell' their subject within their schools, as it had no direct or intrinsic link to the job market. Charles represented the above issue in the following:

"The first question the child asks you is 'what do I do with drama?' I think you need to tell them that there's no subject in school that really prepares you for a job unless you're doing the 'N' courses. Lots of the teachers are canvassing for their subjects and they try to push it in terms of vocational opportunities, but you need to sweep away the myth that school subjects are linked to job opportunities."

Rasi, provided an alternative view to the above issue:

"We have computer studies and we have a lot of commerce subjects at the school – and the students have been told that their future is in the commercial world. I don't know whether I have the right to argue with that in a sense that it is a bread and butter issue. Drama is seen as an indulgence... it's not like students are not interested in drama, but they are being told to choose something that is going to be of use to them in the future."

Lynn maintained that the theatre was notorious for not providing jobs for people. She went on to argue that when entering the above debate, you begin to debate between general education and vocational education, and she stressed that she had always argued strongly for an understanding of drama as general education rather than for vocational education.

The above issue is also linked to the role played by the guidance counsellor in controlling the strength of the subject in the school. Teachers explained that the guidance counsellor was in charge of providing advice to the standard eight pupils on various courses they could choose to do in standards eight, nine and ten. They went on to say that the guidance counsellor did not understand the nature of drama, and as a result of her stereotyped view, influenced pupils not to do the subject which she felt

was irrelevant. Kooby reflected his experiences with the guidance counsellor in his school:

“... of course I was pretty vigorous in my campaign, eventually I managed to get twenty pupils... instead of influencing them to do drama, the guidance counsellor was influencing them not to do drama as it was a subject with no vocational links.”

Three teachers called for the inclusion of media study within the drama syllabus to make it more ‘relevant’ and ‘accessible’. Rasi was one of the teachers, who argued as follows:

“I think, if we start changing the subject we need to change its focus. Maybe media might help, if we make a large part of the course media and teaching of media skills maybe that will make the subject more relevant.”

Addis argued strongly for the inclusion of film studies in the syllabus:

“I feel that it is ridiculous that in this day and age we are doing Speech and Drama but there’s nothing about films study in the syllabus. But, rather we study drama over the ages, yet films and television have evolved from drama. Film studies and television studies should become an integral part of the drama syllabus.”

Another teacher argued that media should become part of the drama syllabus because a major part of drama functions through the media.

Six of the teachers also provided detailed insight into how the subject should be redefined, and also described the processes that teachers need be involved in towards the development of the subject and also the development of the teacher. They argued, very specifically, on how the teacher can develop within a school context:

“Well, I think that’s where the role of corporate effort comes in. For example in this school there is Zubby and I. We discuss our practice, we discuss and talk through how we’re going to approach this; what are

we going to do. If I have a problem, I go to her, if she has a problem she comes to me. All drama teachers need to get together and form their own curriculum development team... that's where I think school based curriculum development comes in."

Rasi maintained that the drama syllabus can develop and change through the process of Action Research:

"I think we need to consider action research. We need to do this. None of us has gone through it in a real sense. We all engage in some kind of action research in a very superficial way where we try something new, we examine what we are doing, think about it and then if it flops we drop it; and if it works we don't go into an analysis of why it failed or try to come to some understanding of why it is good and how we can extend it. I think really that with a subject like drama we need to get the skills to learn how to do some kind of research. Let's take standard eight especially, it's the stage where you can take your chances and we need to be able to work with the skeleton of a syllabus and then fill it in as we go along. That is looking at the individual – that teacher in the classroom. That is just one aspect or factor that you need to look at - where you go in and do the action research. Other factors would be looking at how we form ourselves into little sub-committees/sub-groups who again can go through that sharing-process. So you are doing your own bit of action research in your class, everybody else is as well, then you come together and engage. We need to do this in an organized way so that we can come together on a full day workshop, to work on some of these aspects."

Charles argued for localized development of the subject. He went on to argue that each locality or area needed to be given some kind of freedom to develop the syllabus in whatever way that locality or community wanted to.

Another teacher, Kooby described how more meetings between drama teachers would help in teacher development and subject development.

The former three teachers who called for school based curriculum development and action research to be used as ways of defining the subject were teachers who had more experience in teaching and who had studied further than the other teachers in the sample. The other group of teachers simply called for more drama meetings to be held to refresh themselves with new ideas and methods towards teaching. The above teachers also stressed that learning was an ongoing process and as a result one could “never” know enough. These teachers also maintained that the drama meetings allowed for sharing of communal and collective views, that worked towards motivating the drama teacher who was “lonely” and “isolated” within the school context. Kooby represented the latter grouping of teachers.

“...no, we don't have enough meetings, it's a very necessary part of education because education is on-going and as soon as you become a teacher it doesn't mean you know everything. So, I think more meetings between our drama teachers is necessary. The few that we have had really helped teachers who were stagnating, it helped people get across ideas to fellow drama teachers, and by speaking to them some of the ideas were accepted and some of them were thrown out. So it developed us on the whole. I mean how often do we get to meet people who are part of our subject. ... in our school, they think drama is a joke. I strongly believe that at least once a term we should meet other drama teachers and have these workshops.”

Lina reinforced Kooby's view:

“I think we ought to meet more often. ... we need to very often go for refresher courses to come across new ideas. At any stage of your teaching you can always learn more about your subject, so it is important to share ideas.”

The latter group of teachers maintained that drama meetings should evoke more ideas on creative teaching methodology within drama teaching, while the former group saw

the need for a re-assessment and re-definition of the basic premises upon which drama teaching was based. Yet again, there is a definite gap between the two different groupings of drama teachers i.e. the former grouping placed their emphasis on change and transformation while the latter group concentrated on developing creative methodology within an already “flawed” subject area.

Another issue, that emerged within how the syllabus or the subject could be redefined is the emphasis that teachers placed on the role of the teacher within the curriculum. From the above quotations on how the curriculum should change, teachers saw the role of the teacher as intrinsically linked with curriculum development and called for curriculum development to proceed hand in hand with teacher development. There was an underlying assumption and acceptance that the one could not proceed without the other.

The teachers who belonged to the ‘transforming’ group, also acknowledged that the process involved in the redefinition of drama syllabus was long and arduous. They maintained that change was a process and not something that could be conjured within a short period of time. A teacher who was involved in drama curriculum development shared his views on the above issue:

“It’s a very hard task and I tell you it can be done, but it’s tiresome, very tiresome and it becomes even more tiresome when you have uncritical practitioners around you; who don’t hear you. You feel like a ‘vincent thing’.”

All drama teachers and the subject advisor, unanimously, agreed that the key player in the development of the drama curriculum should be the teacher. They all agreed that the teacher was in the most favourable position to make valid assessments of “where the syllabus was”, and also of where the “syllabus should be”. They went on to provide various arguments and motivations as to why this should be the case:

“Certainly teachers, I mean teachers are, ideally placed to explain when they’ve tried the syllabus, to say which part works and which part doesn’t work. Because they have first hand experience of the subject. From their experience with teaching the syllabus they are able to describe how

pupils react to various aspects of it.”

I think we should, drama teachers should be responsible for developing it because from our experience you know what works and what doesn't. You know what draws the pupils and what brings them in and you know what turns them off.

Eight of the teachers also included significant players other than teachers into the arena of curriculum development. They called for the subject advisor, pupils and the community to be integral participants in the above process. Katy represented the above view :

“I think teachers, pupils and parents; I think they are the best judges, the best people to develop the curriculum, but obviously it must be done in conjunction with people who are specialized or who are trained in the field.”

Rasi argued for the inclusion of cultural workers from the community to be part of the process of curriculum development:

“Then one needs to look at the community itself and look at cultural workers in the community. These people can provide a great deal of input in terms of assisting in the development of a new syllabus.”

One teacher argued very specifically for the inclusion of pupils in the process of curriculum development. Her reasoning was:

“I think for far too long we have been under-estimating them. It is only when they are given a so-called experimental type of teacher do you really realize how much they have - the value that they have. They all come from rich cultural experiences. Why not exploit them? Why should you force something down their throats? Why can't you learn from them ?”

Farouk provided an alternative reading to the theme of redefining the curriculum. He argued that one does not develop drama or the syllabus, rather, teachers should

change their approach to teaching the subject. He removed the focus from the development of drama and redirected it to the development of the drama teacher. Ultimately, he argued that a “critical practitioner” can handle any syllabus. As a result of Farouk’s own involvement in curriculum development, he was in an ideal position to make assessments of where drama teachers were in terms of their approach to teaching and how their approach could change to facilitate more meaningful learning in the classroom. The following were his perspectives:

“The approach that most teachers used is strongly behaviourist. It doesn’t challenge some of the assumptions of even the inclusion of the text. It’s a muted, social, contextualized approach, because what it does is that it looks at personal relationships. For example the play Macbeth is much more than personal relationships. It looks at personal decisions, how these personal decisions impact institutionally, structurally and culturally; sociologically, politically and all the rest of that. Then you could argue; if you’re using critical theory, you can ask yourself, “who are the people who are making the decisions – why is it that the woman is inherently being seen as evil in Macbeth, and who made that choice, a male playwright?” But the fact is that he reinforces the kind of stereotyped notion of the woman being inherently evil, and the man is being egged on - the whole Adam & Eve parable comes through there. For me that’s the kind of things that we need to tackle in our texts and we’re not tackling that. That’s one level - the ideological level. On the second level is the notion of not just making them interpretative artists, but making them creative artists; and you make them creative artists by teaching them play-building skills. What we’re doing in our drama syllabus is that we’re teaching people, that, “look here is a text for the community, it’s good for you, it has a civilising influence!”. We’re not getting children to say this is our community, these are the different kinds of cultural patterns we have in our community; let’s synthesise all of that and create our own. Now I think these are the kind of questions that we need to ask ourselves as drama practitioners in the context of a changing South Africa and even if, and when, we do have a post apartheid society it’s all the more

reason why we should have a group of teachers who can create and 'empower' young children, and who can act as facilitators to create the critical citizenry and what I'm ultimately saying is, that, the kind of learning that takes place in the classroom must pre-figure the kind of society you want."

Later in the transcript, he again analysed the approach used by teachers in their teaching of text:

"...now lots of teachers over emphasize the technical details and that's what colonises them and their teaching, which is okay up to a point, because children need to know what are the ingredients that go into making of a play, of a character, but we over-emphasize that."

On the issue of developing the syllabus or curriculum, he also responded in a way that challenged the word "curriculum development":

"...I'm not into making it work, I'm not into developing it; I'm into throwing it out. You don't develop the syllabus, you develop drama and most importantly I develop my children. Remember we're teaching children we're not teaching a subject and that's a big thing – a big difference, which you've got to sort out quickly."

The above response brings another issue to the fore; that of how should the drama syllabus be developed i.e. should it be "scrapped" or should it be "built upon", keeping the 'workable' parts and throwing out the 'problematic' parts. The following are words used by the drama teachers in respect of the above:

1. *Scrap it*
2. *Throw it out*
3. *Revamp*
4. *Rehash*
5. *Develop*
6. *Build on*

Seven of the drama teachers argued for a “building upon” the old syllabus rather than a “throwing out” of it. Even though the original syllabus was eurocentric they argued for maintenance of the skills and processes that the syllabus facilitated.

The following two quotations represented each of the two groups of perspectives that exist within the above debate:

“...development means that it needs a strong base to grow from, and there’s quite a large proportion of our syllabus that is not good, so nothing good can come from it. Rather, scrap it and start from scratch, remembering the basic structure of where we want to go to in drama. ...I’m opposed to the idea of throwing everything out. I think quite a lot of young people with a revolutionary frame of mind think it would be very nice to just erase everything to the ground and start again. I mean that doesn’t happen. So to re-structure means to look and see what is working and what isn’t and to rework the things one knows are good and I think that is the approach that will give us something solid.”

As a conclusion to the above theme, it is necessary once more to revisit the rich and colourful images and language used by teachers to bring forth pertinent issues on redefining drama, issues that they all felt intensely about:

“...we’re saying let’s revamp, and let’s revamp it with a specific meaning or purpose behind it. What do we want to achieve at the end of the day – what kind of student do we want at the end of the day?

...what I’m saying is that I’m not obsessed with innovative methods because that’s liberal. I’m saying that if you have a critical theory approach then you are liberating.

...firstly I need to use drama to integrate my pupils physically because they come from fractured backgrounds and secondly I need to give them a sense of hope so that “they can make a difference” as they say in the American politics.

...I suppose the teacher has to internalize the whole bang shoot of the syllabus.

He has to "chew on it", digest it and spit out all the pips. Then what would be left would be a fine understanding of the basic issues, principles and objectives of that syllabus. Then he takes those objectives and uses them as a skeleton to form his approach - thereafter all his content should be fleshed out from his students. His content should come directly from the lives, occupation, environment and cultural perspectives of his students. That, I feel would be making the syllabus far more meaningful."

4.4 Minor Themes

Due to the constraints of time, and the nature of the present dissertation, the researcher has taken a decision merely to mention other themes that emerged from the data, rather than enter into an in-depth analysis of each one. The previous three themes were very specifically pertinent to the present research focus and were therefore given extensive coverage. The following themes, however, are definitely not insignificant, they are also pertinent, but not in a way that warrants close scrutiny. Ultimately, it is not within the scope of the present research to cover all the emergent themes in the same degree of depth.

Five of the drama teachers focussed on the value and the potential for the practical section within the drama syllabus to empower pupils to become more confident learners. They argued that the above aspect of drama allowed the child to become the focus, of the learning context and enabled her to express her 'latent' potential that was at most times 'silenced' by the main stream culture of the school. The above teachers also made specific references to the 'quiet' pupils, who began drama at standard eight and who had by standard ten come out of their shells due to their participation in practical lessons. The teachers maintained that the methodology used in drama teaching was that of role playing, improvisation, dance, movement, group-work, choral verse etc. were the essential tools that were employed in empowering the child to become more confident and better communicators.

Kooby spoke his thoughts on the above issue :

"...there's quite a big emphasis placed on practicals and I allow the kids to express their own individuality - their own individual perceptions and ideas, and I think that the practical section of the syllabus is one of the major strengths of the subject in comparison to other subjects they come across in schools. I think to a certain extent drama does develop confidence and self assurance etc... Think of how often you have this quiet child in your class and you try to draw them out, you give them a part in one little play and suddenly you have a changed personality."

Charles added his voice to the above issue:

"I had this one boy who plays the donkey in a children's play, and he was totally shy and he didn't want to take part in the beginning. Finally, I got him into it and now he wants to perform again - now that's the kind of confidence we are building - It's like striving, wanting to go, wanting to do."

The above teachers also maintained that the methodology used in drama was far more empowering to the pupils than that used in English (Drama teachers were in a position to make this comparison as they taught both English and Drama). The above was a general position and also a characteristic of teachers in this sample.

Two teachers argued that the methodology used in drama challenged the school system to the extent of creating in the pupils a conflict with the other more "conservatively" taught subjects: Chalk and talk and also the methodology used where the child is made to sit behind the desk quietly, and told not to disrupt the lesson unnecessarily. They also argued that the methodology employed in drama challenged the administrators of the school i.e. the principal and the deputy principal who were in charge of maintaining discipline were not pleased with a subject that released too much of creativity. Lynn's words reflected the above:

"..there is also this whole idea that school is for discipline training, for learning to sit still behind a desk, it's learning how to talk... so the whole idea of releasing creativity and problem solving does not appeal to those controlling education..."

Four of the teachers spoke about the loneliness and isolation of being a Drama teacher within the school context. They called for more support systems to help them cope. They needed to be guided and directed rather than left to “their own devices.” They argued that the pressure of teaching was enormous i.e. the examinations, interactions within a bureaucracy, and the increase in number of second language learners into their classrooms all added to the burden of teaching, and this burden needed to be lessened through the help of outside intervention. Katy presented the above argument in the following:

“..during the course of this year, I’ve been on my own and done my own thing, I don’t even know whether what I’m doing is right, wrong or whatever? I’m just going along in my own merry way. I think the subject advisor can be far more important in providing a meaningful support system for the teacher.”

Another teacher, voiced his opinion on the above issue:

“At the moment I hate the fact that I have to work with every section and find my own way of getting across the aims and objectives of the syllabus. I hate working it out all on my own and having to battle with it.”

Six of the teachers argued that the drama teacher who established “workable” relationships within the schools’ culture or hierarchy, created an environment conducive to effective teaching. They also analysed the quality of the relationship they shared with staff members and the administration of the school and they were convinced that the more amicable the relationship was, the easier was their teaching.

Sal shared her arguments on the above issue:

“I have never had any problems with any teacher or administrator. Working relationships have always been very very conducive and I have ensured that. I believe that this is one area that has to be sorted out first before you can become an effective teacher - being able to establish a rapport with people you work with. I have had many problems with the system but basically this does not filter down into my inter relating with people.

I have always attempted to maintain healthy working relationships with people.”

4.4.1 Emergent Tensions

A number of tensions and contradictions emerged from the data. Although the researcher has already dealt with the contradictions and tensions within each of the major themes, the following tensions emerged over and above the themes. Reporting on the contradictions and tensions within the data was also an attempt to represent the complexity of the data. The contradictions and tensions also indicate that the thoughts and ideas held by teachers are linked to other thoughts in ways that are not always harmonious, rather, teachers’ thoughts reflect some conflicts beneath the surface. Teachers reported the above in the following manner:

“...On the one hand this happened yet, at the same time there were other sides of the coin.”

4.4.2 Examinations - “The Tail that Wags the Dog”

The first contradiction or tension was that of the examinations. All teachers maintained that the examinations were a ‘hinderance’ and, a “big drawback” to their teaching and although they mediated the syllabus, the examination kept “rearing its ugly head.” Five of the teachers argued that it was the examinations that ‘dictated’ the unfoldings in the classroom. Charles argued as follows:

“Surely, it is the examinations that dictates what you teach in the classroom. It dictates the syllabus to such an extent that in one year, suggested schemes were drawn up to give specific direction, not only to the teacher but also to future examiners.”

Katy, also viewed examinations as a constraint:

“Examinations are the ultimate reckoning, although I teach as creatively as I can, we have to always bear in mind that we are eventually governed by that common end of the year matric paper.”

Another, teacher perceived the examinations as follows:

You know at the end of the day we are preparing them for that

“stupid” matric paper and the achievement there decides whether the child is good or not. This is sad!”

Six teachers perceived the examinations to be far too demanding, and they believed that they were not levelled at the experience and growth of the child.

Veny argued as follows:

“... the examinations put a damper on the subject as the matric paper is far too demanding for the pupil and the expectations in the paper are way beyond the standard of the majority of the pupils.”

Tina reinforced the above :

“It’s an examination, an examination for what? When you look at it in terms of what we are testing, what are we trying to do? Why do we have to put them through so much of agony. The thought of an examination is in itself so stressful and to add to that we give them university level questions - this is destroying us!”

Charles also, added his voice to the above perspective:

“...we have forgotten the child, we’ve become too interested in becoming clever - clever and creative as examiners rather than thinking about appropriate questions for the child... the matric drama paper has become too demanding, we have forgotten about the child.”

Teachers who fell into the category of the earlier “elaborated view” of eurocentricism saw the examinations as also part of the elitist culture within which teaching was immersed. Sal argued as follows:

“Examinations are important but not where it is done on a purely competitive level as most of our eurocentric methodology has taught us. I find it very demoralizing. It could be very hazardous or even dangerous for a child of drama who has been taught these methods because they can become very elitist as well. They are also in danger of becoming egocentric and self conscious.”

Four teachers also argued that the examinations were too product based, and as a result of this, failed to test the “true” wealth of process skills that had been acquired by the child. Addis represents the above viewpoint in the following:

“I find the whole examination system very product-based and being product-based it stands the risk of even becoming so to speak commercial. Everything is centred around the end product, so the wealth in store that has been developed in the process is not even evaluated. For instance I know of students who have done excellently throughout the year in terms of their process, in terms of collating material, developing that material and working with it. Eventually they get tested by the external examiner who comes along and just looks at the product and who has no conceptualization of what had happened before.”

It was interesting that five teachers linked the burden of the examinations to Second Language speakers of English. Katy reflected the above perspective in the following:

“...the other thing I find so hard to understand is that we have quite a mixed bag of pupils. Now, a lot of our testing assumes that children have certain skills, it fails to take into account that I could be teaching drama in Umlazi and for some reason or other my pupils have not been exposed to poetry at such a “deep” interpretative level that we test it at. Ultimately it all boils down to whose standards are we using and whose standards are they anyway?”

In moving towards changing the present examination system, four teachers argued for a more process-orientated testing programme and also for examinations to be based on experiential methods of testing rather than a testing of recalling knowledge.

Farouk represented the latter argument in the following:

“We should move from merely asking children to recall knowledge to testing application of their knowledge. What I’m saying is, take the concepts and ask the children, “how would you actually apply that in your community, do you think it would work, do you think it will be of some value ?”

The following two statements capture in a concise way the extent to which teachers are “fed up” with the examination system:

We have to live with it for now, but I'd love to cleanse myself of examinations.

I would like to see the day when the examination paper is actually thrown out the window.

The contradiction that teachers kept repeating was that even though Drama teachers do not teach for examinations *per se*, they are governed by the basic premise of teaching the child first, but ultimately they argued that examinations control the system.

4.4.3 Direction vs Open-endedness

Four of the teachers argued that although they needed to be free to do their “own thing” in terms of their teaching, at the same time they needed direction, and guidelines or parameters. They went on to argue that the degree of direction needed, and the degree of freedom they had, reciprocated with each other and that the one could not exist without the other. Ultimately what teachers were arguing was that the above two issues resided in a balance with each other.

Veny represented the above perspective in the following :

“Even though we need to operate in an environment without constraints, we still need very specific parameters and guidelines within which to work or else I could be doing my own thing to the point of not knowing whether I'm right or wrong.”

Another teacher, Katy argued as follows:

“The syllabus definitely needs to be prescriptive in the sense of making teachers teach critical skills to their pupils, because in that very prescription there is going to be that amount of freedom because our levels of interpretation are different. So even though the syllabus might prescribe the development of critical thinking in the pupils the way that you do it and the way that I do it will be

different and therefore we still have our freedom.”

4.4.4 “Too Much Rhetoric and Too Little Action”

Four teachers argued that much of the time there was a lot of talk about change and the processes about implementing changes, yet this talk and dialogue hardly ever unfolded into measurable changes.

Lina argued as follows:

“...I think we discussed subject development at the orientation course in February and we said that we ought to have more meetings during the year, but nothing came of it. We talked about it at length, everybody agreed that there just wasn't enough time at that one session for us to thrash out all the problems and for us to explore different teaching methods, techniques etc, but nothing ever happened as a result of that. We never got together again. We just seem to be doing so much of talking about the problems but never do anything concrete about it.”

Yet on the other hand three teachers argued that teachers were too apathetic and even though they wanted change, they expected someone else to do it for them and hand it to them in a ready-made package.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter comprises of the following:

- 5.1 Analysis of the Data
- 5.2 Revisiting the research process
- 5.3 Conclusions on the research

5.1 Analysis of the Data

Drama teachers are not “typical” teachers. They provided evidence in their dialogues that reflected the tactics used by them to counteract the contradictory messages of the prescribed curriculum. The teachers spoke at length about their resistances, mediations and challenges to the curriculum. Because drama teachers did not conform to the conservative and stereotyped view of teachers held by theorists, the researcher has attempted to develop an analysis of the perspectives of the drama teachers. It is hoped that the analysis will assist in shedding more light on the drama teachers’ “atypical” characteristics. The reproduction theorist like Bowles and Gintis (1976) argue that teachers are mere functionaries of the state and serve to reproduce the dominant social order.

① ✓ type

To leave the data at the stage of merely reporting on it would have resulted in incomplete analysis (Goetz & Le Compte, 1984). Goetz and Le Compte, also argue that assigning meaning requires bold action and that most researchers fail to transcend what has been termed the ‘merely descriptive’, in so doing they fail to do justice to their data (1984, p196).

② ✓ (type)

The researcher needed to engage in a deeper reading of the data. The more in-depth reading of the data entailed looking specifically at the correlations and contradictions between the theory that emerged from within the themes and the theoretical perspectives gleaned in Chapter Two. The researcher was interested in asking the following pertinent questions in relation to the perspectives of the drama teachers:

- Is there a correlation between what teachers in this study have to say and to what theorists in the literature have to say?
- Do the perspectives of drama teachers offer any new theoretical ideas/insights?

It was hoped that the above process engaged in allowed for an appropriate interpretation of the analysis of the data.

The in-depth reading and re-reading of the data produced ^{four}~~three~~ issues that Drama teachers repeatedly voiced their perspectives on. The following are the theoretical areas that will be tackled in this chapter:-

(A summary of each of the areas has been given).

5.1.1 Knowledge Construction

- the imposition of knowledge and the need for choosing relevant knowledge within the curriculum.
- meaning and the creation of meaning in contexts.
- the historical creation of knowledge.
- socially and culturally constructed knowledge.

5.1.2 Education for Reconstruction or the Transformation of Society Through Schooling

- relationship between education and society.
- the role played by the teacher in achieving the democratic ideal.
- the teacher as a social reconstructionist.
- creation of a critical citizenry
- correlations between learning and the eventual outcome.

5.1.3 Change in Teacher Practice

- The role of the teacher within the educational milieu.
- Empowerment of the teacher through research.
- Change through teacher development and action research.
- Reflective teaching.

5.1.4 Teaching Methodology

- A description of the learning environments.
- Pupil centred learning.
- Teacher/pupil interaction within the learning context. ✓

shop

Having identified the four areas, the area of Knowledge and Control will be explored first. Muir argues that teachers come to take for granted that what they teach is also what they ought to teach, and that it constitutes “real knowledge” (1980, p1). He goes on to write that teachers agree that the syllabus contains essential elements of the accumulated knowledge of mankind, and that it is right and proper that teachers should convey this knowledge to pupils (ibid).

Drama teachers in this study contradicted the above view. Rather, Drama teachers views were in accordance with the views of the critical theorists on the issue of knowledge and power. As a result it would be appropriate to categorize the more discerning of the drama teachers in the sample as critical theorists. Later in the discussion, more correlations between the views of the critical theorists and Drama teachers have been established.

The teachers in this study were strong in their protest against knowledge that was imposed on them, especially knowledge that was culturally alienating and irrelevant to their pupils. They argued at length about the chasms created by the eurocentric content of the Drama curriculum (refer to Chapter Four).

The teachers voiced their views on the issue of knowledge and power and were very much aware of the interpretation of knowledge as a source of power in this society. They were also in full support of the view that held knowledge as socially constructed (Sarup, 1978).

They challenged the Western, industrially and scientifically oriented culture that favoured a positivist interpretation of knowledge. They saw knowledge as a choice rather than an imposed objective. They were also in favour of the view that meaning

and interpretation resided within the control of people. Kincheloe reinforces the above views when he writes:

Critical teachers are not politically neutral, as they identify with a critical system of meaning and all of its allegiances...On a daily basis teachers choose to include some forms of knowledge while excluding others from the curriculum, they legitimate particular beliefs while delegitimizing others (1991, p39).

Counts (1932) argues that there is the fallacy that the school should be impartial in its emphases, that no bias should be given in instruction. We have already observed how the individual is inevitably moulded by the culture into which she is born. In the school a similar process operates...(and) some selection must be made of teachers, curricula architecture and method of teaching. Because all Drama teachers reflected in various strengths, mediation of the syllabus, this points to the power possessed by the teacher and pupil to counter-act forms of knowledge that were in conflict with their personal perspectives. Slattery reinforces the above when he writes:

...this reminds us that layers of meaning, prejudice, and intention surround all curricular artifacts, thus necessitating a study to expose not only the irony of deception but also the implications of historical analysis (1994, p105).

Drama teachers supported the socially constructed view of knowledge and as a result negated the prevailing view of objective knowledge. The data challenged the traditional approach of modern logical positivism to the study of history as a linear time line of events. The views of the teachers reinforce the view that knowledge will be understood as reflecting human interests, values, and actions that are socially constructed (Slattery, 1994, p36).

Kliebard's succinct arguments on knowledge and decisions about knowledge reinforce the arguments made by Drama teachers thus far.

Kliebard explains:

We often make half conscious decisions as to what knowledge is most appropriate to include in the curriculum then afterwards devise the plausible-

sounding reasons for so deciding. Those half-conscious decisions are tied in many instances to such matters as social class allegiances and to self-interest generally. As such, curriculum history is not so much involved with traditional epistemological questions as with questions closely associated with sociology of knowledge. History of curriculum is, in other words, critically concerned with what is taken to be knowledge in certain times and places rather than what is ultimately true or valid...A fundamental question imbedded in the history of curriculum, then, is not simply one of who went to school and who did not, but the way in which the social machinery may be constructed to differentiate access to certain forms of knowledge. (This is significant not just in a pedagogical sense but in terms of status attainment and social relations, if not social justice (1986, p217).

Finally, on the issue of knowledge, some Drama teachers maintained that knowledge should be created and that teachers and pupils need to be given the opportunity to do this. The innovative writings of Eisner points to the dominant view of knowledge:

Knowledge is considered by most in our culture as something that one discovers, not something that one makes. Knowledge is out there waiting to be found, and the most useful tool for finding it is science (1985, p32).

Shor's (1986) viewpoint in the following reflects the extent to which teachers and pupils can become agents of change through exercising their control on knowledge:

If teachers or students exercised the power to remake knowledge in the classroom, then they would be asserting their power to remake society.

Giroux also argues for how teachers' can change their role from consumers to producers:

It is the teachers role to uncover those often concealed social constructions that shape particular curriculum structures, curriculum materials and eventually the consciousness of students, teachers, administrators and community members. Thus, teachers as researchers become active producers of meanings not simply consumers (cited in Kincheloe, 1991, p34).

The second area that will be explored is Education for Reconstruction. Half of the drama teachers were in essence, themselves critical theorists, as established in the previous section. They showed that they were ardently engaged in asking relevant questions about education and society so that education could become a more equitable medium through which learning unfolds. They were earnest in their quest for creating a democratic educational vision that provided hope for all people. Some of the specific questions and concerns that were raised by them during the course of the interviews concerning developing this vision include the following: How do students acquire knowledge in schools? Is knowledge reproduced in schools to support the status quo systems of inequity? How do schools shape visions, values and outlooks on life? Whose interests are being served by the perpetuation of these outlooks? Do these values, visions and outlooks promote equality, justice and empowerment or do they reinforce inequality and repression and how can schooling be an instrument to promote social injustice?

It was clear that drama teachers did not teach in a social vacuum. They were critically aware of the influences that the outside society had on the unfoldings of the drama curriculum. As a result of the strength of their arguments concerning education and the curriculum engendering meaningful change in the broader society they also fell into the category of the social reconstructionists. Apple's views below exemplify the kind of democratic vision that teachers were arguing for: "...students must develop the will to be active participants in the society all of their lives - so that the society, in fact, lives up to its democratic ideals... True democracy will be achieved only when all citizens have the knowledge and the motivation to live up to society's highest values and when economic and political opportunities are made equally available to all its constituents (1991, pp99-101).

On the issue of gender, race and class, drama teachers were strong in their assertions that the curriculum actually reinforced or stereotyped the above relations, and in their belief that it was the responsibility of the teacher to engage with her pupils in dialogues that demystify the above relations of power. In their above assertions, the teachers represented the views of the neo-Marxists, an example of whom is Apple. Apple (1986) summarizes his position:

in essence, the problem has become more and more a structural issue for me. I have increasingly sought to ground it (education and economics, knowledge and power) in a set of critical questions that are generated out of a tradition of neo-Marxist argumentation, a tradition which seems to me to offer the most cogent framework for organizing one's thinking and action about education (1986, p1).

Apple then outlines an approach to curriculum studies that emphasizes modes of material production, ideological values, class relations, as well as racial, sexual and politicoeconomic structures of social power and the impact of these issues on the consciousness of people in their historical and socio-economic situations (ibid).

A significant sub-theme of teachers' views was the creation of a critical citizenry for the benefit of our future society. Through the offering of curriculum, pupils needed to develop the necessary critical skills that allowed them to read the world and participate in the future society with the conviction of strong citizens. Kincheloe effectively argues for the above in the following:

Citizenship training, if it means anything at all, means teaching students to think critically, listen with discernment, and communicate with power and precision. If students learn to listen, read, speak and write more carefully, they will not only be civically empowered, but also they will know how to distinguish between the authentic and the fraudulent in human discourse...Civic education for a new century also must provide students with a core of basic knowledge about social issues and institutions, to allow them to put their understanding of democracy into perspective" (1991, p xvi).

Rather than follow a technicist approach of merely allowing the curriculum to be taught in a linear and unquestioning manner teachers were engaged in questioning the and underlying aims of the curriculum. They definitely challenged the traditional Tylerian rationale for the systemic design of goals and objectives.

Two very prolific writers on the relationship between society and education are Dewey and Giroux. Drama teachers' perspectives are in accordance with these theorists. The following short accounts of the above theorists views capture their thoughts on education and society.

John Dewey (1859-1952) was both philosopher and educator. He viewed education as a process of experience and social activity and the school was intimately related to this process in the society it served (p147, 1938). Should education be a function of society or should society be a function of education? In other words should schools participate in the process of reproducing the knowledge interests and values of the dominant society, or should schools advance democracy while promoting an emancipating approach to knowledge and learning so as to re-create a just and compassionate society? Dewey believed the latter. So did the social reconstructionists of the early twentieth century (1938, p195).

Critical theorists like Henry Giroux also question "whether schools (should) uncritically serve and reproduce the existing society or challenge the social order in order to develop and advance its democratic imperatives" (1981, p243). Giroux concludes that the development of a social vision and commitment to make the liberal arts supportive of a democratic sphere must be a priority (ibid).

Drama teachers whose views were in accordance with the critical theorists adamantly upheld the vision of justice, equality, liberation, freedom and compassion that underline the critical theory.

The third area that was identified was the focus on change and the role played by the teacher in facilitating and enabling processes that culminate in change within the school environment. Drama teachers spoke at length about the indispensable role played by teachers within the educational arena. The core element or the crux of learning was the role played by the teacher in teaching of the curriculum within the school. But teachers also argued that the other teachers adopted more varied stances within the schools. Teachers taught, mediated, interpreted and interacted with pupils in various ways in the school. Hargreaves reiterates the above when he argues that teachers do

not deliver the curriculum. They develop, define it and reinterpret it too. It is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get (1994, pix).

Yet, the irony that continued to surface time and time again in the interviews with drama teachers was the marginal power awarded to the teacher, and the de-skilling and de-professionalization of the teacher that frequently occurred within the schools..

When drama teachers reflected on the above they were moved and angry. They failed to comprehend why teachers were negated from the valuable process of knowledge production and why teachers were by-passed when new ideas and innovations were needed to change the process of learning and teaching within the schools. Kincheloe argues that knowledge which must be certified by professionals results in anti-democratic tendencies as it renders individuals dependent upon experts. He goes on to argue that we must protect the creative, active, meaning seeking aspects of humans, social scientists must see people as potentially free, marked by the capacity to set and achieve their own goals (1991, p1).

Teachers were unanimous in their calling for educational change to reside within the control of the teacher. They believed that teachers needed to adopt and take more control of their own professional destinies. Some drama teachers saw the solution for developing teachers and their work residing in the area of research. Kincheloe reinforces this when he writes: "To control their teaching they must not allow 'educational experts' to control knowledge production. To ensure good work teachers must become researchers" (1991, p16). Apple argues that a major advantage to teachers engaging in research resided in their "beginning to know" rather than just "hoping" that their work was successful (1986, p208). Carr and Kemmis argue lucidly for why it is imperative for the teacher to be engaged in research:-

Thus the primary purpose of critical research activity for teachers is teacher empowerment. This empowerment involves teachers providing themselves with skills and resources that enable them to reflect on educational practice. The purpose of educational research, therefore is not merely to turn out better theories about education or more effective practices. Democratic educational research performed by teachers renders teaching practice more theoretical in

that it is supported by reflection and grounded in socio-historical context. Teachers as researchers gain the skill to interrogate their own practices, question their own assumption and to understand contextually their own situation (1986, pp39, 56, 123).

Two theorists have provided very unusual, humorous yet telling metaphors of the kinds of treatment meted out to teachers in school and the kind of behaviour teachers portray due to the constraints of bureaucratic forces playing down upon them. Hargreaves argues that policymakers tend to treat teachers rather like naughty children, in need of firm guidelines, strict requirements and a few short sharp evaluative shocks to keep them up to the mark. He goes on to describe that in the United States the tendency is to treat and train teachers more like recovering alcoholics subjecting them to step-by-step programs of effective instruction or conflict management or professional growth in ways which make them overly dependent on pseudo-scientific expertise developed and imposed by others (1994, xiv). Kincheloe sees the modern teacher as the plate juggler on the old Ed Sullivan Show, frantically running from plate to plate, keeping each one spinning atop each stick, unable to pause long enough to reflect on the purpose of the enterprise. Time to reflect might be dangerous - why juggle the plates in the first place? (1992, p12).

Most of the drama teachers interviewed, however, fell into the category of 'the reflective teacher' - one who was constantly engaged in theorizing and making meaning of the practices that they were involved in. Parker argues that the conception of teaching as the reflective practice of a profession has historical precedents extending at least as far back as John Dewey. He goes on to explain that although reflective practice can have a range of meanings, it provides a framework in which the underlying assumptions of schooling, and impinging social structures, and the goals of education, as well as the techniques for teaching those goals, can be examined. Rather than being viewed as technicians, teachers can be considered reflective practitioners or professionals who examine these broader issues, as well as the immediate practical concerns of classroom teaching. For example, teachers can question the goals, the effects, and the social context of schooling in a way that will allow them to make conscious their contribution to the agenda (1997, p8).

Counts (1932) argues with conviction that... “teachers, if they increase their stock of courage, intelligence and vision, might become a social force of some magnitude...that the teachers should deliberately reach for power and then make the most of their conquest.” This is what the Drama teachers in this study believed they were attempting to do.

The fourth area that will be explored is Teaching Methodology. Apple (1991) argues that teaching in South Africa is characterized by harsh discipline, a reliance on the authority of textbooks, memorization of factual information, and a teacher-centred pedagogy. This viewpoint, however, was refuted by the Drama teachers. All drama teachers saw the subject Speech and Drama as possessing the potential to create an innovative and open learning context where the emphasis is placed on the learner to actively participate in the lessons. Rather than follow the traditional teaching methodology of ‘chalk and talk’ or of the teacher taking control of the lesson, Drama has to be taught using methods of role playing, group work, improvisation and dialogue, that allow the learner greater opportunity in creating and acquiring their own knowledge. Most drama teachers cited concrete examples of how the recluse or shy child who initially came into the class full of trepidation and anxiety eventually underwent change to become more articulate and engaging with others during the three years of having participated in the open and creative learning of the Drama class.

Drama can thus be employed as a vehicle to promote or propagate an active learning environment. Drama teachers also argued for the methodology of the subject, that is, the use of group work, dialogue, improvisation, teacher in role and role playing to be used in the teaching of any syllabus or subject across the curriculum.

Two renowned educators Freire & Shor, who call for a more active learning process to be engaged in by both teachers and students, argue thus:

Traditional schooling and conferences socialize us into expecting a speaker

at the front to talk at length first, and then the students or the audience ask individual questions to the expert lecturer, in a one to one discourse. This

is an hierarchical discourse which begins the learning process with the speaker's words dominant. Silent listeners are immersed in the words of the lone authority at the front (1987, p41).

He goes on to argue how the traditional teaching methods create a 'culture of silence:

One element is the students' internalizing of passive roles scripted for them in the traditional classroom. The official pedagogy constructs them as passive characters. After years in dull transfer-of-knowledge classes many have become non-participants, waiting for the teacher to set the rules and start narrating what to memorize (ibid, p122).

The methodology used by Drama teachers is in accordance with the call by Freire and Shor for greater focus to be shifted to the learner in the process of learning. Also, Drama methodology opposes the traditional 'banking' method of learning which is also described by Freire:

Education thus becomes an act of depositing in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat. This is the 'banking' concept of education in which the scope of action allowed to the student extends only as far as receiving, filling and storing the deposit (1972, p53).

It is important to report that two Drama teachers argued that it is not enough to teach in a creative and active learning environment, more important is the teaching of a critical reading of the world. Although they acknowledged the importance of teaching methodology, they stressed that methodology alone does not result in transformation or change.

5.2 Revisiting the Research Process

The following ground is covered in this section.

- 5.2.1 Retrospective insights and evaluations on the research process and methodology used.
- 5.2.2 Three Cameos of selected Drama teachers.

5.2.1 Walford argues that most books present an idealized conception of how social and educational research is designed and executed, where research is carefully planned in advance, pre-determined methods and procedures followed and results are the inevitable conclusion (1991, p1). It is hoped that the following reflections share some of the challenges, embarrassments, pains, triumphs, the ambiguities and satisfactions of doing Qualitative Research. It is the aim of this section of the chapter also to reflect critically on the research methodology used and to appreciate the personal reality of doing research.

The most striking feature of this research was the time spent in the actual writing up of it. Although the data collection and fieldwork was completed in 1992, it was only in 1998 that the research was finally ready as a fully fledged written dissertation. It was important to reflect on the reasons/factors that lead to the writing up of the research becoming so prolonged.

The researcher's novice status was a very significant factor that contributed to the time spent in the writing up of the research. In retrospect, the researcher was able to identify with much of the advice provided by various authors on the process of writing research reports.

Novice writers are big procrastinators. She remembers the countless reasons used to justify her not getting started. Many, many times she went back to her professor and senior academics at the Department to seek further advice. The following arguments and descriptions on the writing process provides clear evidence as to the experiences undergone in pursuing the writing up of this dissertation:

Remember that you are never "ready" to write; writing is something you must make a conscious decision to do and then discipline yourself to follow through. People often tell us that we are lucky; they say, "Writing comes so easily to you." Writing comes easily neither to us nor to many others; it is hard work. As one author put it, "Writing is easy; all you do is sit staring at the blank sheet of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead." Some become more proficient at it because they have

developed good work patterns, confidence, and skills, but it is never easy. Writing seldom comes naturally. Most people feel very self-conscious before they write; their hands sweat and they experience anxiety (cited in Bogdan and Biklen, p108).

In retrospect the researcher had come to know that when engaged in Qualitative Research, fieldwork and analysis produced lots of coded description that provided a starting point - some words on paper. This foundation is valuable, it allowed the researcher to revise and expand on it towards the writing up of the dissertation. Hitchcock and Hughes' advice is to write as you go along for the very process of writing will help to clarify your thoughts (1995, p332). The above advice is worthwhile and the researcher had personal experience of it. Actual engagement in the writing process allows for further thoughts and energy towards the writing process to be created, and this actually sustains and engenders new ideas for more writing to be done. If the researcher has to engage in writing in the future, she will know and will have experienced an important premise on writing skills, i.e. "getting down to it" is the means of allowing the writing process to gather its own momentum and to get it done.

Because engagement with qualitative data results in detailed and rich descriptions, the processes involved in thinking about the data and writing about it cannot be done superficially or be dispensed with, without the necessary grapplings and ponderings on the part of the researcher. Qualitative Research involves engagements that are intense and focussed. These processes require intellectual energy, and if the researcher is feeling "out of it" and abandons the research for a while, the intensity of involvement suffers and it takes some time before the researcher can acquire the former amount of intellectual intensity. These relapses in mental commitment to the research also resulted in time loss. Yet on the other hand, "getting out of the research and getting back into it" also proved to be a valuable exercise in itself. Too much immersion within the research does deter the researcher from gaining a distance from the research. If she had continued with no breaks, the energy for the research would have petered out and boredom would have replaced it.

At all stages of doing research, the researcher has to acknowledge the importance of thinking about what she was doing. But in retrospect she concedes that the data analysis phase of doing Qualitative Research required more deep thinking than any of the other phases. In Chapter Three the researcher provided details of how she went about doing the actual analysis of the data. She will now recount some of the trials and tribulations of engaging with Qualitative Data.

Although Data Analysis proved exhausting, the researcher would not have been satisfied if she had engaged in the Qualitative Research paradigm and had to analyse numbers and statistics at the end of the process. Reading and re-reading the Drama teachers' perspectives to find grounded meaning was challenging and invigorating. It allowed the researcher to get out of the teaching mould temporarily and to analyse views of her fellow colleagues. It was a very worthwhile experience listening carefully to the dialogues engaged in with Drama teachers and studying the transcripts of the dialogues. Analysis of teachers' perspectives was an invaluable experience at gaining insight into knowledge of curriculum and curriculum development. Qualitative Research in education always has a human dimension and benefits from the wisdom of the experienced and curious who are embedded in the research context. The researcher now has a deeper understanding of the complexity surrounding the issues of Curriculum and Curriculum Development in terms of the Drama teachers' perspectives of it.

The following two viewpoints on Qualitative Data Analysis cogently point to the depth and complexity involved in the above process:

Edwards and Mercer argue that at the deepest and most uncertain level of analysis, we are looking for evidence of those "taken for granted" assumptions which, although rarely or never explicitly invoked or discussed by participants, nevertheless define the process of 'doing education'. We call these kinds of assumptions 'educational ground rules (1987, p51).

Strauss reinforces the above in the following:

Undoubtedly, the most difficult skill is to learn how to make everything come together - how to integrate one's separate analyses. If the final product is an

integrated theory, then integrating is the accurate term for this complex process. This is why the inexperienced researcher will never feel secure in how to complete the entire integration until he or she has struggled with the process, beginning early and ending only with the final write up (1987, p170).

5.2.2 Three - Teacher Cameos

According to Lortie, teachers, are present-oriented, conservative and individualistic. They tend to avoid long-term planning and collaboration with their colleagues, and to resist involvement in whole school decision-making in favour of gaining marginal improvements in time and resources to make their own individual classroom work easier (Lortie, 1975).

Weiss and Cambone (1993) concluded that the norms of the profession are not supportive of collaborative models of management - most teachers tended to be conservative, wanting to maintain things as they had been, with minor changes to take care of the problems (cited in Beck and Murphy, 1995, p167)

Both the above quotes cast teachers in a very conservative mode and reinforce the prevailing notion of teachers being merely the functionaries of the state in assisting to reproduce the relations of power in society.

The teachers in this research, however did not display perspectives in keeping with the above categorizations. Because teachers in this study were unusual/atypical, it became the researcher's duty to try and create a more detailed picture of three of the Drama teachers in the sample so that their views and alliances became more credible.

During the data analysis phase, the researcher became wary of the very 'idealized' and 'romanticized' perspectives given by most of the sample of the Drama teachers. Were they real or were they issuing rhetoric to appease the researcher? Was there a consistency between what teachers said and their subsequent behaviour in the classroom? These questions needed attempts at answers. Although the ideal would have been for the researcher to go into the Drama teachers classrooms and study the correlated classroom behaviour.

One area in which the Drama teachers displayed a consistency was the long justifications and reinforcements offered by the teachers to substantiate their views. It is important to remember that one of the aims of the research was to become the medium through which the perspectives of the teachers could be heard, therefore the researcher has provided the reader with the rich and detailed quotes in Chapter Four. These colourful and insightful quotations on the various issues around Curriculum and Curriculum Development depict the perspectives of the teachers and offer the reader an opportunity to assess the validity and strength of their viewpoints. The researcher concluded that it would have been impossible for the teachers to have made up their thoughts and justifications during the course of the interview. Thus the quotes in Chapter Four clarify the positions of the Drama teachers. Most of them are indeed critical practitioners of education who value the potential of the human agent for the transformation of the educational context. They are also hopeful idealists in the quest for improving and developing the human lot.

In 1997 the researcher studied the sample again and selected three of the Drama teachers who fell most forcefully into the category of the 'critical theorist' (refer to Chapter Five for details surrounding the definition of a critical theorist). She then proceeded to collect more information around these teachers in terms of the following: What were these teachers presently engaged in? What had they achieved over the period of time lapse in the research? Had there been any significant change in their professional commitments? What were they presently engaged in? The researcher was able to review the teachers only because of the passing of time in the writing of this research study. This is post-hoc triangulation.

Farouk

- Has been promoted from Level One education to Director of Curriculum Planning in Education.
- Completed his Masters Degree.
- Continues to show support for relevant community structures and the teacher trade union movement.

- Committed to processes that engender change.

Allison

- Obtained Scholarship to study at a prestigious university in America.
- Completed a Masters Degree.
- Serves on Women's desks and forums
- Works within ANC structures in the community.

Charles

- Media Officer - in charge of developing resource materials for teachers.
- Completed a Masters Degree
- Involved in the setting and marking of Matric papers.
- Editor of a Drama teachers newsletter.

All three teachers have also conducted workshops and delivered papers in their field of Drama. They also hold key positions in various committees working towards changes in the new South Africa. The above cameos assist in providing a fuller picture of a selection of the Drama teachers in the sample. These teachers are idiosyncratic and unique in that they possess the energy to relentlessly pursue their dreams and convictions. They are educators with a vision and will stop at ^{modulus} nothing in their commitment to achieve the ideal.

5.3 Conclusions on the Research

✓ [After having gone through the process of research, the researcher has come to understand that the most important aspect of doing qualitative research is the adoption of a critical and reflexive stance.] Reflecting on the research at all times enabled the researcher to continually ask pertinent questions about the research process and also to attempt to answer these questions. It is in the asking and answering of questions that the researcher was able to gain insights into doing research through the process of reflection the researcher was able to create an interactive mood with the research.] ✓

Also, the process of reflection and interaction facilitated the development of validity as the reader is able to understand how the research was done.

Because Qualitative Research is an attempt at unravelling some of the complexity of the educational scenario, the researcher is confident that the perspectives of the Drama teachers add to the many voices and meanings on the subject of curriculum and curriculum change.

Having experienced personally the power of reflective research, the researcher can confidently conclude that teacher development lies in the area of teachers engaging in Qualitative Research.

This research study has enabled the researcher to enrich her own unavoidably subjective view of the world of education and she is now able to transcend some of the rhetoric and clichés which dominate educational talk. The researcher is also better able to see the complexities within the teaching and learning of the curriculum. Doing Qualitative Research has also allowed the researcher to take important educational practices less for granted.

This research study through the documenting of drama teachers' perspectives shows teachers to be mediators of the dominant messages and also challenges of the curriculum messages. The sample of teachers in this study reflect the potential of people to make their own choices over and above the messages handed down to them. Most teachers in the study fell into the category of the "reflective" and "transformative" teacher.

The most important theme that has emerged in this study and must be reinforced in the conclusion is a power inherent in man to create "visions" and implement them.

The perspectives of the Drama teachers exemplifies the position of the teacher facilitating change within the school. There was strong support for the argument proposed by Stenhouse 1980 that teacher development influences and controls

curriculum development. The researcher values the position that supports the development of teachers through the processes of teachers engaging in research.

Whitehead's views on living knowledge and living teachers creates relevant symbols within education that depict teachers as active participants in knowledge creation. He protested against knowledge that was handed down to teachers. He wrote in *Aims of Education*, "Students are alive, and the purpose of education is to stimulate and guide their self development... Teachers should also be alive with living thoughts. The whole book is a protest against dead knowledge, that is, against inert ideas" (1929, p5).

The researcher has argued at length for the positive rewards of engaging in qualitative research. If involvement in the process of research can provide teachers with the strength to contribute to making relevant changes, then all educators need to engage in research. The following quote by Dadds reinforces the power of humans to participate meaningfully and become agents of change:

To be an agent is to have the capability of making a difference, of intervening in the world so as to influence events which occur in that world. To be human agent is to be highly knowledgeable and a skilled individual, who applies that knowledgeability in securing autonomy of action in the course of day to day life (1995, p8).

(APPENDIX A)
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction to the Research

The present study is being undertaken to gather your perspectives on the teaching of the present speech and drama curriculum and also, on curriculum development.

Please do not feel intimidated or insecure about the process you are about to engage in. All you have to do is respond sincerely. If you do not understand any of the questions, please call for clarification. I will also ask you to clarify any aspect that is not totally clear or meaningful. This interview is really a focussed conversation, so relax and we shall proceed !

Areas of Inquiry

1. What are the strengths of the syllabus ?
2. What are the major weaknesses of the syllabus ?

Probes:

 - clarity
 - direction: restrictive / allows for interpretation / open-ended
 - bias / subjectivity / leanings
(Values that underpin the syllabus :)
 - development of life skills
 - development of critical thinking
 - relevance
 - embodiment of NEPI principles.
3. What are the factors that influence the development of the subject / syllabus ?

Probes:

 - Resources
 - time-tables
 - context for the teaching of the subject
 - teacher development programmes
 - status of the subject within the school context

- Examinations
- Cut-backs and rationalizations - "Drama under threat"

4. How do you see Speech and Drama developing as a subject ?
5. Who is responsible for the development of the subject and why ?
- 6.1 What role does the subject advisor presently play ?
- 6.2 What role should the subject advisor play ?
7. Do you have any concluding statements or remarks to add to this conversation?

THANK YOU !

I would like to get some of your views, insights into the present drama syllabus and into the way the drama syllabus can be developed; into where the drama syllabus is presently at; like in terms of the strengths, the weaknesses and more especially what should the role of the subject advisor be, what role does the subject advisor presently play. These are factors that you think about or you actually very intuitively do every day of your life. So it's not like putting you through a test or anything like that, and just be quite spontaneous and say whatever you want to in terms of the questions, but if you are like really going off at a totally new tangent then I'll bring you back. But you're welcome to actually give more insights than there are even on the interview schedule.

What do you feel are some of the strengths of the drama syllabus?

I think in most areas we have a fair amount of subject matter that we can deal with. || Obviously there are lots of flaws amongst the weaknesses in terms of the quality and the content; | but in terms of the drama syllabus as such in the Theatre History section we have a fair amount of subject material | to look at. In our play syllabus we also have that kind of latitude but I think there are more weaknesses and maybe if we go through the weakness we can actually acknowledge some strengths and look at how it does not meet some of the needs. There are more important needs.

You know I think that's a better idea to actually look at both ^{strengths and} weaknesses together.

Yes, but we normally take it for granted that there are strengths. I mean it is alive | we are teaching it || people are being examined, } so it's far more important to look at the weaknesses and take for granted that there are certain strengths.

Now the weaknesses - I think one of the main, not weakness but a flaw - and there's a difference between a weakness and a flaw. A weakness is an inability of the syllabus to meet a need; but a flaw is something that is wrong with it. || I think one of the flaws with it, is that it's jam-packed with stuff that we need to get across to the pupils. It attempts to do too much in too short a

→ volume

redefining drama

space of time. It is also not defined in terms of what - I mean although we have our aims and objectives, I think in terms of like the practical stuff and what is expected of us, I think we're very much of a performing arts school or we try to be. If you look at the concentrated emphasis placed on that matric Examination and yet we talk about life experiences and the whole thing but I think at the end of the day when you're looking at the product, you're looking at how well these people can articulate, how well they can sell themselves, how well they can present themselves which is very important in a sense, but I think far more important is the whole idea of drama. Drama as in theatre in education and not drama as in acting. I think there is a greater emphasis on the performing arts aspect rather than the theatre in education and focus. I mean if we had to really measure the level of maturity of Std 10 pupils as compared to their level when they enter the Std 8 class, I don't know how we're going to do that - how we're going to judge, putting them through an improvisation situation doesn't even test their mental ^{skills} - well, it may test their skills, but how does it test or how does it change a level or depth of thinking. I mean it can in a way, but as far as I'm concerned because the emphasis is on presentation we can't really go deep in terms of like changing ways of life. We think we are doing that.

So what you're saying Kasturie is that as much as you think that there's a great emphasis on the final finished product, there's almost like too much of focus on that to the extent that we are neglecting certain critical skills that you need to be inculcating. Okay, I will start by giving you certain focuses. In terms of the relevance of the syllabus; you were touching on that, but now more specifically in terms of content etc. Now how relevant is it.

^{the syllabus}

I think that ~~it~~ is not relevant in it's content as such. We make it relevant by interpretation, but I don't think as a package that is handed to us it is relevant per se. I mean it can be so much more relevant. We touch on that South African situation in theatre in such a flimsy way in Std 9, "superficial" way. I feel that

Outline

MP

everything I'm saying is so well known, I mean I'm just repeating myself here; in terms of eurocentric bias and everything else.

To what extent do you feel it needs to get more relevance?

Yes definitely, in terms of losing some of it's eurocentric bias. I think it needs to get more indigenous We have this weird idea that drama does not exist in the South African context, that we are mere imitations of things that have gone by or things from the past, whereas there are some very very vital or talented skilled people in our country that we just don't focus on, not just people, but movement. I mean in a Theatre for Africa, it's such an important group in a sense that it looks at an area in environmental issues looking at it through an apartheid or that kind of constraint. We don't even focus on it as a work of study. It's developing now - I mean it's so important because we're going through this transition phase and I think one of the greater problems with us is that we're always talking about the New South Africa and we have ignored that we haven't even got there yet. || We are not there. The New South Africa is something - I don't know where it is. We are in that very important stage of transition. This Theatre For Africa 5 years ago may have been making some important statement. Now it's developing in this process, it's being affected by political decisions - everything that is happening around us, and we need to study how theatre can change in a political climate for a country, for education, for everything; what a useful study, because it's happening now. ||

Just in terms of you as a teacher and in terms of the amount of direction that the syllabus gives you. Do you find that adequate?

Well I must admit that while it gives a direction | I do feel very free to do my own thing. It does lay out certain objectives which are general and can apply to any language syllabus as far as I'm concerned. So in that I feel very much like it depends very much on the teacher how much you can put into it. Now, I wonder if direction is perscription or what are you saying?

No, I understand what you're saying like to a certain degree there needs to be direction and yet to a certain degree there also needs to be that freedom within which you work. That's almost like an ambiguity in a sense but is there a tendency for the syllabus to be too prescriptive or are you satisfied with the amount of freedom it allows you. ||

Well, again I would say in the current climate what would have seemed too prescriptive 5 years ago is a relevant ^{relative} concept. It may not be prescriptive now and I believe that the syllabus, by virtue of the fact that it is a developmental process as well. || I mean | the study of drama is the study in development of the intellect of the body, of everything. It needs to be reviewed and therefore in 1992 if they come up with a new syllabus, then only can I decide whether it is prescriptive or whatever. ||

In terms of your pupils and the way that you have taught them over the years, does the syllabus have in it room for developing critical thinking in your pupils?

I don't know of a syllabus that actually puts down its aims and objectives as, 'here's your content, approach it like this, develop critical thinking and go on like that.' I believe that critical thinking can be used in any subject any time, anywhere, depending on your aim as a teacher. ||

I know what you're saying. You're saying that over and above the syllabus it's where you are in terms of your own critical thinking as the educator in terms of interpreting the syllabus.

Also as like forming one of my hidden agenda a very positive hidden agenda of developing a critical mind.

Yes, but what I'm saying is that to what extent does the syllabus need to be that amount of prescriptive in it actually stating aims that ensure educators then work towards developing critical thinking. |

I see what you're saying. I think that needs to be done. Definitely. It needs to be prescriptive in that sense; because in that very

(enthusiastic) 129

brilliant point

Yes
but I don't
know if
it's
enough

prescription there is going to be that amount of freedom because our levels of interpretation are different so even though it might prescribe develop critical skills thinking in your pupils the way you do it and the way I do, it will be totally different and therefore we have our freedom; but essentially yes, it needs to do that, it needs to state it.

From your years of teaching drama like by the end of the matric year and if you had to evaluate the level of critical thinking of your matrices, what would you say in terms of your drama

Cynical/humble

I think to a certain extent, but I don't believe I can change pupils to such a great... Okay what I do at the end of the matric and at the end of every year is to ask the children as part of their critical thinking process, to evaluate the drama year, whatever standard; and to look at certain angles of the syllabus and how they've grown etc.etc. Some children come out of it having learnt nothing in the sense that I wanted them to learn, like I started out that lesson saying 'I want these children to come out of it like this.' At the end of the year they didn't even see the point. Now I don't know how much of therapy needs to be done in that way. I don't know if I can reach out to everyone but I do believe those who can, who received it, received. Now I did a specific thing this year, it was called the Get Up And Go Show and as opposed to (I'll use the term, the 'zombi awareness') so I made them aware of getting up and going for it and I made that a focus for about 2 months. For that period it seemed like they seemed to be far more aware of what was happening etc.etc. Then it went to 3 months, they sort of forgot again. We came to Advertisements in the last section and it was like the whole process again. They were so stunned that they could look at it critically. || Like we had to go through that whole thing again. Now I don't know whether I am trained to actually get a child there, teach him this and see the result, measure it and do the rest of it. All I can do is offer it, and I think that's my basic problem in terms of evaluating my receptiveness as a critical teacher.

much to do's

change drama

Am I answering your questions?

(worried)

You are and very deeply to. It's fine really.
 To what extent does your drama syllabus correlate to life or
 prepare the child to participate meaningfully in life?

I don't know. ~~You know even there now, if you look at the
 creative drama section, it is what the teacher puts in and what the
 teacher wants to achieve that determines the correlation, the
 level.~~ But if you look at 'Our Town' and look at the books that
 we use and we force themes and we localise text, I don't know to
 what extent that actually prepares the children for life. It's like
 we're forced to teach those books, we find the best ways to bring it
 to their experience, teach them certain theatrical or whatever those
 devices are all about, but at the end of the day how much more
 knowledgeable are they in terms of life left and I don't think they
 are. I think the only section that actually allows for that is
 that practical section where you can apply it; again the teacher is
 so important there. I think there's so much more we can do in terms
 of community work, getting them going. Like we have a refugee
 crisis here. If we took the children there and looked at that as
 part of Principles of Drama putting together a story
 everything that we've learnt but how to expose that issue there.
 I think instead of just talking about it in the Section D of the
 exam because we need to train them for their matric exam I think
 that we should be given that amount of freedom. ~~There should be
 somewhat of trust in our integrity as teachers that we can do that.~~

There's this thing called the NEPI principles Kasturie. They're
 the principles of non-racism, non-sexism, equality, democracy and
 re-addressing of historical imbalances - ~~but that's a bit~~
difficult. But to what extent does your syllabus in drama endorse
 these principles?

Not to a great extent, not ours, no. I mean look at the Theatre
 History, look at Elizabethan theatre, but there again I mean it's a
 question of pointing out what was the role of the female then and
 how is she different now, and why was she different then, why was
 she different about in that fashion. Now I think that it is
important from a historical sector but the teacher can put that

imbalance correct or can sort it out now in this day and age but in terms of the thrust I don't think we're teaching children how to look at sexism and address the issue and when they perform those in if we were really teaching them that then we won't see those stereo-typed men who come home and expect the mothers to bring their food. When we catch them off the cuff we get that, and why is it so, it's definitely because the syllabus is not doing it.

You think it should be done more fundamentally rather than by-the-way.

Yes.

What are the factors that influence the development of the subject or the syllabus. Now we're looking at development of it.

To what extent, in your time as a teacher, has there been attempts to try and develop the subject by any significant player.

Yes. We're talking about the workshops that we used to have. In terms of specific areas that teachers felt they needed more material.

Where I thought that that was just like an attempt to treat the effect of the problem if I see the syllabus as a problem rather than addressing the causes of some of the problems because you look at the teachers, you look at how they perform, you look at their results and they say, right, Principles of Speech, I can't handle this, so please develop this subject in that way or whatever.

Right, which is important to an extent because we need to be manning, we need new approaches, we need the rest of it.

To what extent does resources of facilities work against the subject development.

Text books are a major issue with me. It's so ridiculous that children don't have a theatre history text book; that funds are not made available in terms of materials that they can use; in terms of excursions; in terms of practical experience - the money for that. I think there are lots of tangible constraints in the school sect.

What are some of the other constraints e.g. time-table, the amount of time you have as a drama teacher compared with other subjects that you teach!

I suppose that's an important factor but we've got to see ourselves as part of the school setup as much as we'd like to talk about having all that time we need for drama. There is a reality I mean, there is a balance that must be struck. We are not a Performing Arts school. I mean I teach English as well. I'm not making excuses for the lack of time or lack of anything that is given to drama.

The examinations. To what extent does that actually influence subject development?

I think again it has a lot to do with that product orientation even though the style of questioning has changed and they're trying to promote a far more experiential approach. I think at the end of the day we are teaching books, we are teaching history and we need to test that in the formal exam setup. It would be so good if we could test these in other ways, I don't know what the measures are but to test development I think would be the greatest in some other way. In the matric exam, you know at the end of the day, we are preparing them for that "stupid" paper and the achievement there sort of decides whether the child is a good pupil or not. The other thing I find that is so hard, ~~so~~ is that we have quite a mixed bag of pupils. Now a lot of the syllabus is geared towards or it assumes that people have certain skills, like it does not take into account that I could be teaching drama at Umlazi now and that for some reason or the other my kids have not been exposed to poetry, they do not know how to read or interpret even though - I mean they have not learnt that as part of their training from primary school and it is just assumed in Std 8 that we'll give him this whole thing of skills and emphasis and interpretative skills and expect them to look into poetry and find those underlined underlines meanings and speak it in such a professional and perfect way. For

Handwritten notes:
 ()
 Interpretation of Appraisal Page 9...
 v

whom and for what, ^{subject} and the standards that we use, I mean, whose standards are they? I think that's the basic problem in terms of factors contributing and especially now that we have African students. We have a problem with the language in the first place - with speaking the language. Now how do I test that Std 8 African pupil in that language Home or whatever against the other person who has spoken English all his life, who knows the nuances of the language. I mean how do I test that - I don't believe that the drama syllabus has made accommodations for that and it is very important aspect of teaching a subject We've had such a major change, upheaval in our system. We have Black pupils who have come into our schools within the past 3 years, how has it changed, how has it served them to cope.

How does the status of the subject within the school culture or the ethos of the school actually influence the development of that subject.

(angry)

I am very wary that I constantly promote the importance and the value of drama in the school. I think I'm so scared that it will actually diminish in its value in terms of the way people see it. Now on the status of the subject, I feel the need to promote it. So what I try to do is to use drama to like in ordinary circumstances like it's very much part of the school's culture in the sense that if we have an important day. For example, let's say we have strike action. Then I will make sure that I use the drama to highlight, or give information or do whatever I need to do through drama to get it across to the pupils - to show them that drama is not just laughs and entertainment in that sense; In a light-hearted frivolous way that you can teach it, it can do so much. So I have been doing things like that in terms of drama. I think that the subject is very important and I think because of my positivity in that sense I don't allow anyone to interfere and I think as a result it does have some sort of value in the school. ||

So do you think like management and other teachers view it with necessary maturity that you do.

Yes, I think that I struggled to do that, but initially it was not like that.

Grade 1 necessary maturity towards 1 subject

Well, I started the drama school off here
I started with that attitude.

so

Anyway, Kasthurie, at the moment there's this whole thing of rationalization and cut-backs and even Lorraine at the moment is so insecure because she feels that her job is at stake; that there will be no need for a subject advisor anymore and also that officially from next year the number to have in your Std 8 class is 25, not anything less. So that's another thing in terms of how this is being implemented. What are your views about this whole thing that there is a concerted attempt to actually marginalize the subject.

I think we understand the importance of the subject and what it can do and it is such a pity that this is the way it's going. I'd like to think that it is the old dispensation that is deciding this and I'm so hopeful that in the new system, even the Freedom Charter explains that culture is a very important issue here. I think culture is what is going to save us anyway. We can't talk about crossing racial barriers through Mathematics or even through English being the major problem between races now. I believe it can be done through the Arts and for that reason in this transition phase it is very very important; that rationalization is going to be a very very retrogressive step. I think again it's because people cannot measure it. At the end of the Std 10 year if the principal could say 'this person's personality started off at .2 and now it's gone to .8, yes, great achievement.' It's because we can't assess it like that that they don't know and I don't know how they're going to do it, how they're going to promote the relevance, the importance in the developmental process of students. I think every pupil in high school should do drama from Std 6 till Std 10 as a compulsory subject, not for articulation, not for speech therapy but just for the development.

This is a bit of a question that you need to think about. How should the drama syllabus be developed?

I think it needs to be more relevant and more practical in terms of its content and theory. We need definite direction from the syllabus from the top. I said also that they try to achieve too much with the syllabus. It needs to be watered down, we need to be very definite about focus points, we need to know what we are trying to achieve, when we are going to achieve it and what's the story there. I think it's too bored. I think what has been done here is that that 1st, 2nd and 3rd year drama syllabus from UDW has just been transferred to the 8, 9 & 10 in this school and that certain parallels have been drawn and we're expected to do the same thing. It's so sad because we expect that the Std 8 pupil is equivalent of the 1st year university student in terms of his development and all that. While it is very important that the voice needs to be developed, while the history is being developed, while the body is being developed, but there's so much; it's too vast, and therefore we're not achieving any kind of success.

Who should be responsible for developing the subject?

I think both the pupil - the teachers basically. I think they are the best judges, the best developers at this stage, but obviously in conjunction with people who specialized or who are trained in that field.

Why would you think teachers are important players in developing the syllabus?

I think because ^{teachers} they know what is happening at the ground level. They are working with the pupil. They are receiving from the community, they are receiving from society. They are in the best position to perfect and mould.

What role does the subject advisor presently play?

As far as I'm concerned no role.

I only had one encounter or one positive meeting or whatever with her in that workshop setup at the beginning of the year. But in terms of this year I've been on my own, ^{thing} I mean I've just done

everything, I don't even know whether what I'm doing is right, wrong or whatever. I'm just going along my merry way. I think that she could be a far more important force in this whole process

is that in / situation felt in the process of a classroom?

How can she actually change the role that she's presently playing. I mean you've said that she's hardly playing any role

There are definite problems that we are going to expect. There are problems that teachers are experiencing. She needs to get to that point. She needs to look at those problems and start addressing them - redressing them. She needs to start talking, we need far more democracy, not just in opening our mouths and voicing our opinions at those meetings that we have, but to actually empower teachers to make some changes and to be vital in the development of their subject. We don't need her as an authoritative figure that we need permission from from time to time to carry out certain tasks or whatever. I think she needs to know what's happening in each and every teacher's mind and whether the 40 year old drama teacher needs to be refreshed or whether that 20 year old drama teacher needs more experience and needs to be trained. She needs to know it and because it is so difficult to measure the development it is very important like what type of teachers are teaching drama; what their commitment is to the subject; what their commitment is to teaching it in the first place, and I believe that that is far more important in drama than in any other subject, although I think every subject teacher will argue that.

To what extent has she actually played a role in developing teachers, or has she?

Not in a significant way. Personally I don't know what I've learnt or what I've gained from her experiences as far as direction of the syllabus goes or development of the subject, she hands out certain tips that

She gives me her views on what is right and if I do, I accept her role in a sense that she's trained and skilled.

So I think that I've been left on my own here. I believe I'm an H.O.D. I'm my own H.O.D, my own advisor, my own inspectress or whatever, honestly, and I feel so sad about that because I'm so young, I can influence pupils to such a great extent because of the freedom of the subject and God knows I could be doing anything; she doesn't know. Then at the end of the year I could just have those questions that get the children to just answer the questions on it, and that's it.

So you think that any teacher needs that amount of accountability, is that what you're saying.

Yes, that's what I'm saying.

Does she actually work towards developing the subject?

Now developing the subject - we've defined that. We've said that there's certain factors that affect the development. So when you talk about developing the subject, if you identify one of the problems as like lack of skills, then yes, she's lost in the skills workshop and she's developing the subject in that sense. But I think that development now is such a broad thing again, but I don't think that she's developing it in the way that I think that she should be developing it.

How should she be developing it?

I think that you'd have to go back to everything that I've said, and look at what is not happening; and look at her role, I mean after all she holds that title, she gets paid for that job. I am not trained as an advisor or inspectress, I do not have my Masters in this area, I believe it's her job to do it. In the same way when we had that thing about promotion, I mean we sat together, TASA and tried to figure out the best method and I don't believe it is our job. We are not skilled, we are not trained. It is the

interference on the part
of the teacher

H.O.D's job to come up with a questionnaire or method that suits us. We have a problem, she must address the problem and address our needs.

So you are endorsing the fact that there are roles in terms of specialized people for specialized jobs?

Yes.

Okay Kasthurie, anything else that you need to say, say it now, around what we've been speaking about, like any of the things that you possibly feel very passionate about and want to re-iterate.

At this moment in time, for me the most important thing is to make the subject more relevant to our setup now.

It sickens me the way, you know, the levels, the standards, whatever at the moment and I hate the fact that I have to work with every section, find my own way of getting across my own aims and objectives. I hate working it out and having that battle.

Kasthurie

101
Teachers are mediators of I Curric.

Debank I yuehuas

SIUORAF

The Role of the teacher.
The main tradition of teaching I text - Present the wonder of I text, Authors of text need to be respected.

This T went beyond I debate of transcending vs Africanic
Presented I moderate challenge - you don't dev I

Interpretation of syllabus, Exam questions have to go above recall + reorganization to asking R to apply their know.
Does not slavishly follow I structure of I syllabus.

References => Ideological level
Cultural theory + School based C development
media education

Enrichment I Role

Terminology changed - please for development
to in no 3rd world by I new paradigm part
to created most

Approach to the text is important
He is teacher that he has almost a subject approach
to arranging TS use of I title he plays in readability
-> WRITERS

Drama as a talent subject in I ERSS.

He's not into making I syllabus what value he wants
to know it only

Vocabulary =
He knows fully that it is I Exam which had
diction I Approaches I T. explains P. 5
reflects

liberal & not liberating

he was interested in choices

P. 13
Very good T # h n very good manager.

He uses I word packagers NOT teachers.

FAROUK

* JU. not the squares, it's the kind of things to tackle when teaching a text that's important.
 Are we making our ps creative artist
 TASK as teachers is to create a critical citizenary.
 HE gets himself out of the syll →

Strengths of Drama Syllabus

Why is there need for TS to teach pillars + stage structure + give all the technical names to pupils
 How does it help TS?
 The S can lead to L bourgeoisie of people.

Weaknesses of the S

not changed since 1983 - leans orientated - rooted in L tradition of the Cannon.
 Teachers have a strong behaviorist approach.
 Flawed! Contradictions — calls for an ^{experiential} ~~behaviorist~~ approach but it is strongly behaviorist.
 It asks for BS to be creative but L theme programme is interpreted whose theatre skills are foregrounded in that S.
 Development of the subject.

161 in Dev TS → they must become critical practitioners
 School based Curriculum Dev. (P. 9)

debunk I S + go of into creating his own.

You Don't dev. I Syllabus, You Dev. Drama.

All TS need to get together and put a Curriculum Dev. Team
 — School based C.

Threats of the subject.

TS under threat, but

Role of Subject Advisor.

She has "clipped" out of the file, The need for a good manager
 Coordinate, create buzz groups he need to merge people. Regional buzz groups.

Role of the teacher — The approach of the teacher to L text is important, teachers at workshops are too
 pathetic — A behaviorist approach does not challenge the assumptions

A group of TS that/ who can empower young children — Teacher must always be unravelling the myths
 in the lives of the text.

Critical Theory Approach — were we + people
 making I decisions, why is L ~~important~~ in?
 G.P.S. 8/14/2009

who is doing the selection of the text
 who decides what texts are best for young
 people. — kinds of Texts
 what is L TS ideological approach to teaching

there is a tension in overemphasising L
 in novative approach → blur L political project
 Learning must be unrelated to L kind of
 society one wants.

whose interest is ultimately served by the
 kind of choices we make.

Aesthetics is only a means/ not an
 end in itself (P. 3)

Using innovative methods is liberating, but if
 you have a critical theory approach, then
 you are liberating.

to what extent do you allow total
 free interpretation...???

technical details colonize, threaten the
 teaching

If the Drama course is redefined then people
 will be more accepting of it.



ORIGINAL INSIGHTS

APPENDIX : E

ADMINISTRATION : HOUSE OF DELEGATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

SYLLABUS FOR SPEECH AND DRAMA

HIGHER GRADE AND
STANDARD GRADE

STDS 8, 9, AND 10

IMPLEMENTATION DATES

STD 8 : 1986

STD 9 : 1986

STD 10 : 1986

SPEECH AND DRAMA STANDARD GRADE / HIGHER GRADE

STANDARDS 8, 9 AND 10

1. INTRODUCTION
2. AIMS
3. PRINCIPLES OF DRAMA AND THEATRE HISTORY
4. PRINCIPLES OF SPEECH
5. PRACTICAL WORK
6. EXAMINATIONS

N.B. As with certain other school subjects, the Standard Grade syllabus will differ from the Higher Grade syllabus mainly in terms of emphasis, depth of study and examination. Pupils will be expected to have a basic knowledge and understanding of facts. Analytical and comparative approaches to the work will not be expected.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Speech and Drama is the integration of both audible and visible communication.
- 1.2 Speech is our chief means of expressing our thoughts and feelings, and of communicating with other people.
- 1.3 Like the other arts, Drama is concerned both with the workings of the imagination and with the discipline of craftsmanship - a part of every child's life, not the privilege of the gifted few picked for a special occasion.
- 1.4 A clear distinction needs to be drawn between Drama which is concerned with performance in front of an audience (i.e. Theatre), and Drama as an integral part of education. For much of the work in Educational Drama an audience is not needed at all, and it does not necessarily involve teaching children how to act. It is concerned with opportunities for invention and expression; with an

understanding of human situations and behaviour through movement and speech; with a bringing to life - in a way that adds to personal experience - of much that has been merely imparted information.

- 1.5 In all phases educational drama is important for the development and experience of the child; however, in the fourth phase the pupils also need to develop the skills and discipline of an art form to communicate their ideas and experiences to others. Theatre provides this structure and form.

2. AIMS

- 2.1 The general aims for the course as a whole will be presented here. Specific aims will be presented under each separate section of the course.

- 2.1.1 Although the syllabus has been set out in separate sections, it is essential that wherever possible efforts should be made to integrate the various aspects.

2.2 General Aims

- 2.2.1 To stimulate and extend the pupils' creative imagination.
- 2.2.2 To heighten the pupils' general sensitivity and perception.
- 2.2.3 To provide opportunities for enhanced language development and thereby encourage the growth of a language that will meet a variety of social situations.
- 2.2.4 To assist the pupils to become more poised and selfconfident and to devleop the skills required for efficient communication both audible and visible.
- 2.2.5 To strengthen the pupils' sense of self-discipline and concentration by their involvement in the creative group situation.

- 2.2.6 To intensify their awareness of people and help them to understand and co-operate with others.
- 2.2.7 To promote the integration of the personality physically, emotionally and intellectually.
- 2.2.8 To refine the pupils' understanding and use of dramatic communication through the components movement, speech, action, plot and performance area.
- 2.2.9 To use dramatic communication successfully in order to explore, understand and communicate perceptions, issues, themes and ideas which lend themselves to exploration in this art medium.
- 2.2.10 To impart some knowledge and appreciation of the history and the practice of Drama and Theatre. (This should include reference to the South African situation).

3. PRINCIPLES OF DRAMA AND THEATRE HISTORY

3.1 Specific Aims

To enable the pupils :

- 3.1.1 to gain an appreciation of the general development of drama from ancient Greek to contemporary times through reading a cross-section of plays;
- 3.1.2 to investigate the development and changes in tragic and comic forms of drama through specific plays and historical periods studied;
- 3.1.3 to understand the motivation underlying human action; the nature of dilemma; and the consequences and implications of choice through a study of the prescribed texts; and
- 3.1.4 to perceive the role and significance of drama in society with specific reference to theatre and its development.

3.2 Principles of Drama

3.2.1 Introduction

3.2.1.1 The principles of drama should be related directly to the prescribed texts.

3.2.1.2 In studying the texts it is important to take cognisance of the fact that the script is intended for performance. Plays should be explored through practical work and not only theoretically.

Emphasis should be placed on drama in action. Consideration should be given to e.g. dialogue, action, conflict, characterization and structure of the play.

3.2.1.3 This section of the work should be closely related to the development of theatre history and should be supplemented by visits to various types of dramatic productions, followed by group discussion. (N.B. Importance of integrating the various aspects of the syllabus).

3.2.1.4 Reference could also be made to televised, filmed and radio drama productions.

3.2.2 Standard 8

As far as possible the work should be explored in practical terms.

3.2.2.1 Texts

(i) One prescribed play.

(ii) Two plays selected from a list of recommended plays.

3.2.2.2 Principles of Drama

A brief consideration of the following :

(i) Drama as an art form distinct from other art forms.

- (ii) The origins of Drama i. ritual and worship as an attempt through ritual experience to understand the nature of man and his relationship to the world around him.
- (iii) Drama as a representation of life restructured into a significant form.
- (iv) Dramatic form e.g. tragedy, comedy, melodrama and farce.
- (v) Structure : Plot and themes
Action and conflict/tension
Character
Style
Milieu
Dialogue

3.2.3 STANDARD 9

As far as possible the work should be explored in practical terms.

3.2.3.1 Texts

Three plays are to be studied

- (i) a Greek tragedy (prescribed)
- (ii) a Shakespearean tragedy (prescribed)
- (iii) a Modern or Contemporary play (own choice)

3.2.3.2 General Principles

The dramatic forms of the plays

- (i) The differences between the major historical periods should be highlighted in terms of the specific style and structure of the plays
- (ii) The principles of drama should be considered with specific reference to each play
- (ii) Tragedy as distinct from catastrophe

The changing concept of the hero in Greek and Elizabethan tragedies and modern drama.

3.2.3.3 Greek Tragedy

- (i) An introductory consideration of the following

Subject matter

Playwright's insight into character and action

Structure of the play: form and plot

- (ii) The chorus and its function

- (iii) The function of the messenger

- (iv) The Classical concept of the tragic hero

3.2.3.4 Elizabethan Tragedy

- (i) An introductory consideration of the following

Subject matter

Playwright's insight into character and action

Structure of the play : form and plot

- (ii) Character in action

- (iii) The Elizabethan concept of the tragic hero

3.2.3.5 Modern and Contemporary Drama

- (i) An introductory consideration of the following

The subject matter of modern drama related to the specific playwright

Playwright's insight into character and action

The structure of the play : form and plot

(ii) Symbolism reflected in the character of action

(iii) The modern concept of the anti-hero

3.2.3.6 NOTE: The sections of the work related to Elizabethan and Modern and Contemporary Drama must be studied with special reference to the theatre history studied in Standard 9. Greek theatre history, studied in Standard 8, should be revised.

3.2.4 STANDARD 10

As far as possible the work should be explored in practical terms.

3.2.4.1 Texts

Two prescribed comedies are to be studied in class for the final examination.

3.2.4.2 Comedy

- (i) The structure of the plays studied
- (ii) Some features of comedy, e.g. reliance on stock characters, the use of stock situations, complications and coincidence, incongruity, disguise, mistaken identity, romantic love versus the marriage of convenience, stage properties and business
- (iii) Character in action : Egoism, Hypocrisy, social prestige
- (iv) Where relevant, a brief consideration of social background in relation to the comedies studied
- (v) The range of comedy from high to low : Comedy of Manners, Satire, Romantic Comedy, Farce, Burlesque

3.3 Theatre History

3.3.1 A broad outline of the development of the physical theatre. The emphasis should be on the physical theatre as a venue for the presentation of the plays of the time.

3.3.2 STANDARD 8

3.3.2.1 RITUAL e.g. hunting, seasonal and agricultural rituals; festivals and ceremonies related to the life cycle - birth, initiation, marriage and death. (Refer where possible to South African examples.)

3.3.2.2 THE GREEK THEATRE e.g. festivals in honour of Dionysus, the dithyramb, tragedy and comedy, the great festivals, theatres and staging, actors and costumes and the chorus.

3.3.2.3 MEDIEVAL THEATRE e.g. entertainment during the Dark Ages; the church as venue - tropes and the "Quem Quaeritis", liturgical plays; outside the church - the introduction of the vernacular, the Mystery Cycles and guild involvement; presentation - static (mansions and houses, rounds and booth stages), perambulatory (pageant wagons); methods of staging, properties and costumes; the Morality Play - "Everyman"; the secular tradition - mumming, Mayday festivals.

3.3.2.4 THE COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE e.g. the comic tradition; improvisation; the scenarios and stock characters; masks and staging; the characters (e.g. Harlequin, Columbine, Pantalone, Il Capitano, Pierrot, Pulcinella).

3.3.3 STANDARD 9

3.3.3.1 THE ELIZABETHAN THEATRE e.g. the Interludes; the professional companies - actor-managers comics, boy actors; inn yards and arenas; the public playhouse - staging, costumes, the audience; Shakespeare.

3.3.3.2 THE RESTORATION AND 18TH CENTURY THEATRES e.g. the restoration of the monarchy, the French influence; royal patents; theatres; staging; actors and audiences; the Georgian playhouse; audiences and plays.

3.3.3.3 THE LATE 19TH CENTURY AND MODERN THEATRES

(i) A broad outline of the changes that took place - the transition from the theatre of illusion and spectacle to the theatre of realism, social conscience and symbolism.

(ii) A consideration of some of the major playwrights and their influence on the theatre, e.g. Ibsen, Chekov, Shaw.

3.3.3.4 A study of at least one of the following :

SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE - approached either as an historical survey or with reference to specific modern trends and/or playwrights.

EASTERN THEATRE - a study of one or more of the major national theatres of China, Japan, India and South East Asia.

3.3.4 STANDARD 10

3.3.4.1 20TH CENTURY THEATRE - a selection should be made of some of the major trends, movements and representative playwrights and their influence on theatre e.g.

Expressionism - e.g. Wilder

Epic theatre - e.g. Brecht

The move away from proscenium arch staging.

(Examples from historical periods previously studied, should be referred to.)

3.3.4.2 COMMEDIA DELL' ARTE - the influence of the Commedia dell' Arte on comic writing and staging. Revision of the work on this period covered in Standard 8.

3.3.4.3 A detailed study of the historical periods which are relevant to the plays prescribed for Standard 10.

3.3.4.4 NOTE : Only work studied in Standard 10 will be examined.

4. PRINCIPLES OF SPEECH

The Approach

As far as possible the principles of speech should be taught through practical work so that the pupils will be better able to understand, both physically and intellectually, the processes involved. Imaginative learning situations should be developed involving the pupils. Teachers should be aware of the dangers of a mechanical approach to this aspect of the work and of talking about the principles of speech instead of involving the pupils in first hand experience.

While it is necessary for teachers to know the underlying theory in order to be able to correct and assist their pupils, it is not necessary for pupils to have any deep theoretical knowledge of the fundamental principles. It is sufficient for them to be able to apply these techniques to their interpretative work.

4.1 Specific Aims

To enable pupils :

4.1.1 to develop speech which is free from strain by learning how to use the body in terms of :

relaxation

control of muscles

breathing and breath control

resonation of sound

to help them to communicate their thoughts with more clarity, precision and fluency;

- 4.1.2 to enhance their sensitivity to the spoken word;
- 4.1.3 to improve their speech through relevant exercises;
- 4.1.4 to learn that meaning is enhanced by the attributes of speech,
inter alia :

pitch
intonation
stress and emphasis
pause
pace.

4.2 Content

Teachers are expected to exercise their individual judgement as to which of these sections require the most emphasis with their particular pupils and at what stage in the course the various sections should be introduced. During the three year course all aspects must be covered.

4.2.1 Relaxation and posture

Pupils must be made aware of correct posture and learn relaxation techniques for the whole body and the specific areas involved in the speech process. They should be made aware of the effect of incorrect posture and excessive tension on all aspects of the communication process.

4.2.2 Breathing

Pupils must be able to differentiate between the processes of breathing for speech and normal passive breathing and understand the importance of good breathing techniques. Through exercises, pupils should learn to control their exhalations and increase their lung capacity. They must be made aware of the effect of excessive tension and over-relaxation.

4.2.3 Phonation

Pupils must be made aware of the danger of controlling their voices from the larynx and of the effects of excessive tension or over-relaxation on phonation. Pupils should practise exercises to extend their pitch range. The emotional aspects of pitch in relation to interpretative work must be stressed.

4.2.4 Resonation

Pupils must be made aware of the amplification of sound through direct and indirect resonance and resonators. Attention should be drawn to shape, size, wall surface and their effects on sound. Pupils should practise exercises for developing resonance.

4.2.5 Articulation and enunciation

Pupils must be made aware of the need for clear articulation and of the role played by the organs of articulation in both articulation and enunciation. Pupils must practise exercises to improve careless or inaccurate speech sounds. Attention should be paid to the evocative quality of sounds (verbal dynamics) in interpretative work. Pupils must be made aware of the ill-effects of excessive tension and over-relaxation on articulation and enunciation.

4.2.5.1 Accents

Good speech should be pleasant to listen to, easy to understand and free from strain. Accents are acceptable provided they do not distort speech or interfere with the clarity and expressiveness of the communication.

4.2.6 The attributes of speech

Rate/Pace

Intonation

Stress (syllabic and sentence)
Emphasis
Rhythm and Metre (Basics only)
Tone/Register
Pause - sense, dramatic, suspensory and caesura
Phrasing
The use of the neutral vowel

These must be studied in terms of their practical application to the students' interpretative work.

4.2.7 Correction of individual speech problems

All pupils must be made aware of their personal problems (both technical and interpretative) in the field of speech work. Pupils must be provided with a programme of suitable remedial exercises.

5. PRACTICAL WORK

5.1 Specific Aims

- 5.1.1 To show the pupils how to apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations and, through their experimental learning, give them the opportunity to reinforce, clarify or modify their knowledge.
- 5.1.2 To develop in the pupils an integrated approach to communication through audible and visible movement.
- 5.1.3 To promote the pupils' ability to co-operate and negotiate within the group situation.
- 5.1.4 To develop in the pupils a critical response to their own creative work and that of others.

- 5.1.5 To explore methods of structuring creative material into dramatically accepted forms.
- 5.1.6 To extend and enrich the pupils' kinesthetic sense and awareness.
- 5.2 Creative interpretation - applied principles of speech
- 5.2.1 It is desirable that work be taught in tutorial groups with a maximum of five pupils. If this is not possible because of administrative problems the work should be done either in small groups working simultaneously or as a class.
- 5.2.2 STANDARD 8
- (i) Verbal Dynamics (Evocative qualities of sounds)
 - (ii) Narrative techniques : individual and chain
story-telling
the narrative poem
sight reading
dramatised prose
 - (iii) Choral verse speaking.
- 5.2.3 STANDARD 9
- (i) Verbal Dynamics (Evocative qualities of words in context)
 - (ii) Lyrical poetry
 - (iii) Poetry related to group programmes (ref. 5.3.2.4).
- 5.2.4 STANDARD 10
- (i) Verbal Dynamics (Evocative qualities of words in context)
 - (ii) The sonnet - the Shakespearean or Petrarchan

5.3.2 STANDARD 9

5.3.2.1 Exercises to develop body control and sensitivity.

5.3.2.2 Creative drama and improvisation with special attention to

(i) exploring and dealing with the inter-relationships of plot, context and theme

(ii) finding suitable structures and using them successfully e.g. introduction, development, climax and conclusion.

5.3.2.3 Scripted scenes.

5.3.2.4 Group theme programmes including poetry, scenes and movement.

5.3.3 STANDARD 10

5.3.3.1 Elementary dance drama forms using music and/or sound.

5.3.3.2 Polished improvisations leading to scripted scenes (playbuilding).

5.3.3.3 One-act plays (these should be treated as projects and all aspects of the productions should be the responsibility of the pupils).

5.3.3.4 Group theme programmes for final examinations.

5.4 Group discussions (spontaneous and structured)

In all three years pupils should be involved in discussing the various aspects of the syllabus. Consideration should be given to the following areas of the work

- listening skills

- relaxed speech flow in communication situations

(iii) Poetry related to group programmes (ref. 5.3.3.4)

(iv) Revision of standard 8 and 9 work.

5.3 Movement, Creative Drama and Improvisation

Movement - a consideration of Body, Dynamics (Effort),
Spatial Relationships and Communication in terms of movement

Creative drama and improvisation

Group projects

5.3.1 STANDARD 8

5.3.1.1 (i) Movement - the development of flexibility, versatility
and control, aiming to increase body awareness,
confidence and skill in movement

(ii) Mime - simple actions and occupational mime-striving
for accuracy and clarity of gesture.

5.3.1.2 Creative drama and improvisation with special attention given
to the refining of the pupils'

(i) concentration in acting out and presentation

(ii) sustainment of belief in the make-believe context

(iii) ability to improvise purposefully and become
increasingly less dependant on teacher initiative
and control.

5.3.1.3 Presentation of scenes from scripted drama or improvisations
based thereon.

5.3.1.4 Group projects based on creative interpretation, movement,
creative drama and improvisation activities.

- structuring communication skills : e.g. introducing, summing up, questioning and interviewing etc.

5.5 The creative use of audio-visual media

Where schools have audio-visual equipment and/or fully equipped stages, pupils should be encouraged to become familiar with the use and application of these resources. However, they must be made aware of the fact that the primary criteria for assessment of practical work should be the pupils' ability to communicate audibly and visibly through the dramatic medium.

ADMINISTRATION : HOUSE OF DELEGATES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

ADDENDUM

TO

SPEECH AND DRAMA - STANDARD GRADE

ASSESSMENT: TESTING AND EXAMINING

TO BE READ

IN

CONJUNCTION WITH

SPEECH AND DRAMA STANDARD GRADE SYLLABUS

1. ASSESSING : TESTING AND EXAMINING : SENIOR SECONDARY PHASE

1.1 The Std 10 examination of Speech and Drama (Standard Grade).

1.1.1 Examinations must take cognisance of the general and specific aims of the syllabus.

1.1.2 Total marks for the Standard Grade is 300 made up as follows :

Written paper	180
Practical	<u>120</u>
Total	<u>300</u>

1.2 Written Examinations (a 3 hour paper)

Note :

- . At Standard Grade pupils are expected to possess a basic knowledge and understanding of facts.
- . Although essay-type questions may be set, the pupils should always be given guidelines as to the information which should be included in the essay.
- . It is preferable to set several shorter questions rather than presenting one long question.
- . In Sections C and D (Principles of Speech and Practical Work) a simple description will suffice.
- . In Sections C and D stress should be placed on the creative application of their knowledge in practical work.

The paper will be arranged as follows :

1.2.1 Section A : Principles of Drama

Pupils will be required to answer two questions on :

two prescribed comedies (refer : 3.2.4.1)
the comic forms of drama (refer : 3.2.4.2) (60)

1.2.2 Section B : Theatre History

Pupils will be required to answer one question on :

the history and practice of theatre in the prescribed periods of study covered in Standard 10. In addition to 20th Century Theatre and Commedia Dell' Arte, periods related to the prescribed texts will be examined (refer : 3.3.4). (45)

1.2.3 Section C : Principles of Speech

Pupils will be required to answer one question.

As this section is studied over the three year course (Standards 8, 9 and 10) pupils should be prepared to answer questions on any aspect of the work covered (refer : paragraph 4 of the syllabus). (30)

1.2.4 Section D : Practical Work

Pupils will be required to answer one question based on the practical work covered in the course (refer : paragraph 5 of the syllabus)

Interpretation of prose and verse forms studied.

Sight Reading.

The organisation of and participation in dramatised prose, improvisation and mime items.

Dance drama.

Participation in and/or production of scenes and one-act plays.

Participation in and compilation of theme programmes. (45)

180 marks

A choice of questions will be provided in each section.

Essay and other types of questions will be set.

1.3 Practical Examination

The Practical Examination will consist of the following sections :

1.3.1 Section A

- 1.3.1.1 A presentation of a group programme based on a theme. (The group should not exceed five candidates).

The programme should include varied aspects of the work covered in the Speech and Drama course, but must include the following :

Poetry of a suitable standard.

Dramatised prose.

A scene or scenes from any suitable text/s involving two or more characters.

Movement as an integral part of the programme and at least one specific movement item.

- 1.3.1.2 Each candidate must :

Present a minimum of one individual speech item (not less than 14 lines).

Participate in a scene.

Participate in a movement item.

- 1.3.1.3 Participation in choral verse speaking is optional.

- 1.3.1.4 Maximum time limit :

Two candidates

15 minutes

Three to five candidates

5 minutes per candidate

1.3.1.5 Where there is only one candidate he/she should work within the group situation with other pupils who will not be examined. One of the most important aspects of the practical work is the interaction of the individual within the group situation with the emphasis on team work and co-operation. (75)

1.3.2 Section B

Group improvisation with or without speech on a subject set by the examiner chosen by the candidates from a choice of subjects provided by the examiner.

Fifteen minutes preparation time will be allowed. (25)

NOTE :

In Sections A and B the candidates should demonstrate an understanding of, and an ability to apply, the principles of audible and visible communication in practice.

1.3.3 Section C

Group discussions based on the theme programme and improvisation. The examiner will initiate discussion with questions based on Sections A and B of the Practical Examination. Candidates will be required to sustain and develop the discussion. (20)

120 marks

1.4 Mark Allocation - Standard 10

Written Examinations

Section A	:	Principles of Drama	:	60
Section B	:	Theatre History	:	45
Section C	:	Principles of Speech	:	30
Section D	:	Practical Work	:	<u>45</u>
				<u>180 marks</u>

Practical Examination

Section A	: Group Theme Programme	75
Section B	: Group Improvisation	25
Section C	: Group Discussion (based on theme programmes and improvisation	<u>20</u>
		<u>120</u> marks
GRAND TOTAL		<u>300</u>

1.5 Note ; Standard 8 and 9 Examination

- (i) The work will be assessed internally.
- (ii) In the Standard 8 and 9 examinations, the proportion of marks allocated to the various sections should be approximately equivalent to that in the Senior Certificate Examination.
- (iii) The following mark allocation is supplied for Standards 8 and 9 :

<u>ASPECTS</u>	<u>STD 8</u>	<u>STD 9</u>
<u>WRITTEN</u>		
Section A : Principles of Drama	60	60
Section B : Theatre History	45	45
Section C : Principles of Speech	30	30
Section D : Practical Work	<u>45</u>	<u>45</u>
	<u>180</u>	<u>180</u>
<u>PRACTICAL EXAMINATION</u>		
Narrative Techniques : (individual story telling narrative form)	30	-
Sight Reading	30	-
Dramatised Prose	30	-
Improvisation	30	20

ASPECTS	STD 8	STD 9
Poetry	-	20
The Sonnet (Shakespearean or Petrarchan)		20
Group theme programmes	-	60
	<u>120</u>	<u>120</u>
Total	300	300

APPENDIX

SPECIMEN EXAMINATION PAPER : SPEECH AND DRAMA : STANDARD GRADE

Time : 3 hours

N.B. Candidates must answer five questions :

two questions from Section A

one question from Section B

one question from Section C

one question from Section D

SECTION A

Answer two questions from this section.

1. The Rivals

Discuss the characters of 'the rivals', Captain Absolute (Ensign Beverly), Bob Acres and Sir Lucius O'Trigger. (30)

2. Twelfth Night

For what reasons does Viola disguise herself?
Relate some of the events that befall her in this disguise. (30)

3. Choose three of the following characters :

Lydia Languish, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Olivia, Sir Anthony Absolute, Malvolio.

Write a character sketch, supported by reference to the text, on each one selected. (3 x 10) (30)

SECTION B

Answer one question from this section.

4. "In 1576 the first building designed especially for the performance of plays was erected in London for a man called James Burbage. It copied many of the features of an inn yard". Describe the unroofed Elizabethan playhouse and mention the features which were common to the inn yards and the theatre. Mention any other influences which other architectural structures might have had. Illustrate your answer with diagrams. (45)
5. (a) Write brief notes on the Commedia Dell' Arte. (18)
- (b) What do you understand by the term 'stock characters'. (7)
- (c) Describe two important 'stock characters' in the Commedia dell' Arte. (20) (45)

Answer one question from this section.

6. "The Owl and the Pussycat went to sea 1
In a beautiful pea-green boat, 2
They took some honey, and plenty of money 3
Wrapped up in a five-pound note". 4
- (a) What is a suspensory pause and what is its function? Give an example from the above extract. (5)
- (b) Discuss at which point you would use a rising inflection of the voice if you were saying these lines aloud, and at which point you would use a falling inflection? In each case discuss why you would use that pattern. (5)
- (c) What is the difference between metre and rhythm? How can one avoid the pitfalls of metre? (Illustrate from the above lines). (4)

SECTION D

Answer one question from this section.

8. With reference to your own personal involvement and experience write short essays on three of the following topics :

(a) Dance drama and/or movement

(b) Directing and/or acting in a scene or a play

(c) Theme programmes

(d) Dramatised prose. (3 x 15) (45)

9. "When working on a project, a group should keep on discussing the following points :

Shape - Does the programme have a beginning, middle and an end?
Does it follow a logical progression?

Material - Is the material from a variety of sources? How well is the material arranged? Is it varied enough?

Co-operation - Is the group working well together on the presentation and co-operating with each other?

Conviction - Is the group sincere and convincing in its intentions and performance?

Individual's assessment - How well is each individual contributing to the planning of the presentation and its execution?"

(David Self)

Your group presented a theme programme at the practical speech and drama examination. Discuss the theme programme under the headings above. Do not forget to mention the title of the theme programme. (45)

TOTAL 180

(d) What are the effects of tension in the lower jaw on speech?
Describe how these effects could be remedied. (10)

(e) What is resonance? Name two important resonators of the
voice and explain how each functions as a resonator. (6)(30)

7. "During breathing for speech the air supply from the lungs must
be controlled".

(a) Describe the correct method of breathing for speech. (12)

(b) What are the advantages of using this method of breathing?(8)

(c) Explain what the following terms mean and say why they are
of importance to an effective speaker :

relaxation

a flexible tongue

(10) (30)

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