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WORDS, LIVES AND MUSIC: On Becoming a Teacher of English



Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a Doctoral Degree in Education in the Department of Curriculum Studies, Faculty of Education at the University of Durban-Westville (UDW), South Africa. Supervisor: Professor Jonathan Jansen

1998

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Abstract

"How do student teachers experience the learning and teaching of English over different periods of their lives?" is the question that this research study attempts to address. Drawing on the biographical experiences of nine student teachers of a pre-service teacher preparation programme within post-apartheid South Africa, I document their own retold experiences of English language teaching and learning (ELTL), and analyse the process of their becoming teachers of the English language. I trace their histories of ELTL over different periods of their lives, each of which were developed within varying social contexts of the South African apartheid and post-apartheid educational landscape. In mapping the biographical journey of student teachers becoming teachers of the English language, I foreground their own understandings of their formative experiences.

I explore the influence of their experiences of teaching and learning English during different stages of their lives as:

- members of a family and community;
- pupils in primary and secondary schools during the apartheid era;
- undergraduate students at university;
- members of a pre-service teacher preparation programme, and
- practising novice student teachers in post-apartheid schooling.

The study focuses on how competing understandings of ELTL of the student teachers' family members, their primary and secondary schoolteachers, their university lecturers and teacher educators, their fellow colleagues in the teacher education programme, the mentor teachers and pupils in schools, and the student teachers themselves are shared, exchanged and interrogated as they develop understanding of ELTL. Their role and identity as teachers of English is forged in response to these complementary, contradictory and competing forces of influence.

Gaining access into student teachers' thinking is a complex process. This dissertation explores some of the methodologies of entering into the private world of teachers' personal reflection and understanding (a study conventionally labelled "teacher thinking"). The methodologies used in this study include autobiographical writing, visual collage making, post-lesson interviews, individual and group interviews, written assignments and examinations, reflective journal writing, team research reports, peer and self assessments and student teachers' team design of curriculum materials for their teaching practicum.

The data yielded in this study was subjected firstly to a narrative analysis, and then a discourse analysis. In the narrative analysis, I document a first person lifehistory of only two of the nine case study student teachers as they journeyed from their homes, into schools, through the pre-service teacher preparation programme and back into schools as student teachers. These two case studies served as the principal case studies of this research. The remaining seven of the nine student teachers served as auxiliary case studies. In the discourse analysis, I provide a detailed linguistic analysis of three "texts" produced by the principal student teachers (viz. their written autobiography, an extract from a post-lesson interview and an extract from their reflective journal). Each of these texts was produced within specific discourse settings: directed towards specific audiences, within particular contexts and intended to achieve unique purposes. I analyse these texts on two levels:

- Representational Analysis: in terms of what student teachers say about their experiences of ELTL, and
- Presentational Analysis: in terms of how student teachers choose to present their understandings of ELTL in the specific discourse



setting.

The lifehistories of ELTL of the auxiliary seven case study students are documented to serve as a foil against which comparisons (findings and conclusions) from the two principal case studies are made.

The study reveals that the process of becoming a teacher of the English language in a rapidly changing context (such as that of post-apartheid South Africa) is complex. Various contiguous forces compete to influence the student teachers' understanding of being a teacher of English. I foreground some of these powerful forces of influence over the student teachers' conception of self-identity. Each of the forces do not necessarily "pull or push" in the same direction and student teachers develop a fluid and flexible sense of identity of being a teacher of English. This identity is bound in relation to the specific contexts within which student teachers gain experience of school-based teaching practice.

These different forces are held in creative dialogical tension as the student teachers develop understanding of their role and identity as teachers of the English language. This is marked in the data, which show convergences and divergence between what they ponder (think about), profess (say) and practice (do).

These convergences and divergences are articulated through "The Force Field Model of Teacher Development", which is particularly relevant for rapidly changing social contexts. The following forces that exert influence over student teachers' developing identity as teachers of English within this model are:

- Inertial forces: the forces of biographical history of the student teachers, which tend to draw them back towards teaching as they were taught;
- Programmatic forces: relatively innovative and alternative experiential forces exerted by the teacher preparation programme; and
- Contextual forces: within the school-sites where student teachers conduct their pre-service teaching practicum, which tend towards preservation of Apartheid-like conceptions of ELTL.

The study uses the data to proceed to a further level of abstraction: from an analysis of the process of student teacher development to an analysis of the development of identity as social actors within a rapidly changing social context. The study begins to build a theory of understanding lives in transitional times, presenting the concept of "The Multicultural-Self" to refer to the co-existence of competing, complex, complementary and contradictory cultural facets of identity that constitute the individual.

The individual within such contexts is likely to be influenced by these cultural forces and self-consciously select the kind of presentation of identity that s/he wishes. The facet of identity that one presents varies considerably in relation to context, audience and purpose. The flexibility to chose varying representation of one's identity is the norm in a rapidly changing social context.

This study concludes with suggesting the need for a model of teacher development in rapidly changing contexts which acknowledges the constructs raised by both "The Force Field Model of Teacher Development" and the notion of "The Multicultural-Self".

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Dedication

To the line of the Samuel family who have over four generations contributed to the development of education in this country, as founders of the first school in Stanger (KwaDuguzi) in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa as principals and teachers of secondary and primary schools, as makers of the country's new education policies, as teacher union officials, as performing arts educators.

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Acknowledgements

On the picturesque road from KwaZulu Natal into the Lesotho mountain kingdom my good friend and colleague Caroline Suransky-Dekker finally made me commit to writing a D.Ed. proposal to conduct research into the area of teacher development. I had no escape from her encouragement: I was locked behind the wheel of my Toyota Conquest and she was armed with large pieces of paper and felt pens. We had six hours of travelling to the National Teachers' Training College in Lesotho to conduct a workshop to encourage teacher educators in colleges of education to conduct educational research. As was characteristic of our endeavours as teacher educators we both had been involved in motivating others to conduct research. We, however, were too often caught up in the several roles that teacher educators at university faculties of education play: designing new courses, commenting on educational policies, teaching and supervising undergraduate and post-graduate students, locked up in endless meetings debating the transformation and development of the staff and the faculty. Where was the time to indulge in an individualistic pursuit like doing a D.Ed. research study?

On the twelve hours of journey between Lesotho and back, Caroline wrote copious notes about what could possibly be my research proposal. The research focus and rationale was documented through her pertinent questions. Thoughts about the research methodology surfaced through our conversation. When I arrived back in Durban I was the proud owner of a draft research proposal which was easily converted into the formal application to study for a D.Ed. For that support I am indebted to Caroline who continued to be a tower of strength throughout my research study. My supervisor, Jonathan Jansen commented on the dissertation with humorous encouragement: "It's amazing what creativity can happen when two people are alone in a car for twelve hours!"

Jonathan's encouragement of my research project is a quality that most post-graduate students would dream of. He was always available to offer advice on the smallest of issues. He was prepared to set aside all appointments in his busy schedule as, Dean of the Faculty, just to jointly review the various chapters of the research. An overnight reading of the drafts would yield rich and critical comments. I felt like I was given total attention when we engaged in our numerous sessions. Above all, his provocative comments always made you sit up till wee hours of the morning wondering how to capture a response to Jonathan's prodding to extend the arguments. "What are you offering the academic world of research? So what is the most unusual or unexpected feature that you think your data has revealed? Don't be afraid to name the world! What new theoretical issues has this chapter raised?" These are questions and comments that lived with me throughout the writing of this dissertation. His creative view of faculty management also allowed me the flexibility to engage almost exclusively in the areas related to my research study. For all of this support I am most grateful.

During the course of my involvement as co-ordinator in a link project sponsored by Overseas Development Association (now Department for International Development) of the United Kingdom, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with staff at the University of Sussex. In particular, I met Janet Stuart and Keith Lewin. Both these individuals were particularly encouraging in the respect they showed towards the work we were doing at the University of Durban-Westville. Together we managed to design the Co-ordinated Masters in Education and Training, with a special focus on Teacher Education. The many hours of discussions and attendance on the parallel Masters programmes at the Centre for International Education at Sussex and UDW allowed me the opportunity to become engaged in the international discourse around teacher development, especially in the context of developing world countries. Through Janet and Keith's support I was invited to serve as respondent to an international comparative conference at Oxford University. I was honoured by being asked to serve as a commentator on the teacher development programmes of several developing world projects on Teacher Development. This conference became the foundation upon which a Multi-Site Teacher Education Research (MUSTER) project was set between Sussex University and five developing world countries. I was asked to become part of this



team of researchers looking into teacher development across Lesotho, Ghana, Malawi, Trinidad and Tobago, and South Africa (KwaZulu-Natal).

In July 1997 the team of researchers were assembled at Sussex University for a workshop to design the research project. Many of the ideas that have emerged in this dissertation arise specifically from the two weeks of intensive deliberations that we had between my new found colleagues in these countries: June GForge (Trinidad and Tobago), Kwame Akyeampong (Ghana), Demis Kunje (Malawi) and Phulane Lefoka (Lesotho). I also came to meet other influential thinkers at this workshop: David Stephens, Alison Croft, Dominic Furlong and John Hedges. I must acknowledge them all in the kind of inspiration they have been to me as I deliberated over the many issues of this dissertation. In particular, I would like to thank Janet Stuart for her personal motivation whenever we met in the UK or South Africa. Her early comments in the first stages of this dissertation were crucial. Keith Lewin has always been a voice of reason bringing his breadth of experience of teacher development across the globe to bear on my research in KwaZulu-Natal. Thank you.

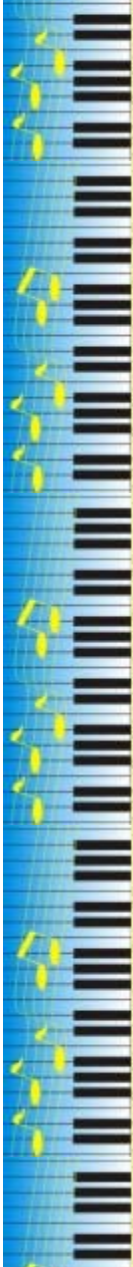
Dee Parker in the United States Information Service (USIS) in Pretoria has also been one of those who believed in my work. It was through her that I was able to share my preliminary research ideas and data collection for this research study with the appropriate individuals and institutions in the United States. USIS sponsored my visit to share views about teacher development under the International Visitors Fellowship Programme. There are too many inspiring individuals to acknowledge here, but two stand out: Lisa Delpit from Georgia State University in Atlanta and Donald Freeman, from the School for International Training in Vermont. In particular, I was inspired by the kind of work that Donald was researching in the area of teacher development and language education. His writings have been an enormous inspiration to me. Attending a USIS Workshop with Karen Johnson and him in June 1996 at the Centre for Continuing Education in Port Elizabeth, South Africa was for me perhaps the first "kick in the butt" to engage in my research study looking into South African teacher development. Thank you to all of you.

Closer to home my numerous colleagues have been towers of support. Constant queries and words of advice and encouragement spurred me on. To Peter Reddy, for "standing in" during my leave of absence; Reshma Sookraj, for the advice from someone who has been on this road of a D.Ed research project; to Betty Govinden for her caring support and encouragement to pursue this kind of literary exploratory style of academic writing; to Daisy Pillay, for her encouragement to extend my creative talents in the representation of this dissertation; to Labby Ramrathan, for being a colleague and a friend, as a co-researcher in the MUSTER programme, as advisor about any matter related to the administrative and technical processes of submitting a dissertation; to Rishi Hansraj and Dheena Govender for their assistance in the videotape recording of the various interviews. To all of you, thanks.

I also thank those who assisted in the transcription of the interviews: Sureka Maharaj, Ravesh Ramroop, Juliet Perumal, Krishnee Govender and Praveena Samuel.

A special mention must be made of important friends: Juliet Perumal who is meticulous in her critical judgements and editorial advice on how to remain sane and focussed throughout this process of writing a dissertation; Krishnee Govender and Mershen Pillay who were students who were always willing to rescue me from the brinks of despair when things seemed to be piling up: those late night chats, long letters from London and drinks in the pub were most useful; Prem Naidoo, who convinced me to begin this journey; Leanne Browning, who is the kind of friend that any one would need: who knows just when to say the right things, supporting me in endless hours of encouragement through just being there whenever I needed her; Vijay Reddy whose research interest in lifehistory research provided us with several hours of fruitful exchange; Renuka Vithal whose commitment to research

provided us with numerous dialogues that seem to cry out for joint publications, and Rubby Dhunpath who has become a travelling companion, a kindred spirit who walks alongside me as I journey through the challenging world of new ideas, technical botches and computer temperaments. To you all, a big thank you.



Towards the end of this journey I met Michael McFadyean from Sheer Design who shared a professional commitment to the quality of visual and graphic layout of this dissertation. For your patience through all my editorial and artistic changes during the decisions about the final product, thank you.

My family has all disowned me by the end of this dissertation. They have given up inviting me to any "obligatory" family function. My four-year old niece, Tara also knows that Michael is too busy to be disturbed. My sister Mary Ann knows that she needs to check up to see if I have eaten. My sister, Denise and her family are simply anxious for me to get it all done so that I can visit them in Australia. My brother, Kenneth knows how to keep a creative distance to support me. Gerard, my other more demonstrative brother, helped me potter around my garden to maintain my sanity. My father has been meticulous in plying me with all the appropriate material that I might need from the South African Democratic Teacher Union. His nurturing care for my well-being and particular fatherly advice was a mark of quiet support. His meticulous writing up of his reflective journal is a testimony to the lengths he always goes to support his family. His inspiration from the many hours of debates about teacher unionism and professional development has been my formative inspiration to becoming a teacher educator. I am most grateful to my family for the kind of close-knit unit we all are. It is out of this unique blend of individuals that I gain my support base to be able to dedicate hours of undivided attention to my academic career and they fully understand that my work is my first love. I know my late mother would be proud of the kind of work I have done in this dissertation: she was always the strong voice campaigning for quality educators in our school system. To them all I am most grateful.

The particular students of my Special Method English class of 1997 were an amazingly co-operative and enthusiastic group of individuals. They were always so willing to add new responsibilities to the number of tasks that I set out for them. They were prepared to endure long hours of extra effort and time so that we could conduct the many data collection sessions. This was often outside their scheduled lecture hours. I am most indebted to you all for the rich data you provided so openly and honestly. Thank you Emmanuel, Sanelesiwe, Imraan, Zakiyya, Romola, Kamalan, Ravesh, William and Thembi.

I am certain that I have excluded perhaps some important people in this long list. For your support and influence over my development during this research process, I thank you.

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Preface

When I was about twelve years old, my father took me to a classical concert in the Durban City Hall. The memory of that event is vivid: the sombre consternation of Sunday afternoon White faces, mainly in their late forties and fifties; the smell of polished wooden floors; my brothers' and sisters' shuffling to find seats; the cacophony of musicians fine-tuning their instruments ahead of the arrival of the penguin-dressed conductor who took the podium after applause from the audience; the presentation of the musicians to the audience by the conductor. The players re-arranging their sheets of music... Only one space of the orchestra was not filled... The string section was nodding approvingly to each other. Shiny gold brass instruments were gleaming from the back right hand corner of the stage. The wind section displaying a range of strange instruments I had not seen before. The back of the stage was filled with an array of delightful noise toys: a childhood fantasy of percussion... But the centre space of the stage was not filled.

I had been studying classical piano then for about one year and had my grandfather's playing of the church organ to inspire me. I had the fortune of my family's love for music sung into my life from as far back as I can recall. My dad's record collection of classical music many envied. My mum's tolerance and support of my piano practising, I now appreciate...


Now arrived the person I had been positioning to see: the long-tailed starched pianist took his seat. The hushed silence as he collected in the ambience of the occasion, the task ahead of him, the range of emotions that his fingers would have to deliver. And then it began...

I do not recall the composition or the composer, nor the melodies or harmonies of the music. Instead I was enthralled that it was all these individuals together who were making the sounds that I, in my childish innocence, had not connected with human beings. To me the sounds of an orchestra were merely the magic of the plastic vinyls that my Dad spun on his turntable. An orchestra was made in heaven I thought.

In this dissertation I try to uncover the magic of that musical moment. The experience taught me profoundly that the process of playing music, whilst being liberating and entertaining, relied on the concerted and concentrated effort of many musicians. Each was individual and separate in voice and instrument, but were all working towards deliberate interventions to achieve a common goal. I see the process of researching as involving the assemblage of the many voices of different thinkers, players and actors. Together, we are assembling the pursuit of deeper insight into the matter under scrutiny. Therefore, I have tried to assemble as many musical images to capture the experiences of working with my research inquiry.

I am currently a teacher educator at the University of Durban-Westville. This research study evolves out of my engagement with preparing pre-service teachers of the English language. These students bring with them the heritage of experiences of learning English during the apartheid era. My involvement with these students was forged during their fourth year of a teacher preparation programme with the Special Method English Course (SMEC), which was a targeted intervention to prepare teachers of English in the context of the rapidly changing socio-political landscape of South Africa after the first democratic election in 1994.

*In **Chapter One**, I present an autobiographical account of how I became involved in this research project. This chapter can be regarded as the overture or introduction to the full experience of my involvement in this research project. It begins with the raising of the tabs (curtains) which reveal the educational stage or scenario within which I was working. It draws on my own experiences of being a practising teacher and teacher educator involved with English language teaching and learning (ELTL) during the pre- and post – 1994 elections period in South Africa. It is out of these experiences that my research agenda and critical research questions were born, looking specifically at the process of student teachers learning to become teachers of the English language in a post-apartheid South Africa.*



Drawing on these biographical experiences, I proceed to survey the literature related to the topic of this research. In **Chapter Two**, I first locate the study of student teachers' developing understanding of becoming teachers of the English language within the broad tradition of research into "reconceptualising" teacher education. This research tradition is contrasted with the current dominant focus of South African research into teacher education emphasising "restructuring". This dissertation seeks to address this imbalance.

Throughout Chapter Two I use the analogy of a musical sonata to trace the inter-related influences from both the national/local South African and the international literature on the nature and development of teacher roles, identities and knowledge over different historical periods. The first three sections of this musical sonata focus on the following issues:

Section One: A systemic and historical analysis of teacher roles and identities over the last four decades within the international and South African educational landscape, noting the influence of dominant educational research perspectives in each era on how teachers are framed and represented;

Section Two: A theoretical exploration of what teacher knowledge entails, and how this knowledge is activated during the teaching/ learning process;

Section Three: An analysis of different models of teacher education curricula with the view to exploring how each model tends to foreground particular conceptions of teachers' roles, identities and knowledge.


The first section suggests that teachers develop conceptions of their role and identities in relation to the unique formative social, political, historical and educational contexts within which their experiences of teaching and learning are embedded. I juxtapose the changing conceptions of teachers' roles and identities of the international context with that of the South African context in order to foreground the similarities and differences. Alongside this more academic analysis, I present the reflective journal of my dad, who records his personal account of what it meant to be a teacher during the same historical period in South Africa.

The second section of this sonata explores what is meant by "teacher knowledge". This section is presented to provide a theoretical framework for analysis of the data describing student teachers' developing conceptions of becoming a teacher. The data illustrates student teachers' understanding of what teacher knowledge entails. This is revealed both in what they say the process of ELTL entails, as well as in how they reflect on their teacher preparation curriculum both at university and within the schools in which they were first, learners of the English language and later, student teachers conducting a teaching practicum. The model of teacher knowledge that is reviewed in this section outlines the vocabulary of theoretical constructs used to analyse this data.

The third section of this sonata provides an analysis of one of the powerful formative influences on the student teachers' conception of what it means to become a teacher, namely, the force of influence of the formal teacher preparation curriculum. The SMEC is one such example of this force impacting on student teachers' developing conception of their roles and identities as teachers of the English language.

Teacher preparation curricula are an attempt to intervene in the lives of student teachers, assisting in shaping particular conceptions of teacher roles, identities and knowledge. This section explores how different models of teacher education curricula each promote varied conceptions of this intervention. When designing the research instruments for this study and analysing the data, this section provided a set of theoretical constructs to discuss the influence of the teacher preparation curriculum on the student teachers under investigation.

The above three sections of the musical sonata serve to reinforce the argument that teacher development does not happen in a social vacuum. It emphasises the need



to view student teachers' conceptions of teachers' roles, identities and knowledge as bound to their unique broader socio-historical landscape of educational transformation within which their teacher development occurs. It suggests also that student teachers develop conceptions of their roles, identity and knowledge in relation to the more micro-contextual influence of the specific teacher preparation curriculum they experience.

The fourth movement, **Section Four**, presented as a finale to the musical sonata, draws on the review of the literature surveyed. In this section, I present my own tentative model for understanding the development of student teachers' conceptions of their roles and identities as teachers within the context of a rapidly transforming educational landscape. The South African post-apartheid era is one such example. This tentative model served to guide the process of data collection and illustrates the particular nodes in the trajectory of student teachers' developing conceptions of becoming a teacher. It also informed the design of the research instruments used in this study.

Having outlined the theoretical platform, which informed my understanding of the research topic under investigation, the next chapter describes the research methodology used in this study. In **Chapter Three**, I use the analogy of an orchestra preparing to perform thereby revealing the process of my involvement as the conductor of this research project. This chapter highlights the complications that arose during setting up the research in my specific research context. It details the

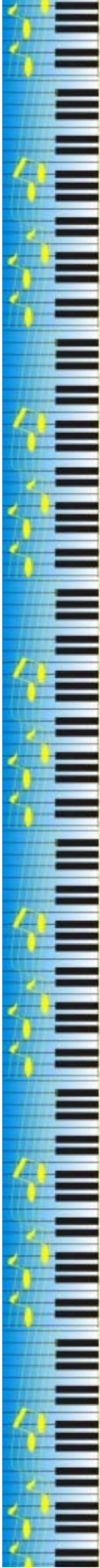
blurring of the boundaries between teaching, researching, and developing the teacher education sector which more often than not, is the experiential reality of academic staff like myself in such contexts. It highlights the nature of the inter-relationships between the student teachers and I during the process of data collection. The characteristics of this data collection process arise from life-history research looking at teacher development as a process of critically reflecting on student teachers' autobiographical accounts of learning and teaching the English language. The chapter presents detailed accounts of how this process of data collection and analysis can be effected as a means of tapping into the student teachers' understanding of the process of learning to become teachers.

Chapter Four serves as a description and analysis of the data yielded in this research study. Two forms of analysis were employed:

- **narrative** analysis, and
- **discourse** analysis.

The tradition and characteristics of **narrative analysis** are discussed in the opening section of this chapter (**Section One**). Within the tradition of narrative analysis this section recounts two student teachers' narratives of the process of learning to become teachers of the English language. These two principal case studies reflect the main factors of interest, which this study focus targeted, namely, the student teachers' gender, their biographical experiences of schooling and the specificities of their teaching practicum contexts. The narrative-analytical style of this section foregrounds the "dialogical tensions" of intersecting, complementary and contradictory forces which impact on the lives of student teachers as they develop and explain the process of becoming teachers of the English language. These dialogical forces are reflected in the disjunctures between what student teachers think, say and do. The student teachers reveal the process of learning to teach as involving the juggling of:

- the forces of their autobiography impacting on their understanding of the school environment and the teaching of English;
- the expectations of both school and university personnel influencing their development;
- the experiences garnered as they work in collaborating student teacher teams;
- the changing social and linguistic context of English language teaching within the schools;
- the complicating responses of English first and second language pupils to their attempts at innovative curriculum practices.



In **Section Two**, the data is subjected to a **discourse analysis** of a sample of texts produced during the data collection process. The following sample texts were used from the two principal case studies:

- an extract from their written autobiographies;
- an extract from their post-lesson interviews , and
- an extract from their reflective journals.

This analysis reveals the complex nature of the process of data collection, and a product of the inter-relationships between the researcher and the student teachers.

Section Three of this chapter synthesises the emerging issues arising from these two case studies. It provides a detailed analysis of the language and concepts the student teachers use to describe the process of their development as teachers of English.

This chapter concludes, in **Sections Four and Five**, with a cross-case analysis of the seven auxiliary case studies. Their own biographical experiences of learning to become teachers of the English language are compared with the detailed narrative and discourse analyses of the first two main case studies. Convergences and divergences between the cross-case studies are recorded here.

Chapter Five synthesises what has been learnt about the process of learning to become teachers of English in the rapidly changing context of post-apartheid South Africa. The emerging and recurrent constructs arising from this study are represented in "The Force Field Model of Teacher Development".

Working towards a further level of abstraction, this model forms the basis of a theory for understanding lives in transitional times. This theory posits the notion of "The Multicultural-Self" which embeds the various competing, complementary and contradictory forces impacting on the formation of identities in such contexts. The chapter concludes with an exploration of some of the avenues of research that this project has opened up for future study.

Reading the musical text

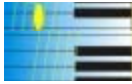
I have tried to stay as authentic to the many voices that have been part of my experiences during this research process. The variety of voices is represented in the text via the choice of **different font colours** to reflect their individuality and "separation" from my authorial voice. I present the main melody of my voice in the Blue font. The other receding harmonies I present in **teal** in **italicised font**. The actual texts of voices from other printed sources (my colleagues, my students, and my own writings in other texts) are presented in amber.

The narratives of the two student teachers are given their unique font colours as well: **Purple Italic** and **Olive Italic**.

I present an orchestra of voices through the choice of appropriate texts that have emerged in the process of my study. These include an interpretation of the concept "texts" in its broadest sense: visual material, art work, posters, pamphlets, photographs, letters, tables, diagrams, time lines and schematic representations of ideas. It's a pity that I did not supply accompanying music: that you will have to create for yourself as you engage in the process of reading this text...

I invite you to listen to the music of the research process that I engaged with during this study. This dissertation is my musical composition, the collective chronicle of my years of being involved in the process of teaching pupils and student teachers to grow in love with the act of learning and teaching the English language. I invite you, to think beyond the words used, and instead focus on the images and thoughts evoked. Words are unreliable messengers. The message lies somewhere amidst your own interaction of the representations that I will present. The exploration of your own musical animation is afterall far more charming than the notes that I will record in this text...

Hush, now the performance is about to begin...



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"We should not give the Natives any academic education. If we do, who is going to do the manual labour in the community?"

**J.N. le Roux,
1945 National
Party
politician**

"When I have control over native education, I will reform it so that natives will be taught from childhood that equality with Europeans is not for them."

**H.F.
Verwoerd,
1953. He was
Minister of
Native Affairs
at the time
when Bantu
Education
was
introduced.**

"The education we receive is meant to keep the South African people apart from one another, to breed suspicion, hatred and violence, and to keep us backward. Education is formulated so as to reproduce this society of racism and exploitation."

**Congress of
South African
Students, 1984**



Chapter One

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"There is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour."

H.F. Verwoerd, 1955.

"I have seen very few countries in the world that have such inadequate educational conditions. I was shocked at what I saw in some of the rural areas and homelands. Education is of fundamental importance. There is no social, political, or economic problem you can solve without adequate education."

Robert McNamara 1982. Past President of the World Bank, on a visit to South Africa

Cover Page Design Chapter One: Linoleum-print: "The Freedom Charter": Artist Unknown. Extracts from : Pam Christie (1989) "The Right to Learn", Braamfontein, Ravan Press.

Chapter One Title Page

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• Orientation to Chapter One

The chronicle of this chapter explores my own history of refining and redefining my role as a teacher/teacher educator in the late eighties and early nineties. This chapter illustrates the many social, political and educational issues that needed to be simultaneously addressed during these changing times in South Africa. Like all artistic creations, these images reflect my selection of the melodies, harmonies and counter-harmonies used to compose this research piece.

In this chapter, I present how I came to ask the critical questions of this study which focuses on the processes of novice student teachers' learning to teach the English language in a rapidly changing educational scenario. My interest is to explore how these student teachers' biographical experiences of learning and teaching English influence their understanding of teaching English.

In the first section of this chapter, I reflect on my own development as a secondary school teacher in both a government and a private school context where I taught English as a first and second language respectively. I then focus on my early biographical experiences (1991) of working with student teachers in different school contexts during their school-based teaching practice session ("raising the tabs"). These two sets of personal experiences recalling being a teacher and a teacher educator intend to recapture biographical views of myself and the student teachers, as well as provide some insight into the evolving and wide ranging terrain of English language teaching in South Africa.

In section two I trace my relocation into teacher education through an analysis of the specific context ("the orchestra pit") of the University of Durban-Westville, where I currently teach. Here, I note the influence of changing educational policy at an institutional level and national education level (as part of the "musical score" that influenced my life as a teacher educator). I note my personal involvement ("taking the podium") in relation to specifically the South African teacher education policy regulations ("translating musical notation into sound") of the Committee of Teacher Education Policy (COTEP).

In section three I present the influential experiences leading towards the focus of this research study and the design of the Special Method English curriculum. The process of finding the focus of this research study is captured in the section entitled "searching for a song". The rationale for this study is presented in the section entitled "why this music?" The detailed description of the researcher and the subjects of the research study are captured in the section "the conductor and the players". The process of curriculum development of the Special Method course is reflected in the section entitled "transmitted sounds" (looking at the

influence of student teachers on this process) and "collaborative cacophonies" (focussing on other non-faculty members' commentary on the teacher preparation curriculum of UDW).

The initial research design became refined after I engaged in a preliminary investigation into the attitudes of mentor teachers and Department of Education language subject advisors towards the model of teacher development that my course promoted. The findings of this exploratory study (also in the section entitled "collaborative cacophonies") provided an insight into various stakeholder perceptions concerning issues confronting teachers of English in a multilingual society and a changing school environment. This investigation also provided the first evaluative tools to understand attitudes towards the model of teacher development being used by the Special Method English course, which attempted to prepare teachers of English for a post-apartheid multilingual school context. This was the educational terrain into which my student teachers of 1997 (the target focal group) entered to learn to become teachers of the English language.

Section One: Biographical Backgrounds and



Contextual Landscape: Raising the Tabs

This section reveals the biographical and contextual landscape of this research study. It opens the curtains (tabs) to view the particular research arena of this study. This section is divided into three sub-sections focussing on: 1.1 My own biographical history of working as:

1.1.1 A teacher in the public and private schooling system;

1.1.2 A teacher educator at a university Faculty of Education;

1.2 The micro-context of educational transformation within the specific university at which I teach;

1.3 The macro-context of educational policy changes of post-apartheid South African in relation to teacher education and the schooling system.

1.1 Biographical Context:

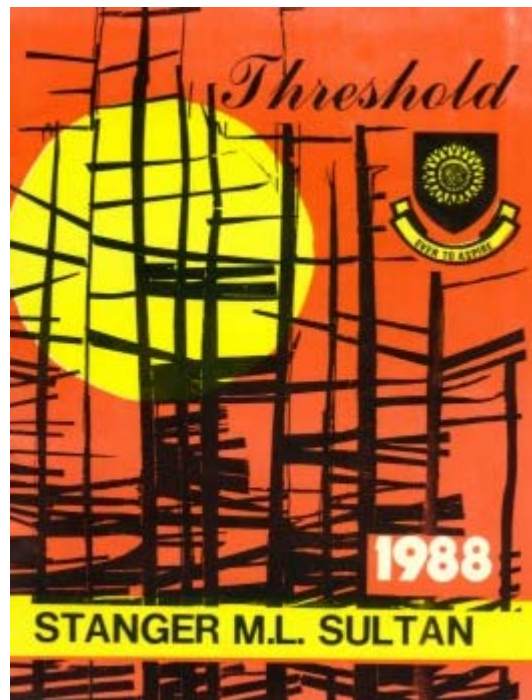
What do I already know about music?

My personal biographical heritage that I brought to bear on the process of this research study is recorded in this section. It traces my development as a teacher educator, drawing on the experiences of my own involvement as a schoolteacher in the public and private secondary school system during the apartheid era. This section is included to indicate the particular kind of biographical influences that teachers and teacher educators have over their learners.

1.1.1 Being a Teacher:

My Musical Years

My own journey as a teacher of English in secondary schools began in 1984. I recall the mixed emotions I had about becoming a teacher educator especially after experiencing rewarding years of working with secondary school pupils in the formal public and private schooling systems. I loved teaching and working with adolescent pupils. My teaching career had granted me the opportunity to work with pupils in a technical high school, especially in the climate where such "practically minded" pupils were labelled as underachievers, no-gooders, write-offs. I proved to both pupils and staff that we need to recognise that different pupils had different goals and ideals in relation to their education. The varied class backgrounds of the pupils meant that they tended to become circumscribed by the worldviews of their own homes, families and immediate communities. The simple quest of the "technical boys" was to be acknowledged as individuals with working class aspirations. The "academic course" pupils had different expectations of schooling, which focussed on their middle class aspirations. My own quest was to allow pupils to understand the possibilities for alternative choices in life. I nevertheless, was astutely aware of my own middle class values when engaging with pupils who were locked by their financial constraints. I wonder now whether I had been able to break through the glass ceiling that stunts the lives of boys particularly from working class families who are destined to apprenticed lives in the service of industry. I do know that my technical class boys ended up loving D.H. Lawrence's "Sons and Lovers" and producing amongst the best English results in the school. The girls they romanced often commented on their more mature understanding about teenage love relationships.



#3 1988 Brochure of M. L. Sultan Secondary School: My First Years of School Teaching.



#4 Photograph: (1989) "1989 Uthongathi Project Fortnight Group".

- Samuel 1991: "A way out of the woods (via the sugarcane fields): Theoretical reflections on Curriculum Planning for Second Language at Uthongathi School", Paper presented at ESL Day conference, Tongaat.

This paper reflects on my own experiences of designing a curriculum for the development of second language learning at this school. The paper argues for a more conscious effort for managing linguistic diversity within schools. The paper focuses on the use of communicative language teaching principles married to a sociolinguistic analysis of the relationship between English, Afrikaans and Zulu, the chosen languages of the school.

- Samuel 1992a: "The Second language learner in a First language environment: A Practical route for development", Paper presented at conference "Tomorrow's Schools" at Edgewood College of Education, Durban.

This paper presents an argument for the interdependent relationship between theory and practice when developing curriculum experiences for language teaching and learning. It offers pragmatic strategies for handling English second language learning drawn from my own experiences of teaching at the Uthongathi School.

- Samuel 1992b: "The Second language learner: A Case for Remedial education", Paper presented at South African Association for Learning and Educational Disabilities Conference, Durban.

"African" pupils in White, Indian and Coloured schools were being ghettoised into the remedial specialist classrooms because teachers were interpreting them as "cognitively or linguistically deficient". This was because the schools tended to operate using a largely assimilationist model of (language) education: the "African" child was being expected to abandon his/her home languages in preference to the dominant language(s) of the school. The resulting inability to cope with such transition from township schools to the so-called "open schools" labelled them as remedial cases. The paper argues for a more careful analysis from a language acquisition perspective to help practitioners interpret what could be alternative views of "the problem".

My next major learning opportunity as a teacher was being part of a school experiment set up by the New Eras Schools Trust (NEST) in 1987. This organisation was intent on disproving the legions of apartheid ideology which professed that teaching pupils of varying cultural, linguistic and racial backgrounds was undesirable, unacceptable, if not educationally unimplementable. The Uthongathi School was set up to bring together like-minded teachers, administrators, parents, and community participants who believed that apartheid education was moribund. The school openly defied the threats of closure in designing a curriculum which promoted respect across many of the divisions and barriers (race, class, gender, sexual orientation) that apartheid ideology believed to be sacrosanct. My role in this school was to contribute to the development of the language curriculum, especially the promotion of the teaching and learning of English as a second language. The joys of moving pupils from tottering neophytes to towering ambassadors of alternative visions for a new South Africa are documented elsewhere (Samuel: 1991; 1992a; 1992b).



#5 Photograph: (1990) "1990 Uthongathi Pupils".

An extract from the reflective journal of one of my pupils, Riccardo Dunn, captures some of the characteristics of the curriculum of this school. The journal was written during September 1989 when the de Klerk government was polling the White electorate on a Yes / No referendum in terms of his "capitulating" five year plan for South Africa. The Uthongathi pupils were involved in Project Fortnight: a two week programme in which the formal academic programme was "halted" and pupils across different grades joined self-selected projects to work with two or three teachers. Two of my colleagues, Milly Reddy and Sareen Young had put together a programme focusing on the use of the performing arts as social commentary. The journal entry describes the first day of the project where pupils were first invited to explore their own creative performing arts; then attend a music concert at the University of Natal where things went horribly wrong.

MOTION



That we, peace loving South Africans:

Note that:

The majority of South Africans are more determined than ever to rid this country of apartheid.

There is a growing search for alternatives to racism and division in our country.

That Apartheid laws are still being forcefully upheld by the Nationalist government.

And whereas we believe that:

The five year plan of Mr de Klerk's ruling party offers no solution to this countries problems

And that there will be no solution to these problems until South Africa is democratically governed by all who live in it, black and white.

And we further believe that:

The September 6th elections will not lead to the resolution of this countries problems.

It is through the extra parliamentary movement of the MDM that the real options for change lie.

We now therefore undertake:

To add our voice to the calls and to actively campaign for

- *the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners*
- *the unbanning of the ANC and all banned organisations*
- *the lifting of the State of Emergency and*
- *the freeing of the political process.*

And do pledge to contribute side by side to the building of a new South Africa free from racism and prejudice.

#6 Pamphlet: (1989) "**04 September 1989: Pamphlet of Protest March of the University of Natal (Durban)**".

Day 1 Monday 04 September 1989

'First days are always boring.'

Well, this was hardly the case on this particular first day. The morning began with the clashing of cymbals and clapping of hands and to top it off the saucy swaying of the hips by project members. After this mindless cacophony we packed our lunch and was off to Natal Varsity. Andrew Tracy's 'Steel Band' was most entertaining except for a few corrective criticisms. The vibrant sounds from Cuban, Trinidad and South America were successfully executed and had everybody tapping their feet. The music's total synchronization and the group's co-operation was surely a great asset and enhanced their performance. Accompanying this co-operation was the group's sincerity about their music. The band leader's (Andrew Tracy) enthusiasm was overwhelming that he even offered to perform an

extra song at the end.

A minor criticism which can easily be corrected is: at times one could not hear the flute due to the huge sounds echoing from the bigger instruments. By bringing the sound to a lower level the melodious flute will spice up the tune. Andrew Tracy's son aged 17+/- should be highly commended on his skill at playing the hand drums. He too, like his father showed great enthusiasm. Overall I felt he was most competent and interesting with a combination of not only talent but communication which is vital to the performing Arts!

But the noise did not end there. Before entering the theatre there were rumours of a political meeting (Mass Democratic Movement: M.D.M.) but despite this we enjoyed the show. Somehow in the back of our minds we were anxious about this meeting. So after the show we went outside to wait for the group. There was not only students everywhere but also the South African Police (S.A.P.) squad cars hovering in the vicinity.

The students were seated singing songs (peaceful protest against the elections). After a minute or so later a mumbled voice came over the loudspeaker, 'Could students please disperse accordingly.' Without allowing time for the students to move, the guns were opened and the cops were at work. Twenty students were shot including an innocent pupil from Uthongathi, namely Nicholas Hill. After Mrs. Reddy's and Mrs. Young's hysterics, we went to seek help. After being instructed to do so many things we decided to take the 'innocent victim' to Addington Hospital where we were encountered with petty formalities.

After X-rays without any solid results, Nicholas emerged a new person with the birdshot still within him. So much for medical advice!

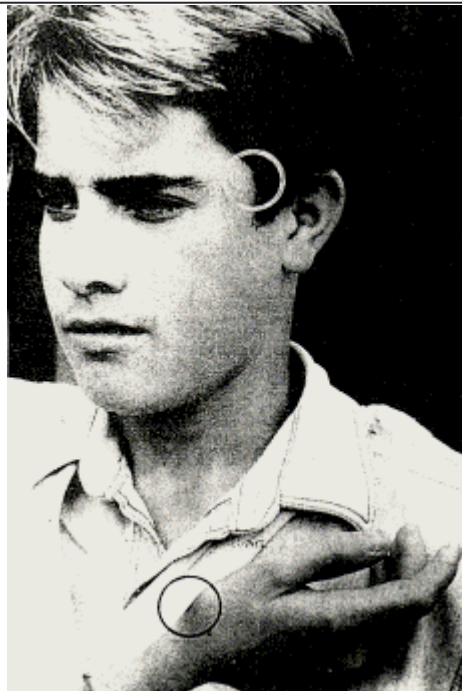
All in all the experience proved most worthwhile and enlightening to those who saw protest as 'great fun'. It taught me to consider my actions but somehow I do feel that if perhaps there is another meeting I will still continue to peek.

'There you go South Africa

So much for your liberalism!


And your guns!'

- Riccardo Dunn was in Standard Eight (Grade Ten) at the time. He completed Honours in Political Science at UDW and a Masters in Journalism in Sydney, Australia. He now works for the South African Broadcasting Co-operation.



ONE of the 20 people injured by police birdshot at the University of Natal confrontation yesterday was standard nine pupil at uThongathi school,

missed his eye. He was also hit in the hand and on his back. Another casualty who had nothing to do with the demonstration, was former



Nicholas Hill. An innocent bystander who was at the university on a drama project with a group of fellow pupils, he was hit by birdshot that only narrowly

Springbok hockey player Paul Logan, who was hit about 15 times in the back while on his way to a law lecture. He declined to be photographed today.

#7 Newspaper Article: (1989) " **'Innocent Bystander Shot': 'The Daily News', 04 September 1989**".

My experiences as a teacher of English during the apartheid era had taught me that it was possible to challenge the stereotypes into which the oppressive era attempted to box us. My English language classrooms provided a forum to experiment with alternative conceptions about learners from different race, class and linguistic backgrounds. As pupils and teachers we were intimately implicated in the political, social and educational contestation that teaching and learning under apartheid education entailed. I believed that I could share those experiences with future teachers in my role as a teacher educator.

1.1.2 Becoming a Teacher Educator:

Learning to Teach Music

I began my career as a teacher educator in 1991 at the University of Durban-Westville, Faculty of Education. The following texts are extracts from a reflective journal I kept during my first year as a teacher educator. These were reflections I recorded whilst visiting various secondary schools in the KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa. My task was to supervise student teachers of English during a school-based teaching practicum (SBTP). Student teachers were placed in teams of two or three "buddies" in different schools. I recount the experience of visiting the following schools:

1 Nqabakazulu Secondary: an African township school serving mainly working class African pupils.

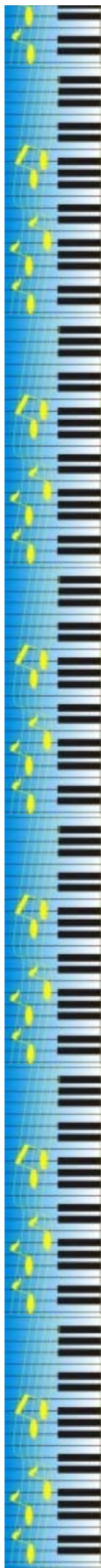
2 Westham Secondary: an Indian school in a working class Indian area.

I use the above labels to depict the racial and class fragmentation of the educational settings under the apartheid system. However, the labels belie the more complex inter-racial and class perspectives within the schools which I hope the following stories will capture:

School 1

NQABAKAZULU SECONDARY SCHOOL - KWAMASHU

I am sitting here in a classroom full of secondary school students, all eighty odd of them, some of them sitting in groups of three on a two-seater, huddling around copies of a sonnet written in isiZulu. The novice student teacher is enthusiastically attempting to involve and listen to her pupils' opinions. The majority of the pupils do not concentrate because many of them talk simultaneously in their little groups, hopefully about the poem. A volunteer pupil attempts to talk above the general hum (which includes the sounds of the next class filtering through the wooden partition separating the two classrooms- they are studying "what is effective communication?"); the volunteer pupil's voice grows louder, so does the teacher's.... The class is interrupted by three senior pupils of the Students' Representative Council collecting money for some cause, which I do not understand because they speak in isiZulu.... A pupil in front of me has an idea about the poem. He attempts to raise his hand to offer an answer. The teacher cannot see him. Instead he chats to the guy in the next row who continues to play



with his compass - a sophisticated piece of metal equipment, stabbing the desk with repeated animation.

The teacher's voice is now high-pitched. A pupil on my left hisses to get the class to keep quiet. All the time the teacher walks around the class clutching her textbook in her hand. The pupil in front of me now gets up and walks over to the other side of the classroom. The teacher makes no comment or did she even notice? It is impossible to hear the pupils above the noise of the majority of the class. The teacher seems to have completed her task of teaching the content of her lesson. She chats to the pupils. What time does this period end?

Someone in the front of the class has her head on the desk. Is she asleep? I have not heard a single girl respond in this entire half-hour. There are twenty girls in this class. The teacher now collects the textbooks from the pupils- "Uyanzi" by E.S.Q. Zulu. The teacher peeps through the hole in the masonite wooden partition to see if the lesson is over in the next class. Our lesson on "Amasonethi" by B.V. Hlope is now almost over. The teacher now hisses to get silence - to no avail. The isiZulu lesson is now over. We are getting ready "to do English", says the student teacher. I get out my TP O2 form.

Is my visit going to be of any worth to the student teacher? Where and what do I start commenting on?

The teacher starts by handing out test papers. "Tula, tula" - these are words I recognise. "Howard, Themba, Nicholas, Nlwazi, Name: August 19, Njabulo, Thembisa, Nonhlanhla, Promise, Lungile..."

"Quiet, please," screams a pupil. The pile of books to be distributed is almost over. The pupils converse loudly with their mates - comparing marks do you think? There are about five books left. Would a more disciplined way of handing back books be more appropriate in this situation?

The teacher attempts to get the class to be quiet to start the lesson. Repetitions of "Tula" and "Quiet".

A singular bell is rung and the period is about to start..."It's time for English now. Take out your language books," says the teacher. Only half the class hears. The hum dies down as the teacher repeats the same statement in three different positions in the classroom. "If you have a book, open to page 36. We are doing 'homonyms'." Pupils are scrambling to regroup around the available texts. "What can I do? I can't find your texts if you don't have them." The teacher threatens to leave the room if there is no order. "You can teach yourself."

The lesson focuses on the text. Many can't participate. We are now talking in English. "Don't listen to the noise in the class. Listen to her," comments the teacher attempting to get pupils to listen to one another- especially the soft-spoken girl who ventured a comment... The S.R.C. President returns to collect more money. The teacher continues teaching while the S.R. C. pupils encourage others

to donate to the cause... "How come you don't have chalk in this class?" One pupil offers the teacher a piece he has. An oral discussion providing examples of homonyms continues while a large percentage of the pupils talk to their neighbours. They seem ruffled when the teacher asks them to share their conversations. Pupils in the corner are fanning themselves with the text. They take turns to use the book as a communal fan. The effect of the hot asbestos roof, a usual architectural hazard of many African township schools, takes its toll.

Half an hour later the girl in the front is still sleeping. I wonder if she is sick?

About half the class does not have a text. Half the class does not pay attention. "Don't worry about that group," remarks the teacher, "They know all the answers already so we won't ask them." A siren now marks the end of the lesson. It's break time. Pupils yawn and stretch as they get up from their desks and pour out of the classroom.

The girl is still asleep on the desk, and so too is another boy whom I couldn't see



before.

School 2
WESTHAM SECONDARY - Phoenix

Three English second-language student teachers teaching mainly first-language pupils. (Euphemism for three "African" students teaching mainly Indian pupils.)

The lesson is over. The first student teacher tries to find an excuse to leave the pupils after the lesson his buddy has taught; the pupils want him to remain to spend their free period with them. He is more interested in listening to the comments I will offer about his buddy's lesson. He apologises to the class and we head off in the direction of the staff room.

The second teacher ends his lesson frustrated that the class teacher had informed him that the pupils had not studied a particular short story, but when he got there he discovered that the pupils had already read the story. His lesson design to predict an alternate end to the written passage after having read only half way through the story - was subverted. Instead he poses another strategy: what would happen if we removed the doctor (a key figure in the story) from this community being described here. He also ponders over what to do with one disruptive pupil who always interferes with the rest of the pupils while they are working; he knows that that pupil has a brother in a higher standard and he tells me that he intends speaking with him to find out what is the family background. We walk back to the staff room.

Student Teacher three (who was also present observing his buddy's lesson) reflects that pupils did not exactly follow his buddy's instructions and did not carefully enough analyse the visual picture he had put up; this is why he felt he had to intervene to point out that the pupils had not interpreted important information in the text like the direction the policeman was pointing in, the position of the glass on the pavement, the ages of the robbers in the picture... No, he comments, he was not intending to prescribe what they should interpret from the picture, but how to go about interpreting a visual text. We continue walking back to the staff room.

Two other "African" student teachers (Science and Economics method) are also in the staff room. The student teachers soon realise that I am well pleased with the high quality of work being done, especially in the area of developing comprehension skills. They were certainly assisting pupils to realise their potential in contributing to the quality of the lessons and pupils were being motivated by the consequence of their own actions. The non-English method student teachers have not yet mentioned a word to me; all they do is listen attentively to our comments not sure whether to eavesdrop or not.

Now I act as Devil's Advocate. Would you like to teach in this school next year, I ask. Oh, oh! it's wonderful here, Mr. Samuel, but everything is so perfect: there's enough teachers, there's not too many pupils, they all got textbooks, the school is well disciplined, the teachers work well, they all got degrees or they went to training college. But I think I must go and teach in my community. They need me there.

My horns grow longer. But what community are you talking about? Am I not part of the community of South Africa? Are Indian pupils (whom you have got to understand better now) not also part of the community? Don't you think you are doing a wonderful service by dispelling the myths of what an "African" person is all about, especially for these Indian pupils who perhaps have very stereotyped ideas about what an "African" is capable of?

Comments flood in from students two and three; Science and Economic students are beginning to wonder whether they also have the right to comment in this "English crit". No we are not being racist to consider the black community only. There are far greater needs to be served in the Black education system and I



think we can do quite a lot there. Hold on now, what is "black"? Am I not Black? Come on, Michael, you know what I mean, maybe the term "African" people- but okay, we're all Africans; well I don't know what term to use but you know who I'm referring to. I think we've got to start helping the situation in Black schools; we've got to put into practice what we've seen is possible like in this school.

My red cloak and trident are now seen emerging from behind. But what about the problems that Black pupils are facing in this school? Don't you think that you will be best qualified to address these problems?

especially since you have been through the kind of education system that they are coming from? Now begins the next major argument. The Economics student teacher ventures that he is not too certain if it was a good idea to include Blacks in this school. Yes, confirms one of the English teachers; they do not seem to be coping very well at all; in fact, he remarks most of them have failed their quarterly exams. The other teacher remarks that there needs to be some kind of programme for these pupils to help them cope. The other student teacher feels that this would be very difficult to implement without being perceived as being a kind of racism. But is it not simply an issue of Language, I ask. These Black pupils are being treated as if they are simply first language speakers and are expected miraculously to cope with a first language teaching environment. Well some teachers are interested to develop a programme but..., hesitates one of the teachers.

I am now in full costume now... Do you think that your English method course is actually assisting you to come to terms with some of these very real problems you will face next year? What coping strategies do you have up your sleeve to assist you to be as effective as you now are here in these classrooms? I suddenly become conscious of time. Glancing at my watch, I apologise- Look chaps, I must be running off now, I've got to get back to varsity to lecture about curriculum development.

Here endeth our staffroom discussion. The Science teacher is nodding his head about something as I pick up my files. The Economics teacher tells me his name as I leave the staffroom.

These above reflections indicate my biographical questioning during my first year as a teacher educator in a pre-service programme at UDW. I found that I began to grow more critical of the quality of teacher education curriculum that was being offered at my own institution. To admit students of different racial groups within the university system, was for me, insufficient in contributing to shaping the new generation of teachers for a democratic South Africa. I found that student teachers in the teacher education programme were ill prepared to deal with different racial and cultural groups. Their interaction with persons other than those from within their own apartheid framed boxes was limited, and limiting to their future role as teachers. The success of apartheid was that it had bred a form of ethnocentrism that even the political ideology of "justice for all" could not shake.

My reflections from within the classroom of my 1991 student teachers reveal the contextual landscape that I was dealing with:

- physically under-resourced African schools;
- over-crowded classrooms;
- poorly designed learning spaces;
- distanced and committed teachers;
- afraid and confident novice teachers;
- unconsciously racist practices;
- unclear language teaching and learning principles;
- poorly construed ideas around the relationships between different language groups; accepted patterns of handling multilingual learners which perpetuated hierarchical hegemonic power relationships among different language groups in the country;
- unchallenged underperformance of girls within the school system;
- demoralised pupils.



#8 Linoprint: "A Township School Classroom": Artist – Patrick Holo



#9 Photograph: (1998) "**University of Durban-Westville**", Public Relations Office, UDW.

1.2 The Micro- Research Context:

The Orchestra Pit

These were the biographical resources that I drew on when I began my career as a teacher educator at UDW. I had experienced the world of largely mono-racial public school education during the apartheid era; I had been part of challenging this apartheid educational worldview during my teaching at a multiracial private school. I myself had grown to understand the possibility of enacting alternative means of addressing multilingual education. I joined the university education system as a teacher educator at the time when the institution was undergoing its own version of visions for a new South Africa. This changing vision is presented here to contextualise the university environment into which the student teachers of my study were immersed.

The institution had originally been set up by the apartheid government to cater for "Indian people". As part of the movement towards reconciliation politics in the reconstruction era before the democratic elections in 1994, the restrictions on admissions of Indian students only were relaxed. Within a short space of time, UDW constituencies were able to develop an alternative mission statement for its institution. Through many heated debates and struggles (which continue to this day) the institution elected to see itself as "The University for a Changing South Africa".

The culture of the institution was widely recognised as being dominated by "struggle

politics": the continued defiance of apartheid legislation. The strategies of boycotts and overt student defiance and resistance have become synonymous with the institution's history. However, I felt that when I entered the institution in 1991 the discourse around the faculty's curriculum programme did not fully address the preparation of teachers for a new South Africa. We were seemingly caught in a rhetoric of transformation; that restructuring of the Faculty's or University's management hierarchy would pave the way for transformation of the university and hence the education system (See Mala Singh; 1992 for an analysis of the transformation agenda of South African universities presented at the Union of Democratic University Staff Associations' -UDUSA- national conference). My own involvement in these campaigns was fuelled by a desire to see change within the system that had become institutionalised as (perhaps?) unconscious organs of the apartheid system. Addressing these structural issues was a necessary, but not ultimate, step in the march to freedom.



#10 Conference Brochure: (1992) "Union of Democratic University Staff Associations".



#11 Pamphlet: (1998: release date) "**University of Durban-Westville: Mission Statement**", Public Relations Office, UDW.

The era was very well characterised as the "era of marching". The apartheid

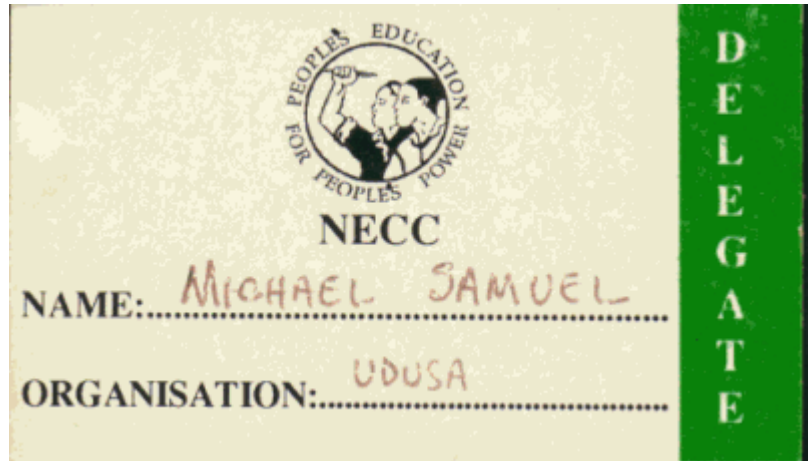
government had relinquished its tight fisted control on the right of individuals to disagree with its agenda: the toyi-toying down streets seemed to attract more diverse representatives than just the African township youth who had immortalised themselves in laying down their lives for the cause of their education in Soweto 1976- some 15 years earlier. Academics and lay people, religious leaders of different faiths and racial groups; students and teachers; newly released activists and ardent community voices were attempting to forge synergy with the various forces of resistance to apartheid. The objectives of the educational struggle were not (as to be expected) easily agreed upon and I found myself also part of academia who were debating the possible alternative educational policy options that a new South Africa should strive for. These debates became (arguably) encapsulated in the 1992 National Educational Policy Initiative (NEPI) documents.

A testimony to the multi-layered issues which needed to be addressed during this policy exploration is best captured for me in a vivid picture I have of the national conference of the commissioning organisation, (the National Education Crisis Committee) to promote "People's Education for People's Liberation", the

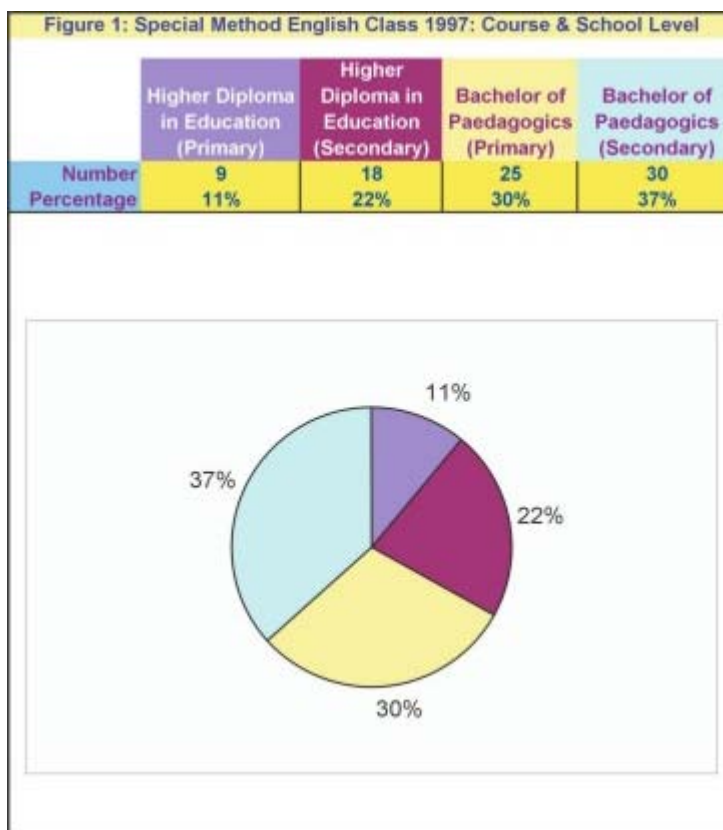
rallying cry of those who believed that liberation was possible through the democratic development of curriculum interventions based on the principles of "non-racism, non-sexism and democratic" ideals:

The hall of one of the barons of South African industry, ESKOM was filled with toyi-toying and chanting student representatives; a young White South African student, clad in the wraps of an India-print sarong was impressively chanting the lyrics of the freedom songs she had learnt from her Black "comrades"; at the podium stood a confident mother delivering her keynote speech with the soft gurgling sounds of her new-born child suckling at her breast wafting over the microphone. That mother, Mary Metcalf, is now the Minister of Education in Gauteng.

Nourishing times.



#12 Conference Delegate Badge: (1992) "National Education Crisis Committee Conference: People's Education for People's Power".



At UDW I was involved specifically in the pre-service development of student teachers who would be future teachers of the English language. They were registered for the Special Method English Course (from now on referred to as the SMEC) which was part of a final year programme of the Faculty of Education's undergraduate degree, the Bachelor of Paedagogics (B.Paed.). These B.Paed. students would have been studying with the Faculty of Education for three years before enrolling in the SMEC. The SMEC also comprised a smaller group of post-graduate students registered for a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE). All SMEC students would have had a minimum of two years of study within the Faculty of Arts in an English I or II undergraduate course, which focuses on the study of English literature. The English courses, which are compulsory courses for the SMEC student teachers offered by the Faculty of Arts, presume that the students themselves are first language speakers of the English language. Additive/catch-up/compensatory/ academic support programmes have left the courses essentially unaltered in the wake of propagating the canon of literary greats (even if these literary greats are themselves African!). Changing the content selected for study within the English department was not necessarily accompanied by changes in the methodology of how literature is being taught or learnt (See Samuel: 1992c and 1994).

These pre-service student teachers of 1997 were the focus of this research study.

1.3 The Macro-Context of Changing Educational Policy:

The Musical Score

In this section I briefly present the main thrust of the post-1994 macro-educational policies to locate the broader landscape of educational reconstruction that was occurring at various levels during the formative pre-service teacher preparation years of the student teachers under investigation. I also hint at the policy initiatives of the apartheid state prior to 1994 to serve as a backdrop to the kind of post-apartheid (1994) initiatives that were introduced by the new democratic government in South Africa.

Within the educational scenario the process of preparing to govern the new democratic state took the form of policy proposals being presented to the electorate to outline the intentions of the various political parties. This may be regarded as the era of reconstruction which attempted to counteract the era of

resistance and contestation that had characterised the South African education system during the late seventies and eighties (See Figure 1). The apartheid State in 1991 had proposed a largely managerial model of curriculum reform in the Educational Renewal Strategies (NDE: 1992). It was presented in the usual high-handed fashion characteristic of the former State's ideology of social engineering. The model of curriculum development proposed the traditional linear steps of Research,

[Click Here for a full sized version of Figure 2 .](#)

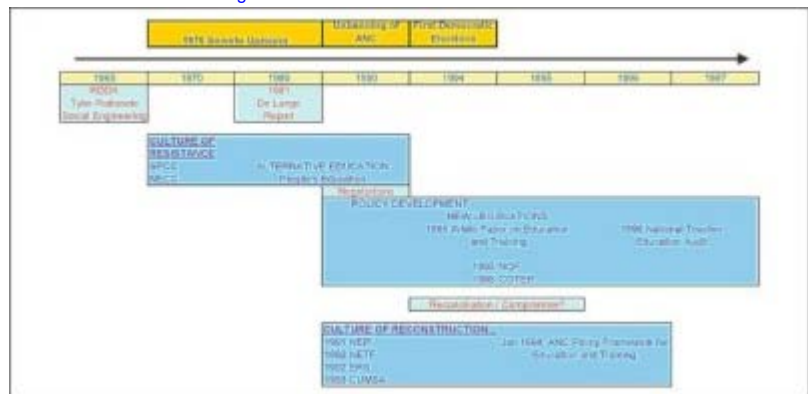


Figure 2: Educational Policy Development in South Africa (1960 – 1997)


Development, Dissemination and Adoption (RDDA) (Popkewitz: 1984). Its lifespan as a proposal was short. Its "expert policy writers" soon became aware of the lack of

political support such proposals would enjoy given its anti-democratic stance in failing to involve the relevant educational stakeholders.

The "Curriculum Model for South Africa" (CUMSA) (NDE: 1993), a State curriculum initiative, was noteworthy in that it was able to adopt the rhetoric, vocabulary and discourse of the political "left"/ "radical" forces in the country (thereby reflecting itself as a document of its times) whilst simultaneously not shifting any further away from the original conceptions of a technical approach to curriculum development and planning. The document blatantly ignored the political and social contexts within which reform was to be implemented. It offered no specific strategies for redressing race, gender and regional inequalities in education. The reliance on a centrally driven reform agenda was also seen as anti-thetical to the campaigners of a more democratic "bottoms-up" approach to curriculum development. It is interesting to note that the post-apartheid State seems to be echoing the kind of curriculum development model of the CUMSA document whilst couching its rhetoric in the framework of promoting democratic upliftment and global competitiveness.

The unbanned liberation movement, the African National Congress (ANC) also presented a framework for education in the post-apartheid South Africa. Its agenda was quite clear in that it attempted to promote its political ideology that education is a fundamental right of all citizens of the country. In appealing to the large worker constituency in its ranks, the proposal "A Policy Framework for Education and Training" (ANC: 1994), outlined the principle of developing a co-ordinated system which brought together the formal world of schooling (pre-primary to tertiary), and the informal world of training (largely within the commercial and industrial sectors). The proposal came under the banner of "getting ready to govern", and was offered as a model for development of the human resources across the many sectors who were previously excluded from access to upliftment through education. The proposal was largely driven by the ideologies of the trade union movement who were chief allies of the political party. They saw the proposal as an attempt to develop a more bold initiative in addressing the country's historical legacy of discrimination in terms of race, gender and class. Its framework has become the cornerstone of the proposals of

the post-apartheid State: The White Paper on Education and Training (Govt. Gazette:1995a); the National Qualifications Framework (Govt.



Gazette 1995b) and "Curriculum 2005", the 1996 model of curriculum development based on an outcomes based approach to education and training (DNE: 1997a+b).

Wally Morrow's commentary on the policy terrain of post-apartheid South Africa urged the legislators to approach the process of writing policy documents as if they were writing the rules to a game. For example, writing the rules to the game of soccer. Whilst there is need for the regulatory rules such that both teams are in agreement about how they should interact with each other on the field, the rules nevertheless, should allow for the individuality and potential of individuals and teams to exploit the game in the pursuit of excellence, or of winning.

(Wally Morrow: 1996, "A Personal Perspective on the possible White Paper on Teacher Education", Paper presented at National Teacher Education Audit Workshop, 19 April 1996)

Analogies are often useful as well as dangerous. For example, to extend the analogy in the era of reconstruction in South Africa, one would need to ask:

- *Who are the two teams?*
- *What are the advantages of seeing the policy terrain as a contestation of competing powers (opposite teams)?*
- *What are the powers being contested in the South African educational policy terrain?*
- *Whose version of knowledge will win the educational game?*
- *What skill or expertise is needed to win?*
- *Who are the umpires and lines-referees?*
- *Are individual or team endeavours to be valued more?*
- *Why and who will benefit from such "victory"?*
- *Can both teams lose?*
- *What historical expertise do each of the teams bring to the match given that they have previously played on very different playing fields?*

The White Paper on Education and Training (Govt. Gazette:1995a) became the first official symbolic declaration of the "ANC" State's vision for a new direction in the education system. It attempted to deal with the following concerns:

- provide the legislation for the development of a single unified system of education and training; this meant the amalgamation of the previous 17 fragmented departments of education;
- propose the co-ordination of the education and training system;
- signal the intentions of redressing the inequalities of apartheid education;
- profess an education and training system that acknowledged the prior practical knowledge and learning that individuals were capable of utilising when accessing the learning/teaching system;
- declare an intention to restore a culture of teaching and learning within the schooling system;
- provide a legislative platform for the increased participation of parents in the choice of the form of education for their children;
- openly reveal its preferences for an education system that respected diversity in culture, religion and language.

Curriculum policy proposals of this kind have been often described as "New Year resolutions": a symbolic act of purging oneself of the ills of yesteryear. The confessional box of State legislation often ignores the fallibility of sinners to sin again, and celebrates the idealism of the evangelists who believe that at the stroke of midnight, legislation will change pumpkins into carriages, mice into Arabian stallions. The heritage of apartheid has become deeply ingrained in the lives of both the oppressed and the oppressors. Transformation cannot be legislated. The policy proposals of the new State can only be seen as providing the necessary "frameworks for reconstruction" (Samoff: 1996). Conversion from the ills of apartheid will need more in-depth, conscious and deliberate targeting of the mind sets of all those involved in the education system: teachers, students, parents,

administrators, policymakers, textbook writers, as well as those who are the recipients of the educational system, owners of industry, the commercial sector, the society at large. But, the process of conversion is not a linear one. The process of reform is an iterative one, as one reform initiative acts as a catalyst and snowball for other initiatives.



#13 Photograph: (1994) "The National Minister of Education: Prof. Sibusiso Bengu".



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA • REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA

Department of Education
Departement van Onderwys

Private Bag X895
PRETORIA
0001
29 April 1996

Mr Michael Samuel
Faculty of Education
University of Durban-Westville
Private Bag X54001
DURBAN
4000

Dear Michael

Thank you very much indeed for playing the very significant role at our National Teacher Education Audit Workshop. It was not an easy role and so much depended upon it. The report which you were requested to produce and the recommendations which flow from your discussion group will give guidance to the compilers of the draft White Paper on Teacher Education.

I hope that we will be able to lean on you again for advice and assistance in the development of the draft White Paper and the workshopping of it at an international conference in August 1996.

Again, our thanks for the important contribution you made to the National Teacher Education Audit workshop.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Dr A L le Roux
CHAIRPERSON: ORGANISING COMMITTEE

#14 *Letter: (1996) "Correspondence from Dr. Andre le Roux: National Director of Teacher Education".*

Section Two: Teacher Education Policy Development (1995-1997): The Stage

2.1 The Teacher Education Policy Context:

Taking the Podium

In this section I outline the reconstruction policy fervour of the post-apartheid State with regards to teacher education. This section contextualises the macro-forces of legislative influence on the design of teacher education curricula. The design of the Special Method English Course (SMEC), with which the student teachers in this research study were involved, was designed as a consequence of this kind of regulatory framework. (The specific details of that course will be explored in Section 3.4). This section also foregrounds my own biographical involvement simultaneously as a researcher, teacher educator and a contributor to national teacher education policy development. In Chapter Three I explore what effect these simultaneous roles had on the research process.

My personal development during this era of reconstruction in the mid 1990's was catapulted through my involvement in the formation of a teacher education forum which aimed to bring together the voices of the silent (or silenced) teacher education sector in the debates around policy being developed. In particular, the organisation grew out of the concerns that teacher education policy was being

developed to regulate the quality of curriculum for teacher education institutions without the active involvement of teacher educators. A Committee on Teacher Education Policy in KwaZulu-Natal (which acted as a think-tank to react to government policy proposals) felt that it should develop a more proactive role in engaging with policy formulation, consultation and implementation. The KwaZulu-Natal Organisation of Teacher Educators (KNOTE) was launched to bring together various providers of teacher education in the province. These included teachers colleges of education, university faculties of education, the non-government organisations dealing with teacher development, or school improvement initiatives. Together we critiqued the proposed regulations of the new "National Norms and Standards for Teacher Education Curriculum" (Committee of Teacher Education Policy (COTEP): 1995) and became involved in perhaps affording legitimacy to the State's view that it had consulted widely in the formulation of this document. The reality was that the document had long been the brainchild of its architects who allowed the urgency to deliver an

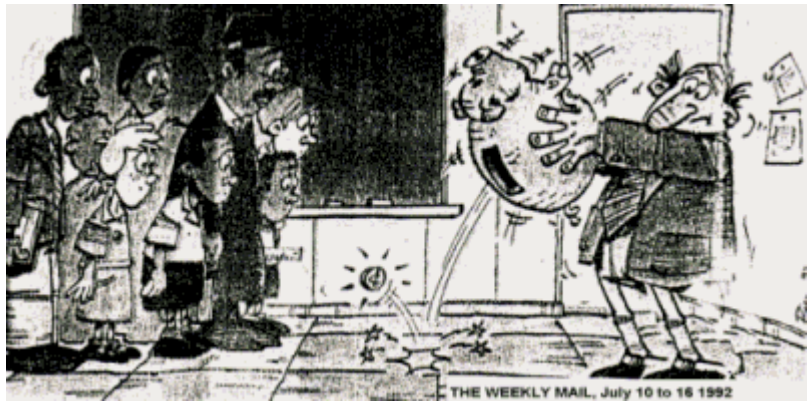
PROVIDERS	NO.OF INSTITUTIONS	TOTAL ENROLMENT	1994 NEWLY QUALIFIEDS
State Colleges (contact)	93	71 731	17 654
Private Colleges (contact)	5	11 000	700
State Colleges (distance)	8	44 117	
Private colleges (distance)	3	24 532	
Universities (distance)	3	60 038	225
NGOs (distance)	3	763	
Technikons (distance)	1	164	
Universities (contact)	20	28 954	7 432
Technikons (contact)	5	1 846	316
Dept. INSET	41 centres	122 290	
NGOs	99	115 882	
TOTAL	281	481 317	26 327

Jane Hofmeyer and Graham Hall (1996) "Synthesis Report of the National Teacher Education Report", Presented at National Teacher Education Audit Workshop, ESKOM Conference and Exhibition Centre, Midrand, Gauteng, 17-19 April 1996.

Table 1: The Provision and Output of Teacher Education Institutions in South Africa

alternative framework for teacher education overtake the consultative ideals they professed. The legislation was finally gazetted in September 1995.

A testimony to this was that the regulatory proposals for governance, the curriculum and quality assurance were decided upon before a comprehensive analysis of the teacher education sector as a whole. This more comprehensive analysis only featured in 1996 with the release of the National Audit of Teacher Education. Of course this might confirm that the process of curriculum policy formulation is never a neat and linear process and that the agenda driving the audit may have had more to do with the need to secure funds from donor agencies who were being primed to assist the cash strapped post-apartheid government to deliver on the promises and ideals of their elections manifestos.



#15 Cartoon: (1992) " 'The Weekly Mail', 10 – 16 July 1992": The Cash-Strapped Department of Education.


A more comprehensive description of the status of teacher education in the country was necessary at that point in the reconstruction agenda.

What was particularly revealing during the release of this National Teacher Education Audit was the generally poor quality of teacher education programmes ("barring few pockets of excellence"); the disconcertingly high proportion of students who were in the teacher education system did not see teaching as their first career option: they saw their presence in the teacher education system as merely their access into the tertiary education system. This resulted in the teacher education sector bloating into the largest sector of higher education in the country. However, the professional mission of teacher education was seen as being "at risk" (National Teacher Audit: DOE: 1996). The curricula of the colleges of education, in particular, were found to be narrowly conceived as sets of syllabi which promoted teaching as a process of transmitting loads of "information bytes": pre-packaged units of information to be regurgitated in the examination. The course on the philosophy and sociology of education were infused with the ideology of Fundamental Paedagogics, a South African interpretation of a Dutch philosophy of education (See Suransky-Dekker: 1998 for a discussion of how this infusion has taken root in the South African scenario). This South African hybrid was used by the former apartheid state to promote views of the hierarchical

PROVIDERS	PRESET STUDENTS	INSET PARTICIPANTS*
State Colleges (contact)	71 731	
Private Colleges (contact)	11 000	
State Colleges (distance)	11 664	32 453
Private colleges (distance)		24 532
Universities (distance)	950	59 088
NGOs (distance)		763
Technikons (distance)		164
Universities (contact)	20 734	8 220
Technikons (contact)	1 717	129
Dept INSET (contact)		122 290
NGOs (contact)		111 862

* Includes INSET for higher qualifications and INSET for school competence

Jane Hofmeyer and Graham Hall (1996) "Synthesis Report of the National



Teacher Education Report", Presented at National Teacher Education Audit Workshop, ESKOM Conference and Exhibition Centre, Midrand, Gauteng, 17-19 April 1996.

Table 2: Enrolment Patterns of PRESET/ INSET Student Teachers in South African Teacher Education Institutions

relation between teachers (adults) and recipient pupils (children). This pattern of unequal relationships was extended to legitimise the iniquitous provision of education to the different race groups under the guise of cultural affirmation for diversity. Of course, many of the beneficiaries of the apartheid system (including people of all race groups) promoted the ideologies of setting up the separate teacher education institutions in each of their carved up cultural "homeland" islands. The National Teacher Audit even discovered whole new colleges of education that were not on the official register of one of the many departments of education! Afterall, it was possible to confuse a teacher education institution with a regular secondary school because such student teachers looked like school pupils in their institutionalised uniforms and their adherence to the regulations of bells, sirens and assemblies characteristic of pre-tertiary education.

The teacher education institutions were a symbol to many of the separatist ideologues of their contribution to the advancement of their island community. With the amalgamation of the country under one education department, there is need to debate the future of the number of teacher education providers in the light of teacher "supply and demand"; there is need to analyse how such "supply and demand" figures are arrived at; there is need for a review of the quality of these many providers of

education. It is necessary to diversify the kind of post-secondary access of students to preferred careers instead of recruiting unwilling students who are "coerced" into the


teaching profession. This diversification is often resisted by some colleges of education themselves since it is often at the expense of the teacher educators promoting their own redundancy if they do not have the necessary skills, knowledge to offer alternative kinds of education and/or training.

The audit also provided an analysis of the provision of in-service teacher education programmes, and noted the diversity of programmes on offer. The largest sector providing INSET was being offered by the Departments of Education within the model of RDDA: Adoption phase. The second largest provider was the non-governmental organisation sector: this is understandable given the need for alternative visions of education and training to be provided from outside the citadels of the departmental control. However, Jansen (1997), evaluates the impact of these zealous non-governmental providers in terms of whether they are able to significantly transform the quality of teaching and learning practice within the classrooms of the many attendees of workshops, seminars and presentations. He suggests that the "survival agenda" of the NGO sector permeated their engagement with donor agencies in the post-apartheid era channelling their funding through the central governmental departments. The competition to present favourable "images" of their work to evaluators often clouded the real mission of these organisations. Quantity rather than quality is said to have become the priority.

2.2 The Teacher Education Policy-Practice Relationship:

Translating Musical Notation into Sound


In September 1995, the proposals for developing the quality of teacher education became legislated in the "National Norms and Standards for Teacher Education Curriculum" document of the Committee for Teacher Education Policy (COTEP: 1995). Six months later a task team (from largely within the ranks of KNOTE) were commissioned to explore how teacher educators within the province of KwaZulu Natal responded to the expectations outlined in the COTEP document. The document itself professed that it allowed for "a large amount of autonomy in the implementation of agreed-upon aims, competences and criteria. The means are



variable, but the ends or outputs are specified" (ibid: Preface). The document encouraged teacher educators to interpret the content for inclusion in their teacher education curricula in relation to a list of specified competences. The success of the implementation of a new vision for teacher education was thus reliant on the ability of teacher educators to activate their own abilities in the process of curriculum development.

Our KNOTE task team made the following observations about the challenges of translating the COTEP policy into practice:

1. The process of translating policy into practice is never neutral. Practitioners choose to interpret policy in ways, which reflect their varied personal understandings (e.g. about education, epistemology, philosophy, etc.) and their assumptions about change being signalled by the official document. The interpretation of policy into practice will therefore, reflect the current levels of competences (skills, values, attitudes, knowledge) of the practitioner teacher educator to engage in the development of a new vision for teacher education. Teacher educators' current level of competence and understandings of the process of curriculum development drive the interpretation process. Given the historical exclusion of the teacher educators from serving a more prominent role in curriculum development, the process of curriculum design reflects the lack of experience of teacher educators to enact the paradigm shift expected by the COTEP vision.
2. Colleges of education seem to be preoccupied with the need to articulate with the university system. The result is an attempt to imitate models of university curriculum which are inappropriate to the needs of a teacher education context in a college of education. This is despite the cautionary notes to the practitioners in the COTEP policy "to get away from defining degrees in terms of university and technician requirements, and instead define credits in terms of teacher qualifications and teaching degrees" COTEP: 1995: 60). The university courses which many colleges seem to emulate are often designed for a general Arts, Science or Commerce degree and are not necessarily directed towards teacher development.
3. If colleges are using the curriculum model of the teacher education degrees at universities as the basis for comparative curriculum design, then it needs to be analysed whether the present model of teacher preparation being used at universities is an appropriate model for teacher education. The university curriculum of teacher education also tends to rely on the undergraduate programme offerings for general students and these courses may not necessarily be appropriate for teacher development. (Exceptions of this kind of general "front-loading" curriculum do exist e.g. Science Education, Mathematics Education at UDW.)
4. The design of teacher education curriculum programmes should be seen in the context of impending rationalisation of colleges. Most lecturers at these institutions tend to be hesitant about the adaptation skills to become transformed providers of a broader based post secondary education system (e.g. lecturers in a community college system). Therefore, lecturers at such institutions justify the inclusion of their present area of specialisation within the teacher education programme so that the curriculum design becomes a process of legitimising their existence in the institution.
5. A technicist interpretation of the COTEP outcomes-based model has resulted in the design of curriculum which revert to (or confirm) behaviouristic notions of teacher preparation and development. This is despite the intentions of the document to signal a paradigm shift, which attempts to prepare student teachers with more than just an accumulation of skills to implement in the classroom.

- 
6. The listing of competences to be developed (which include knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and dispositions) have resulted in a limited interpretation that the curriculum programme should be cluttered with a series of compartmentalised courses, which aim to individualistically develop the specified outcomes. This has resulted in the design of cluttered timetabled programmes, demanding lengthy face-to-face contact sessions with lecturers and students.
 7. There is a misguided belief that it is possible to teach competency in an individualistic fragmentary way. Competency is learnt via more than the teaching activities being experienced at a teacher education institution. The design of the curriculum should attempt to fashion what is taught, caught and learnt as a consequence of attending a particular institution.
 8. The design of the curriculum programme for teacher education should also attempt to be conscious of what is excluded or silenced from the formal curriculum programmes. It should include more than just the design of the teaching content of the various lecturers in the institution.
 9. The development of any curriculum programme needs to acknowledge the competence level of the students entering the system. This is particularly important in relation to ranking and organisation of the COTEP competences according to pragmatic and theoretical considerations. This rationale should inform the development of translating from COTEP to a curriculum.

The above summary of findings were presented in a paper "From COTEP to Curriculum" (Samuel: 1996), at a "Teacher Education Institute", hosted by the Embassy of the United States, Port Elizabeth.

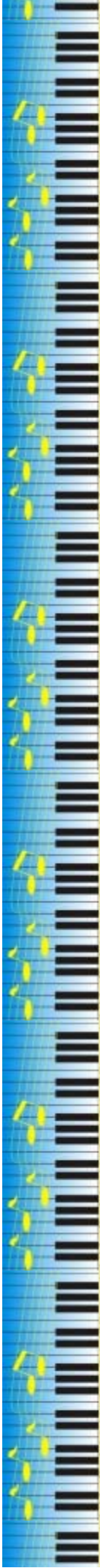
Section Three: Setting Up the Research Process: Getting Ready to Play

This section outlines the process of refining the specific areas of focus of the research study. It begins by looking at how the particular focus of the study emerged out of my own personal and contextual engagements at different levels within the teacher education sector. It outlines the main research question and a rationale for the study. The next part of this section focuses on the specific individuals involved in this research exploration: the student teachers in the Special Method English Course and myself, as their "teacher" and educational researcher. It records the process of how the Special Method English Course was designed arising out of the reflections and consultations with various stakeholders: the student teachers of the previous year (1996), the mentor teachers in schools and the language subject advisors of English in the Department of Education.

3.1 Finding the Research Focus:

Searching for a Song

The previous section 2.2 provided an analysis of the process of interpretation of teacher educational policies into curriculum practices within teacher education institutions. Points 7, 8 and 9 particularly, drove me personally to re-evaluate the manner in which we were engaging in the process of curriculum development at my own institution. Firstly, I felt that it was becoming increasingly evident that we were not acknowledging one of the key ingredients in the design of our teacher education curriculum: i.e. the student teachers themselves. It is ironic that this is the kind of emphasis that we were professing in the education of our teachers: that they (student teachers) should firmly assess and acknowledge the backgrounds, the uniqueness and diversities of their pupils in order to design relevant and appropriate curricula within the specificity of each school context, yet we were failing to acknowledge the resources that our student teachers were bringing into the teacher education curriculum programme. Second, the course material of the Faculty of Education tended to be presented largely in the



traditional lecture format which more often than not, constructed students as receivers of the wisdom of the omniscient lecturers (See also Rajah: 1992 for an analysis of the paradigms of teacher development that the assessment procedures of the UDW faculty hinted at). Although the rhetoric of critical reflective practice had already reared its head within the Faculty, Rajah (ibid.) concluded that this was often negated by the manner in which these discourses were presented to the students. Novice teachers were often being lectured to about "the critical paradigm" as if such a view of the education scenario, within the complexity of a post-modern era, was capable of dissection into certainties and piecemeal offerings. A genuinely discursive critical space for the students to impact on the

curriculum was not the overtly professed philosophy of the curriculum documents of the faculty and, this in itself is counter to the goals of a critical discourse. Third, a more thorough analysis should be made concerning how we as teacher educators construct the kinds of curriculum experiences for our novice teachers. These three concerns may be summarised as concerns about whom we teach, what we teach and how we "teach" in our teacher education programme.


On reflection of the curriculum that we had offered to date in the SMEC, my course colleagues and I were concerned that students engaged with the curriculum content as if it were another body of information to be digested in the pursuit of an academic qualification. Perhaps, students had inherited such views from their own experiences with undergraduate courses. They often saw the SMEC as the forum to gather the appropriate discourse so that they would know what to say, "think" and act out during SBTP sessions supervised by the university lecturing staff. In the examinations which were conducted at the end of the year, it became noticeable that students were able to mouth what they thought were appropriate views about English language teaching and learning (ELTL) as congruent with their lecturers' views. What was noticeable was that there appeared to be a contradiction between many of the practices that we had seen being "demonstrated" in the school-based classroom and the kind of "thinkings" being espoused to in the examinations. Moreover, it was becoming evident that the teachers who graduated from the university were entering the school system and within a short space of time were demonstrating ELTL actions that they had so vehemently "disagreed with" during their pre-service education.

Of course, there may be several interpretations as to how and why these "phenomena" arise or persist. Further research should be conducted into how novice teachers become co-opted into the dominant practices of the school culture: what forces of co-option are exerted from *within* the students themselves (inertial forces), as well as from the *external* constraints enforcing "conversion" (contextual forces). An examination of the appropriateness of the university curriculum to address the particular realities of schooling could also be investigated (programmatic forces). The role of the assessment processes within the pre-service education of novice teachers could be more thoroughly examined in terms of how it contributes to shaping the kinds of engagements novice student teachers make with their courses.

I chose to focus my lens on to the process of how student teachers learn to become teachers of the English language. My focus was not on what they were being taught, or how they were being taught. Instead, the focus of the study attempted to probe how students teachers understand what and how they are being taught. What are novice student teachers' understandings of the experiences that they are being afforded within the teacher education curriculum of the SMEC?

In trying to fine-tune the focus of my lens I chose to explore the student teachers' life experiences of learning the English language. My research study aimed to look at the processes of how these novice student teachers were developing in relation to their particular biographies of ELTL. These biographical experiences were developed over different periods and contexts in their lives: as members of unique homes, families and communities; as pupils in primary and secondary schools; as students in a

university pre-service teacher preparation programme, as practising student teachers at their teaching practicum sites.



This process of learning to become teachers of the English language I track with one cohort of students over a period of the one-year course. The 1997 SMEC students became the subjects of my case study.

The refined critical question (which like all questions embed several more questions) for this research therefore emerged as:

How do student teachers experience the learning and teaching of English over different periods of their lives?

3.2 The Rationale for this Study:

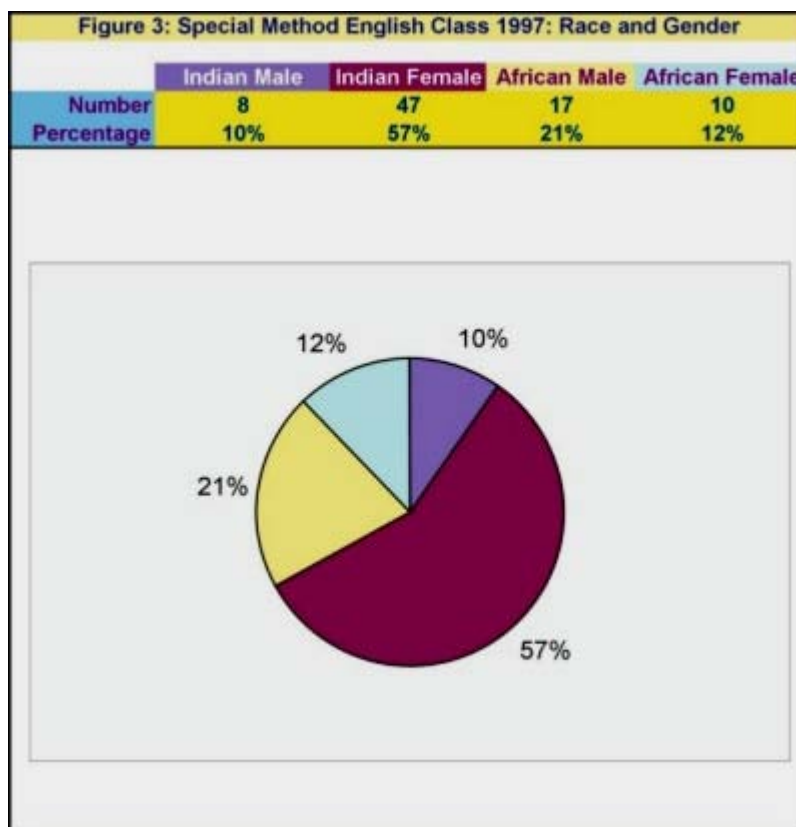
Why this Music?

The purpose of this study was to develop a clearer understanding of the biographical experiences of ELTL that student teachers bring with them to their teacher education courses. It attempts to probe how student teachers understand these experiences which were developed during different periods of their lives. It serves to illuminate how student teachers appropriate these experiences of ELTL during the process of becoming teachers of the English language.

The study aimed to:

- document the wealth of tacit and explicit learning about English language teaching and learning established before entry into the teacher education course. This included experiences of ELTL developed by individuals and institutions in their homes, community and schooling;
- probe more deeply into how student teachers experience and understand the teaching and learning of English during the teacher preparation programme (on- campus programme). This understanding extended beyond just formal tests, assignments and examinations set for student teachers;
- analyse the process of student teachers developing an understanding of their role as teachers of the English language in schools during their school-based teaching practice placement.

By foregrounding the biographical dimension of student teachers' experiences with ELTL, the study particularly focused on how competing understandings of the student teachers' family members, their primary and secondary school teachers, their university lecturers and teacher educators, their fellow colleagues in their teacher education programme, the mentor teachers and pupils in the schools, and the student teachers themselves were shared, exchanged, interrogated as they developed an understanding of ELTL.



This study is located within the context of a rapidly changing educational landscape. In sections 1 and 2, I have outlined the range of competing concerns that characterise educational transformation within post-apartheid South Africa. The student teachers of this research study are actors on this educational stage and consequently, reflect the impact of changing micro-institutional and macro-national educational transformation within their own developing personal identities as teachers, or simply as members of a rapidly changing society.

I believe therefore that this study could contribute to:

- advancing theoretical understandings about the nature of conducting educational research in a rapidly transforming educational context.
- achieving a more democratic presentation of the voice of student teachers within the teacher education system, and
- providing clearer insight to (or raise questions for) teacher educators about how student teachers make sense of the teacher preparation curriculum.

3.3 The Researcher and the Researched:

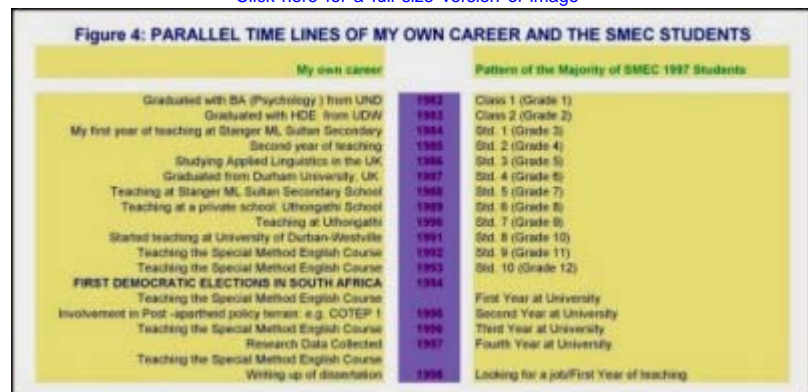
The Conductor and the Players

Unlike my own experiences of studying to become a teacher in the early eighties, the 1997 cohort of student teachers were not being prepared to teach in an "Indians only" school. The SMEC 1997 class also did not reflect one racial group. This cohort of students was a plurality of diversities and they were being (ideally) prepared to teach in any school within the new South Africa where they were likely to teach pupils from diverse backgrounds, cultural perspectives, language heritages, religions, races, etc.

The racial character of the university campus from the early 1980's to 1997 had undergone major changes significantly due to the conscious policy of improving access to the university for students from the so-called "disadvantaged" backgrounds. The mission statement of the university may be criticised for its patronising conception of race and dis/advantage but this kind of rhetoric was seen as part of the university community's ideology to redress the imbalances of the apartheid past. Its doors of learning were opened to students from the African community. This presented a major breakaway from the apartheid policy, which saw UDW as the university for the Indian community only.

The SMEC 1997 class consisted of 82 students reflecting a combination of different genders and races, different religions and cultural backgrounds. Students were studying to become primary and secondary school teachers. Students came from deep rural areas, as well as from urban centres. They brought a range of linguistics heritages to the class. These languages reflected most of the South African languages in varying proportions. Nevertheless, the SMEC was still largely Indian, with a minority of African students. There were no White or Coloured students in this class. To use race classifications as a unit of analytical categories is reflective of my own historical "encultured" conditioning/ socialisation. I realised how wrong I was to have "labelled" students according to their race, when I embarked on my first exercise with them: entitled "Who am I?" (More of that later in Chapters Three and Four.) I needed to question myself in terms of whether I needed to define "race" in the first place.

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Most of the students had read undergraduate courses at UDW. On average the undergraduate university degree would take a student three years to complete. Thus, it meant that these students would be approximately 20 years old (17 at school-leaving age + 3 years undergraduate study). In the main, I was correct in my assumptions. The race, gender and area of subject specialisation breakdown of the cohort are also revealing about Faculty's selection and admissions criteria. (See graphs: Figures 1 and 3 describing the cohort.)

I surmised that the students who were now in the SMEC had left the schooling system at around 1994, the time when the new democratic order was being established. They themselves would not have been "recipients" of the new political order as it was being meted out to schools in newly legislated educational policy. Were they to be educated to act as agents of a "new vision" for the education and training system as envisioned by the new democratic State? Or should they be? Was this my agenda?

This sparked off my further interest in getting to know the students in a more in-depth way. What kind of contextualised background experiences do these varied students bring with them to the SMEC? How does one prepare student teachers in a rapidly changing social/ political context? They had all pupils been within the schooling system during the apartheid era; now they were entering as novice teachers the post-apartheid era of schooling (See Figure 4). Of course, there are many things that have remained the same. But many things had also changed. My research design was being born. How was I as a lecturer in the SMEC going to acknowledge the development of creative, discursive space for my novice student teachers to grow, articulate their critical voices, tower above and within their past experiences? I had many questions. I wanted, above all, to know how student teachers made sense of the curriculum experiences of ELTL and whether these assisted them to learn to teach the English language.

3.4 Designing the Teacher Preparation Course for Future Teachers of English:

Composers and Composition

During the process of setting up the research study I conducted two exploratory



studies:

3.4.1 focussing on the 1996 student teachers' reflections of the SMEC they had experienced;

3.4.2 focussing on mentor teachers', and Department of Education language subject advisors' attitudes towards the model of teacher development being used in the SMEC.

In this section I present some of the key issues that emerged from these exploratory studies and note their influence on the process of curriculum design of the SMEC 1997 programme. The detailed description of this 1997 SMEC curriculum is presented in section 3.4.3 and it constituted the formal curriculum that the student teachers in this research study engaged with in the process of becoming teachers of the English language.

3.4.1 Reflections from Student Teachers:

Transmitted Sounds

As part of the reflective course evaluations the 1996 SMEC students wrote letters to the 1997 SMEC cohort. These reflective letters provided preliminary insight into student teachers' understandings of the SMEC teacher preparation programme. An examination of these letters reveal the following:

- the students commented on the nature of the relationship between the lecturer and themselves as crucial to their own development as teachers of the English language;
- they commended the interactive quality of the "lecture" contact time;
- they argued for a more pragmatic focus on the classroom teaching methodologies;
- they applauded the value of studying theories e.g. theories of second language acquisition and learning.

The following two letters are a sample of the SMEC 1996 students' reflections highlighting their experiences of the year long programme:

Dear English Special Method Students, 1997

The course you are about to "embark" on is going to be enjoyable, stimulating, nerve wrecking and exhausting. Make sure you have the energy, determination and time to commit yourself to the course, because, (unlike other lectures you have attended or will attend), every lecture you attend for English Special Method is going to end in you having to "do some homework", prepare for the next lecture, do some reading, etc...). You'll feel like you are "back at school" because you will constantly be doing some assignment, task, presentation, discussion, interview or report.

I hope you will enjoy it as much as I have. Despite the work it is very enjoyable and interesting, and it will definitely keep you on your toes! (No more copying lecture notes from a friend; because there might not be notes to copy.) Attendance at lectures is vital because much of the "lecture" time is actually "discussion time" and the issues raised, debated and clarified can not be read from lecture notes or readings.

Changes:

1. Try to get UDW Faculty of Education to introduce "Micro-teaching". It is an excellent way to prepare for Teaching Practice.
2. Contribute to class discussions and encourage your friends to speak in the class. Many students keep their ideas to themselves and I feel that this in fact is a form of negligence, because it is your duty, especially as a future educator, to share your knowledge and experiences with others.

Work hard and keep smiling!



Fatima Esat.

- Fatima was a Zimbabwean citizen who is now working in Chicago, USA.

Dear English Method student of 1997,

Welcome to the world of real work. Real work, that is what the English Method is all about. This is not meant to scare you, but it is just that the truth must be told before we die. Anyway, I just want to tell you about the English Method course. This is just an advice, if it is fine with you, take it; if it is not, be at ease to leave it. But remember this is an advice from the person who has been through the course.

If you think that you will continue doing what you have been doing in the English III, forget it! You are not going to be doing that in this method. I think this is a serious drawback about the course. If it were to be possible I would advise that the Faculty of Education offer the course on English Second Language teaching and learning from B.Paed I for those people who are doing English as a major. The gap between English III and the Special Method is so wide to an extent that I feel that even a person who has not done the English III course can do the English Special Method. This is however a challenge that you will have to take up with the Faculty.

The courses has a lot of work. I will advise you to attend every lecture if it is possible. If you miss one lecture, you miss so much that sometimes you find it difficult to make sense of what is being spoken about in the following lecture. As you may know I missed several lectures due to my SRC commitments, and I must tell you comrade, I had a hard time coping with the course. Please do attend all lectures.

There are coursepacks Michael will give you. Take them and read them as soon as possible. They constitute the core of the course. Did you know by the way how do we acquire the second language? Well be happy because you will know in this course. It is bloody (I'm trying to scare you!) relevant.

Michael (i.e. your lecturer) needs his work. Please do it. Otherwise you will fail.

During the School Based Teaching Practice work co-operatively with your buddies otherwise you will have a hard time if you are working alone. Do not mind the Resident Teachers' comments!, it is because they are ignorant.

Have a good luck in the course, but please take everything seriously.

These are words from an old man. And old men are wise.


Take them wisely.

Read Krashen!

Bongani Ngqlunga

- Bongani is now a post-graduate research student in the Faculty of Education, researching how teacher perceptions of language acquisition and learning influence their classroom practice.

The letters (Course evaluations) provided me as a researcher with some initial hints about how student teachers made sense of the curriculum experiences that they were exposed to. I now wanted to provide a more systematic analysis of these preliminary views. For example, I needed to know more about why students



highlighted the importance of the nature of the relationship between the lecturer and the students, the importance of the interactive quality of the "lecture" contact time. They were also hinting that a more pragmatic approach to classroom practice be adopted in the presentation of the course. They nevertheless, were not discounting the value of studying "theory" e.g. theories of second language acquisition and learning. Why?

The course leaders, my colleagues Betty Govinden, Juliet Perumal and Peter Reddy, were influenced into designing an appropriate SMEC curriculum after having read

these evaluations.

3.4.2 Attitudes towards UDW Model of Teacher Development:

Collaborative Cacophonies

The data for this exploratory study was gathered in the following manner:

1 interviews with a selection of the mentor teachers from six schools where our student teachers are placed during teaching practice (three African township schools, two Indian township schools and one White school); (See Appendix 1: Interview Schedule Number 1).

2 a focus group interview with the Department of Education subject advisors for English language teaching, and the UDW SMEC lecturers.

I have sub-titled this sub-section "collaborative cacophonies" because of the varied interpretations that the different stakeholders presented about the UDW model of teacher development. More importantly, however, the data yielded from this exploratory study reflected the different stakeholders' own understanding of the complexities confronting teachers within the context of a rapidly changing educational scenario. These complexities included having to deal simultaneously with macro-educational policy changes (such as the introduction of a new school curriculum), and the practical implementation constraints (lack of human, physical and financial resources) within schools themselves. The possibility of enacting transformatory visions of education is often thwarted by these constraints. The attitudes of the various stakeholders varied and can be related in many ways to their own positions within the education system.


These varying perspectives of the model of teaching practice being used by UDW Faculty of Education is captured in the paper "Rituals of Disempowerment: Preparing

Teachers as Curriculum Developers", which I presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Conference in Chicago, in April 1997. The exploratory study revealed that the stakeholders were unconsciously or consciously subscribing to ritualised practices, fermented during the apartheid era. These were the mentor teachers with whom the student teachers in my research study would be engaging during their school-based teaching practice. The following summarised extract from this paper captures how the various educational stakeholders were responding to the teaching of English, alongside policy proclamations to promote multilingualism in the new South Africa:

Some insights into the rituals of disempowerment

1 The teachers have been inadequately trained to deal with multilingual classrooms.

Most teachers have been trained to deal with pupils who belong to one racial group. The linguistic background of these racial groups is usually clearly identifiable. The linguistic diversity that the pupils bring with them to school is often perceived as interference in the acquisition of the dominant medium of



teaching and learning within the school. A model of *subtractive bilingualism* features within most schools where the child is expected to replace the language of his or her home with the language of school (be it English, or Afrikaans).

2 The schools continue to use their old language policy (pre-1994 elections) favouring particular languages (e.g. English and Afrikaans) despite the changed linguistic background of their school population.

3 A system of linguistic acculturation is adopted which disadvantages the African pupil in White and Indian schools.

4 The white school system is more flexible in introducing an African language, (for example, isiZulu).

With the establishment of strong parent-teacher associations at White schools, and the relative affluence of White parents, it has been possible for schools to hire additional teachers who were paid out of an elevated schools funds scheme without assistance from the State. Such a degree of flexibility is not present in Indian or African schooling because of their relatively lower earning (and therefore school fee-paying) capacity.

5 The Indian schooling system is constrained by not having teachers with the linguistic proficiency to teach Zulu.


This situation prevails largely as a consequence of the resistance of Indian teachers to move out of their perceived secure "Indians only" schooling posts. The ultimate consequence of this situation is that staffing at Indian schools remains largely Indian. The current proficiencies of language teachers extend to English and Afrikaans. This is as a consequence of the apartheid state's language policy for teacher education. Indian teachers did not develop competences in the teaching and learning of African languages e.g. isiZulu or Indian languages e.g. Tamil.

The status of isiZulu (or Indian vernacular languages) within the Indian school is thus afforded minimal, if any attention. Despite Afrikaans being a language that is minimally spoken in the KwaZulu Natal area, it continues to enjoy an elevated status. Only two schools within the old Indian school system offer isiZulu as both first and second languages.

6. The work of student teachers in addressing the demands of the new syllabi is seen (by Indian resident teachers) as insensitive to their (teachers') demands of preparing students for a matriculation examination.

7 Indian teachers are not very familiar with the documents governing school syllabi and have inherited "interpretations" of what they ought to do.

This is an important observation about how teachers within the field interpret what exactly is "the syllabus". The Subject Advisors of English noted that the syllabus regulating the teaching of English, as a first language was the "old syllabus document" first written for the White education system in 1984. This document reflected an attempt to use a competency-based framework. The schools were offered free interpretational reign to design appropriate syllabi in relation to the competency framework. In the initial stages of school-based curriculum policy development, White schools attempted to carve up the curriculum into manageable chunks for the pupils to study. These syllabus chunks became entrenched within the design of schemes of work for teachers' "journals". The "journal" of the teacher was a weekly checklist of specific competences, which were dealt with in the teachers' classrooms. As a consequence, the preference for behaviouristic linguistic competences came to be emphasised. The journal was seen as an appropriate means of regulating the control of teachers within the classroom. The journal schemes of work thus reflect an "interpretation" of the policy document. However, these journal schemes became entrenched as the only interpretation of the original 1984 syllabus policy document, even when they



were adopted by the other race groups. Teachers who were initiated into the school system thus often did not have access to the original documents and have even reported not having ever seen it during their numerous years of teaching. Their conception of "what the Department requires them to do" in their classrooms is thus erroneously perceived of as being the schemes of work that are passed over year by year within the teaching force itself.

It is interesting to note that within the African school system, the teachers are aware that a new Interim Core Syllabus (DOE:1995) for English Second Language is available, but that they too have chosen to ignore its demands and hardly refer to it in their development of the curriculum.

8 The Indian teacher feels that the restrictions on their activities within the school stem from the "demands of what the Department expects".

The "Department" argues that the "demands are being misinterpreted": the syllabus documents offer more flexibility of interpretation than the teachers have chosen to make. The teachers have chosen to follow rituals of practice that have become the norm of school curriculum; the syllabus documents allow for more flexibility.

9. The teachers within the African schooling system see the work of student teachers as inspirational in addressing the needs of the new Interim Core syllabus for Second Language.

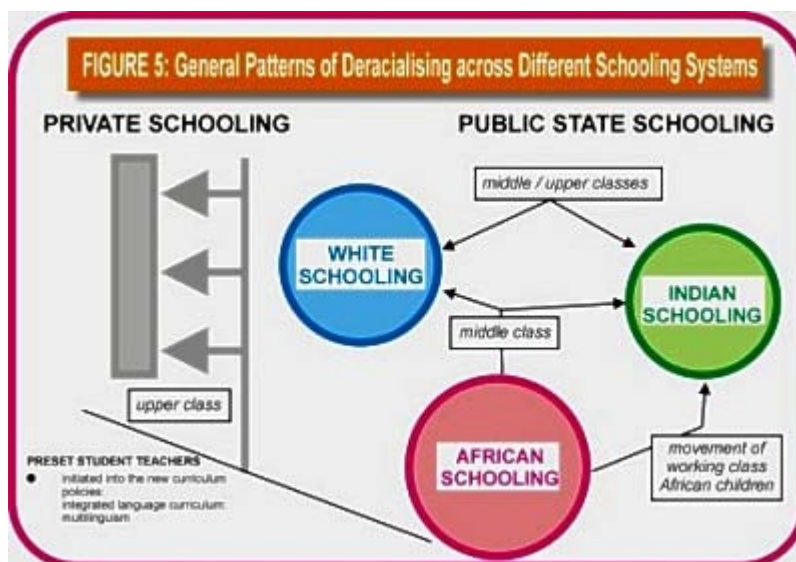
10 African teacher see the teaching of language as a formal affair and that the classroom is a space for the formal teaching of the language.

The personal and private beliefs about language teaching and learning filter out any innovation that may be imposed from "outside". The new syllabus document therefore, cannot pass through this personal filter, and regimented patterns of language teaching continue.

The need for a massive programme of in-service to assist teachers make appropriate choices for language development is evident. Solutions to resolving the language development of all pupils will need to include both changes at the **systemic level** (e.g. changes to the linguistic composition of staffing), at the **programmatic level** (e.g. in the design of appropriate school-based language policies) and at the **methodological level** (e.g. strategies for coping within multilingual classrooms). All these levels are in need of development to reconstruct the education system in South Africa.

The above report on the exploratory study into stakeholders' attitudes towards UDW model of teacher development is provided to reveal the complex cultural context of schooling in post-apartheid South Africa. This is the specific changing context that the student teachers are immersed into as they develop conceptions of being a teacher of the English language. This exploratory study revealed the varied debates around language teaching/ learning. In particular, there is evidence of clear differences among the conceptions of teachers from different race groups. The gulf between Departmental officials' conceptions of the language education policy regulations and teachers' understanding of practical implementation of such policies is wide. Departmental officials claim that more flexibility is afforded to teachers to enact alternative language curricula, yet teachers continue to design curricula that legitimate their own personal beliefs about how children learn languages.

[Click here to view full size version of Figure 5](#)



[Click here to view a full size version of Figure 6](#)



Figure 6: Introduction of New Syllabi / Curriculum Policy Documents


3.4.3 The Special Method English Course 1997:

The Composition

It was into this rich educational context that my student teachers of 1997 were to be launched. The overall theme of the 1997 SMEC thus came to be "TEACHING ENGLISH IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM".

The espoused aims of the 1997 SMEC were captured in the course handout (Special Method English: Curriculum Programme Schedule 1997": See Appendix 9) and they included:

- developing student teachers as committed teachers of English who respond positively to the challenges facing the design, production and implementation of the new curriculum for education and training;
- developing continuing critical reflection on the nature of current ELTL practices within the school system;
- not preparing the students teachers merely to fit into current patterns of ELTL within any educational or training site;
- providing the student teacher with the appropriate tools to critique (their) own past ELTL experiences through an analysis of debates around language acquisition;
- creating awareness of the varying contexts within which ELTL takes place in South Africa;
- creating awareness of the various policy documents regulating the promotion



of the multilingual resources of the country, and locating the teaching of English within such a context;

- providing a balance between the values of a sound theory about ELTL and a sound repertoire of practical strategies to cope with developing pupils' language competences.

All of the above concerns were directed towards developing competent professional teachers of the English language who would be able to address the challenges of promoting multilingualism within the education sector.

Thus began the Special Method English Course of 1997.

Summary of Chapter One: Coda

I have tried in this chapter to capture an autobiographical account of my involvement in the process of working first within the formal schooling system, and then of preparing student teachers. I outline as background to this study the specific educational policy terrain within which we find ourselves in a changing South Africa before and after the election of the democratic government. This background reveals the factors from within the school system and the university that influence the design of an appropriate English language curriculum for teacher education. I present the process of finding the research focus for my study as part of my simultaneous endeavours as a teacher educator, a researcher and a contributor towards developing qualitative teacher education practice.

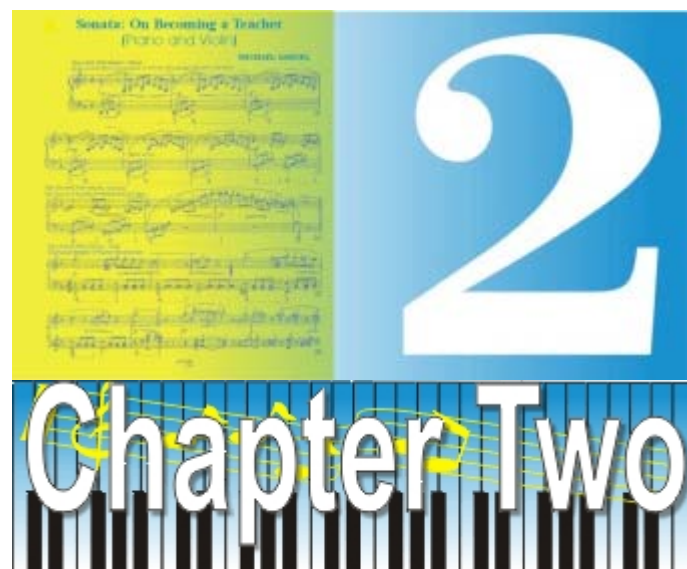
- This research study focuses on how student teachers experience the learning and teaching of English over different periods of their lives.
- The aim of this study is to probe deeply into the rich biographical experiences of novice student teachers of English in order to understand how they acquire understanding of the complex processes of teaching and learning the English language.
- In this opening chapter a presentation is also made of the findings of exploratory studies conducted at the beginning of the research process. This preliminary investigation records the educational contextual background of a rapidly changing environment impacting on the teaching and learning of English.

This is the overture to the musical experience of my research study. In the next chapter I shall foreground the literature around the nature and development of teacher knowledge from international and national contexts. An exploration of teacher education curriculum models and their concomitant views of teacher identity and roles follow. These discussions form the basis for the presentation of a model for researching student teachers' conceptions of their role and identity as teachers (of English) in a rapidly transforming educational context.

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Sonata on Becoming a Teacher



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**#16 Cover Page Design: Chapter Two: "Fantasia in D Minor" : Mozart Sonatas
and Miscellaneous Pieces Pianoforte: Revised and Edited by York Bowen;
Analytical Notes by Aubyn Raymar, The Associated Board of the Royal
Schools of Music London.**

Chapter Two Title Page

Orientation to Chapter Two

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Teacher.**

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Historical Analysis of
Teacher Identities and
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1960's

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Section Two: The Nature of
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2.1 How can Teacher
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Summary of Chapter Two:
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• Orientation to Chapter Two

The previous chapter, serving as an overture to the dissertation, dealt with an autobiographical account of the characteristic discourses and tendencies (musical strains) defining my own research in South Africa during the transition from the apartheid era to the new democratic order. This chapter focuses on the key discourses (musical strains) from a survey of literature related to the following focal areas of this study:

1. a systemic analysis of the tendencies of educational research to frame particular conceptions of teachers' roles and identities over different historical periods;
2. an examination of the nature of teacher professional knowledge;
3. an exploration of the influence of particular models of teacher education curricula in favouring particular conceptions of teachers' roles, identities and knowledge;
4. an exposition of the nature of teacher preparation in the context of rapidly changing social contexts.

The above focal areas are all located within the research tradition variously named teacher thinking, teacher learning, teacher decision-making, teacher knowledge, teacher socialisation or teacher identity and role formation (Freeman: 1996; Kennedy: 1991). The literature was surveyed in order to provide the conceptual platform to build the research data collection plan for this study, to develop the research instruments used in this study, as well as provide the basis for the data analysis strategies employed.


These chosen focal areas arise as a response to the targeted critical research question of this study, which is directed towards an understanding of student teachers' experiences of the process of becoming teachers. This research question concentrates on the process of socialisation into the role and identity of a teacher of English over different periods of the student teachers' lives. Student teachers develop experiences of English language teaching and learning in relation to the specific educational landscape within which they are embedded. These landscapes are characterised by the complex intersection of social, political, historical and economic influences, which are unique to each context. In the first section of this chapter, I trace a socio-historical analysis of how the conceptions of teachers' roles and identities have been influenced by the dominant research traditions of educational research agendas.

Section One concentrates on an international comparative study of teacher education research which has framed conceptions of teacher identity in particular ways, contrary and parallel to the portrayal of teachers in the South African context.

Section Two explores a theoretical proposition about the nature of teacher professional knowledge. It argues that "teacher knowledge" consists of several domains most of which are unarticulated by teachers themselves. These domains of knowledge are usually acquired below the level of conscious awareness. This research study is an attempt to get STs to articulate the process of acquiring professional knowledge, thereby providing insight into the process of becoming a teacher.

Section Three surveys literature around models of teacher education curricula, focussing on how different curricula emphasise different conceptions of the kind of teacher they purpose to produce. Each teacher education institution also foregrounds certain domains of teacher knowledge above others. The powerful influence of the teacher education institution in framing student teachers' conceptions of their roles and identities as teachers is also explored.

- The first three sections of this chapter are presented in different "movements" of a sonata on teacher development. This sonata attempts to answer the following focus questions:



1. A Systemic and Historical Analysis of Teacher Roles and Identities: The First Movement: Allegro:

How can the changing roles and identities of teachers over the last four decades be described?

What are the possible forces of influence affecting such a changing conception of teachers' roles and identities?

2. The Nature of Teacher Professional Knowledge: The Second Movement: Moderato

How can teacher knowledge be described?

How does one activate teacher professional knowledge?

3. Models of Teacher Education Curricula: The Third Movement: Largo

What kind of teacher roles, identity and knowledge do different teacher education curriculum models favour and promote?


Section Four (Finale) draws on the understandings from the literature surveyed in the first three sections and presents a tentative model for analysing student teachers' development within the context of a rapidly changing educational scenario. This model served as the framework for the rest of the research process of this study.

The literature surveyed in this chapter draws heavily on recent research on teacher thinking. This selected research has focussed in general terms on the process of developing teachers' conceptions of their identities and roles as teachers. It consciously overlooks the research tradition of Applied Linguistics research, which focuses exclusively on the development of language teachers. I made this decision to concentrate on the general research tradition into teacher development in order to provide an alternative vantagepoint from which to view the process of teacher's developing conceptions of their identity as teachers of English. This vantagepoint is largely uncharacteristic of the research tradition on teacher education in South Africa. I believe that this orientation could fuel new insights into the process of becoming teachers of the English language.

It should be noted that I conceptualise " (student) teacher identity" as including the following:

- (student) teachers' understanding of their own biographical history of (English language) teaching and learning, developed within specific contextual socio-historical educational landscapes;
- (student) teachers' understanding of what knowledge is needed to execute their professional practice;
- (student) teachers' understanding of what roles they need to execute as professional teachers;
- (student) teachers' understanding of the function they play in developing their learners' competence in the subject they teach (in this study: the English language) and the contribution that learning could make towards their learners' own development.

In South Africa there has been an under-representation of research focusing on the micro-level processes of teacher education. The dominant research paradigm tradition in this field has focussed on what Wideen and Grimmet (1995) refer to as research into the "restructuring of teacher education". The agenda of such research is characterised by its focus on broad macro-issues related to the provision of teacher education, the development of appropriate governance structures to regulate the teacher education sector, the influence of local and international politics on the teacher education sector and the search for relevant teacher education policies reflecting the preferred ideologies of its proponents. Research in this tradition also foregrounds the participation rates of different social groupings within the society: e.g. different racial groups, genders, individuals from different geographic settings, etc.



The teacher education research tradition in South Africa has been an accomplice to the iniquitous apartheid education system used to marginalise and oppress certain groups of individuals within the society. Research from within and outside this framework understandably therefore, focussed on "restructuring" concerns. This research tradition is best reflected in the kind of macro-scale research reports of the mass democratic movement in the early 1990's. The National Policy Initiative (NEPI: 1992) was specifically commissioned to present policy options in the run up to the democratic elections. The NEPI: Teacher Education report (ibid.) is an example of this tradition focussing on "restructuring teacher education". This dominant research tradition continues into post-apartheid South Africa with its focus on developing a governance system to establish a more just and equitable provision of teacher development. The 1995 COTEP policy focuses on the attempt to develop national norms and standards for the accreditation of teacher education curriculum. The National Teacher Education Audit (DOE:1996) attempted to provide an analysis of the status quo of teacher education curriculum programmes and providers of teacher education (See Hofmeyer and Hall: 1996). The more recent 1997 teacher education policy discussion document (Department of Education: 1997c) is also preoccupied with fashioning a systemic model for teacher education in line with the vision to develop a co-ordinated education and training system for post-apartheid South Africa. The above research all reflect a quest to improve the quality of teacher education by exploring the necessary systemic structures which would enable quality teacher development.

Wideen and Grimmet (1995) describe a second tradition within teacher education research as attempting to "reconceptualise teacher education". This tradition attempts to provide a micro-level analysis of the processes of student teacher development by providing in-depth accounts of the teaching/ learning processes that are engaged in within teacher education institutions. It looks at how student teachers (PRESET) and practising teachers (INSET) develop conceptions about the nature of teacher competence. It attempts to evaluate the impact of teacher education curricula on the development of teachers' identities.

Research in the South African tradition focussing on the teacher as an agent of teaching and learning is sadly under-explored. When the teachers were the subjects of research, it was usually framed to mourn their disempowered status or inability to interpret curriculum policies into action.


Clearly, a gap exists within the South African educational research agenda. Educational research has neglected to focus on how teachers make sense of their own practices and how teachers acquire understanding of their roles and identities as knowledgeable professionals.

A refocusing on the teaching /learning process has become the agenda of researchers particularly within the arena of Science and Mathematics teaching (See Reddy: 1995 for an analysis of the research output of the South African Association of Mathematics and Science Education: SAARMSE conferences). However, this research is limited because of two concerns:

1. it tends to look at classrooms largely from the perspective of how learners make sense of the classroom activity;
2. it overemphasises its constructivist roots by looking at the teaching/learning processes as a set of cognitive psychological processes, e.g. its preoccupation with problem-solving techniques.

Hobden (1995) begins to address the concern for understanding not only pupils, but also teachers' own decision-making processes in the classroom. His research focuses on what meaning teachers themselves attach to the actions they perform when engaging their pupils in problem-solving activities.

Other research agendas are beginning to foreground the role of the teacher as an individual agent. Emerging research is being conducted into how educational managers interpret their role as school leaders (Joseph: 1998) in the changing context of post-apartheid South Africa. Gokar (1998) presents research conducted in KwaZulu-Natal, about teachers' perceptions about the involvement of parents in school governance. This research may be said to be located within the attempt to



understand educators' roles and engagement with schooling at a managerial level in relation to school governance. It does not focus on the teachers' conceptions of their engagement within the classroom itself. Cele's (1998) study attempts to uncover teachers' attitudes towards their professional conduct within the classroom. His study reports on various perceptions of stakeholders, including teachers themselves, about what constitutes professional teacher conduct.

None of the above studies probe deeply into how teachers make sense of their daily teaching/ learning processes and what range of forces influence their teaching actions. What teachers understand as their role and identity as teacher is underexplored. What constitutes their knowledge base, has been largely ignored.

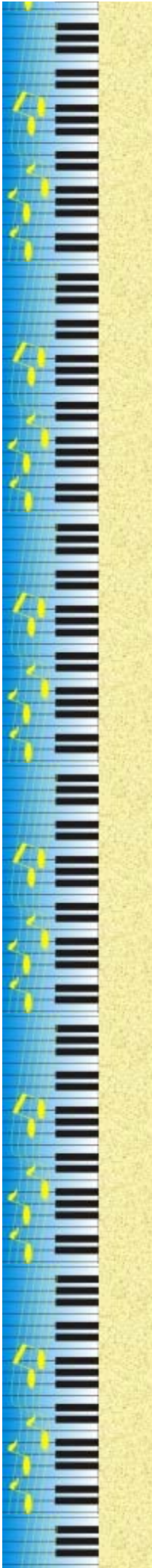
An exception to this generalisation is evident in the research of Modiba who focuses on South African Black teachers' perceptions about their practice in Soweto schools. She concludes that "in general Black teachers concede to the conditions of their work-setting rather than challenge and resist those they regard as obstructive to their role as educators" (1996: 131). Teachers profess ideological stances towards their practice, which are often not carried forward into the actual practices. This, they (teachers) suggest, is as a consequence of having to meet everyday "common-sense concerns" (ibid.) They thereby, legitimate the existing patterns within the school structures, which serve to perpetuate the poor performance amongst their learners.

The findings of Modiba's study are reinforced by the preliminary investigation of this research study into the "Rituals of Disempowerment" (Samuel: 1997) which reported on the patterns of maintaining existing routines and ritualised practices within the school context in the wider Durban area (Chapter One: Section 3.4.2).

Besides the lack of research on the above concerns, there is a dearth of South African research into the decision-making strategies used during the process of becoming teachers, for example, in the context of student teachers' developing an understanding of their roles, identities and knowledge during a teacher preparation programme.

Research in the area of "reconceptualising teacher education" is nevertheless, slowly developing within South Africa:

- Ntshingila-Khosa (1995) in her report presented to the "Improving Educational Quality Project", describes the interpretations student teachers made about their actions within 22 Soweto classrooms. She concludes that there is a disjuncture between what STs prefer their pupils to do in their classrooms, and their observed pedagogical actions, which did not consistently invite such pupils' participation. Research in progress includes the kind of work being carried out by Vithal (1998c) tracing the way in which Mathematics student teachers interpret a particular theory of Mathematics teaching/ learning into their classroom. She foregrounds the meanings that STs themselves attach to their own activities. These research agendas bode well for furthering the focus away from only a macro-analysis emphasis in teacher education.
 - Recent research presented at the international conference on teacher education held at UDW during the course of this research study in 1998 ("International Trends in Teacher Education: Politics, Policy and Practice") signal this emerging research tradition on teacher thinking in the South Africa:
1. Burkett (1998) outlines the need for the recognition of teachers' prior learning and their articulation of teaching/learning concepts in an in-service teacher education programme at the University of Port Elizabeth. She argues that teacher development is better realised when teachers themselves are able to critically examine their own practices.
 2. Jackson and Stileau (1998) explore the use of autobiographical writing of teachers about their experiences of developing literacy to promote in-service teachers' self-affirmation, self-reflection and professional development of their classroom practice.
 3. Keogh (1998) reflects on the collaborative ideals to be forged between university lecturers, resident teachers (mentors) and STs during the school-



based practicum of a pre-service course.

4. Stein (1998) reports on the value of cross-cultural understanding and reflexivity when engaging student teachers in a dramatic performance to explore their literate lifehistories.

All of these studies are indicative of the desire to refocus teacher education research in South Africa on the reconceptualisation of teacher development.

The focus area of my research study concerning the nature and development of teacher knowledge of pre-service student teachers of English is located within the reconceptualisation of teacher education research paradigm.

#17 [Reflective Journal](#): (1998) "Reflective Journal of Educator: Harold Samuel over a period of 48 years : i.e. 1951 – 1998"

[Click here to view Reflective Journal](#)

Developing Teachers' Roles, Identities and Knowledge: Sonata: On Becoming a Teacher

Each historical era is characterised by particular arrangements regarding their social, political, economic and educational order. Individuals within each era reflect and mediate these patterns / trends in the way in which they organise and understand their daily actions. Consequently, they tend to develop particular conceptions about who they are and what roles they play in that society. Teachers also tend to present particular conceptions of their roles and identities within any given historical period.

In Section One I shall present a particular perspective on the broad conceptual trends of teachers' roles and identities over four decades from the 1960's to the late 1990's. These descriptions arise out of the research literature on educational trends within these different periods both in the international and South African context. The dominant agendas of educational research in the international and national contexts are the lens through which this analysis of teachers' roles and identities is viewed.


As with all historical periodisations, this discussion reflects a study of broad trends, which mask the exceptions to the pattern being suggested. Also, to homogenise all teachers as a single cultural entity within any historical period is problematic given the individual teacher differences and interpretations of their contexts.

As a testimony to the belief that teachers' voices should be heard within the realm of research, I have included as a parallel text to this chapter (on the left-hand pages) the reflective journal of my father, Harold Samuel, who traces the experiences, priorities and critical appraisal of his teaching / education career that has spanned 48 years. His reflective journal bears witness to him being regarded as a stalwart in educational circles. His authentic voice captured in his own handwriting acts as a foil against the more traditional academic style I have used on the right hand side pages. It also serves to present another voice on the interpretation of teachers' roles and identities in South Africa.

Section One functions as a sonata of words and ideas on teacher development. A sonata represents a particular tradition of classical music, which is marked by accepted conventions about its organisation, structure and character. A musical sonata is described as a composition, which is created to highlight the potency, subtleties and attributes of chiefly one individual instrument (for example, the piano), or the relative combinations and contrasts between two instruments (for example, the piano and the violin). The sonata is normally characterised by two or three movements which are contrasted in rhythm and speed to reflect the potential of the focal instrument/s.

The overall composition is usually related in the same musical key offering an integrated musical experience. This chapter is an attempt to listen to musical strains from two contexts represented by two different musical instruments:

1. the Piano: reflecting the literature from the international contexts beyond

- 
- South Africa ("musical strains from afar")
2. the Violin: reflecting on the combinations and contrasts of local/ national South African research ("musical strains from near").

Each of the sub-sections of this sonata are marked by musical notation and convention reflecting the overall tone, rhythm, speed of the presentation of the musical performance (e.g. allegro, moderato). In the text that follows I have presented at the beginning of each sub-section, the musical notation reflecting the manner in which the performance of each of the sub-sections of the text is to be rendered. Co-incidentally the tones, rhythms and speed of the different sections that I have marked depicting the tone of the educational research discussed reflects an uncanny semblance to the traditional markings attached to classical sonata compositions.

This sonata also explores the key concerns of reconceptualising teacher education and focuses on three such areas:

Section One: the changing conceptions of teachers' roles and identities;

Section Two: the nature of teacher professional teaching knowledge;

Section Three: a review of how different models of teacher education curricula favour and promote particular conceptions of teachers' roles and identities, and teacher knowledge.

Section One: Systemic and Historical Analysis of Teacher Identities and Roles:

The First Movement: Allegro

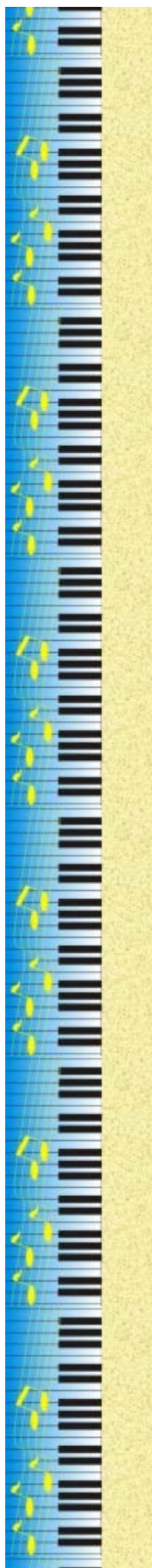
- *How can the changing identities and roles of teachers over the last four decades be described?*
- *What are the possible forces of influence affecting such a changing conception of teachers' roles and identities?*

In this section (the first movement) I shall trace the changing conceptions of teacher identities and roles over four decades focusing on:

- the particular paradigmatic perspectives of educational research within each era;
- a comparison between the conceptions of teachers' roles and identities over these different eras:

in the international context (represented in the voice of the Piano)

in the national context (represented in the voice of the Violin).



*became cited more popularly during this period

	Paradigmatic Perspective	International Perspectives concerning the role / identity of the teacher	South African Perspectives concerning the role / identity of the teacher	Research Emphases	Examples of some of the researchers conducting research in this field
1960's	Technocratic Perspective Behaviourist Empiricist Positivist	Teachers as villains (Poor student achievement)	Teachers as technicians of State driven ideologies	Restructuring Teacher Education Large scale macro-sociological analysis of schooling School effectiveness movement Human capital theory	Tyler (1949) Coleman (1988)
1970's	Cultural Perspective Interpretative Hermeneutic	Teachers as victims (of circumstances, context)	Teachers as political liberators	Reconceptualising Teacher Education Micro contextual analysis of schools Apprenticeship of observation Evolutionary theory of socialisation Psychoanalytical model of teacher identity	Stephens (1987) Wright and Tuckie (1987, 1988) Lurie (1975) Shulman and Elstein (1975) Gutelle (1977)
1980's	Radical Perspective Critical Pedagogy	Teachers as individual thinkers Teachers as researchers	Teachers as agents of alternative education	Reconceptualising Teacher Education (extended) Teacher decision-making Action Research Scholarship Research Collaborative Research	Eliot (1985) Carr and Kemmis (1986) Zachner et al. (1987) Goldhead (1987) Atcher et al. (1993)
1990's	Synthesis Hermeneutic Radical Postmodern	Teachers as complex, contradictory individuals	Teachers as reconstructionists Teachers as change agents Teachers as curriculum developers	Reconceptualising and Restructuring of Teacher Education The complexity of postmodern society, knowledge Rapidly changing social context	Kennedy (1991) Goodson (1992) Knowles (1992) Sugrue (1998) Freeman (1998) Johnson (1998) Hansen (1997)

Table 3:
Summary of Systemic and Historical Analysis of Teacher Knowledge, Identities and Roles

[Click here to view full size version of Table 3](#)

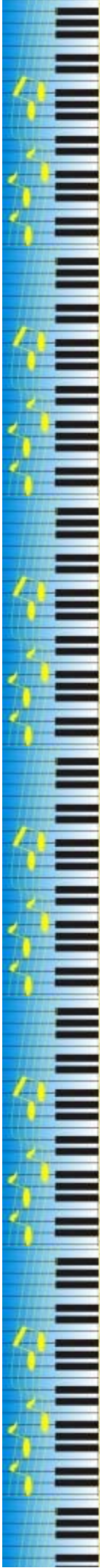
Table 3 represents a schematic summary of the argument being developed in this section. It outlines the broad paradigmatic perspectives of teacher education research during the four decades under review. It outlines the impact of the dominant technocratic perspective of the 1960's on teachers being framed as villains because they were not able to guarantee good pupil learning achievements (international context) and as technicians of State driven ideologies (South African context). The cultural interpretative perspective of the 1970's saw a more sympathetic view of the teachers as victims of the social circumstances within which they operated (international perspective). By contrast, the SA context was characterised by the mobilisation of the teachers under the campaign of political liberation. In both the local and international contexts the research emphasis of teacher education during this era was characterised by focus on broad macro-level systemic adjustments to ensure "re-structuring of teacher education". The radical pedagogy era of the 1980's influenced international teachers to re-conceptualise their role as shapers of their own destiny. This took the form of teachers being promoted to exercise their research skills (international context) and become vociferous in their role as agents of an alternative education system (South African perspective). The 1990's under the influence of post-modernism, tends to reflect a more eclectic research emphasis, borrowing from both the systemic "restructuring" and "re-conceptualising" research traditions. A more detailed description of these trends follows in the section below.

The 1960's

Piano: forte (loud)

The 1960's were characterised by the need for education policy-makers in the first world to develop more public accountability in the light of major research findings, which questioned seriously whether schools matter. Jansen (1995:181) suggests that this research agenda (which came to be named 'the schools effectiveness movement') "traces its origins of the subject to the 1966 study by James Coleman and his colleagues, the so-called Equality of Educational Opportunity Report (Coleman et al.: 1966)". In this report serious indictments were made against schools which were not able to make notable differences in student outcomes. The effects of socio-economic status and family background were argued to be powerful determinants of school achievement. This era of pessimism resulted in large-scale curriculum initiatives being led by consortiums of businesses and State Departments of Education. Headstart, Operation Upgrade are examples of the kind of preoccupation with the need to provide the United States education system with teacher-proof materials to elevate the effectiveness of schools (Schubert: 1986).

This movement was influenced by macro-sociological analysis that tended to represent the school as an agent of human capital development. Schooling was seen as a social process where engineering of the outputs of the educational process was regarded as a desirable and possible goal. The dominance of the Tyler Rationale (1949) amongst curriculum development models is testimony to the



belief that it was possible, with a fair amount of certainty, to design, produce, and evaluate the desired output amongst learners. This output was believed to be reachable if accompanied by the necessary resource input (e.g. lowering of pupil-teacher ratios, provision of classrooms, textbooks etc). This became the manifesto of many international development agencies in their funding of projects within the third world around educational development, despite the glaring differences in educational contexts and resources of the first and third worlds. Jansen (1995: 195) suggests the schools effectiveness paradigm was supported

*"not only on the development of a coherent research agenda by academics, and the support of practitioners for adopting such an agenda for implementation, but also on the generation of **large scale funding support** from the international development agencies" (emphasis added).*

The simplistic input-output analyses of schools were being exported to the third world without recognition of the complexities that occur within classrooms in varying socio-cultural contexts. Jansen (ibid.) proposes an alternative model of an education quality paradigm to counteract the pervasive influence of such educational research initiatives.

This kind of macro-level analysis of schooling had the effect of conceptualising the teacher as a cog in the machinery of educational provision. The research priority was on student learning and achievement, and the teacher was perceived of as merely the agent of delivery of the subject matter to the student population. Freeman (1996) argues that within such a paradigm of education, teaching is seen as a "means of delivery of subject matter, rather than an activity unto itself" (ibid.: 355). A more sociological analysis of the status of the teacher is offered by Giroux (1987) who argued that the consequence of "teacher-proof curricula" was to effectively disregard the value of teachers' expertise as "intellectuals" and this transformed them into a deprofessionalised labour force. The clear separation between the "thinkers" (conceptualisers of the curriculum) and the "doers" (teachers) resulted in the objectification of the teacher, a de-personalised voice.

It was also an era which tended to frame the teachers as the villains: the ones who were unable to deliver the quality of education which resulted in underachievement of school pupils (Goodson: 1992). The teachers were also seen as agents of externally driven models of educational initiatives and were technicians in delivering State / Business / Funding agencies' goals and missions.

Violin: ***Largo e mesto (broadly and sadly)***

Within the South African educational scenario the interest in human capital theory resulted in the apartheid educational authorities appropriating its tenets to serve the ideologies of a separatist cultural philosophy. It was seen as possible and desirable to organise the delivery of education to service the manpower needs of the country stratified along racial lines. The philosophy of separate development of the different racial groups was presented as a means of "cultural affirmation". However, the government's conception of racial supremacy of the White race group led to a kind of social engineering which legislated restriction of access of other race groups to the kinds of privileged domains for which White children were being groomed.

All teachers, irrespective of race, were nevertheless subjected to the centrally driven legislations for education, which effectively treated them as agents of State ideology. The glaring disparities of provision of education between the different race groups were merely an overlay on an essentially disempowered teaching labour force. Those opposed to the oppressive discrimination of different race groups reacted against teaching being seen as a coerced collaboration with State thinking. The struggle for the voice of the teacher in this context thus became not only a struggle to elevate their professional status as educators, but also a part of the political struggle.

Of course, there were those who willingly collaborated with the State driven educational oppression. These teachers were those (across racial lines) who were beneficiaries of the kind of obsequience that such subservience required.

Nevertheless, they became willing participants in their own oppression.

Piano: **Forzando** (*forcing the tone*)

The research agenda characteristic of the 1960's was also constrained by the need to elevate educational investigations into the realm of "serious scientific research". It became characterised by a strong empiricist and positivist preoccupation with emulating the then dominant natural science model of research.

Freeman (1996) notes that educational research within this era is characterised by a process-product research paradigm. He suggests that with the dominance of this research paradigm, teaching is "(cast) in terms of behaviours and activities that could be studied, quantified, and assessed via learning outcomes" (ibid.:353). His diagrammatic representation of the process-product research paradigm is worth exploring in more depth (See Figure 7).

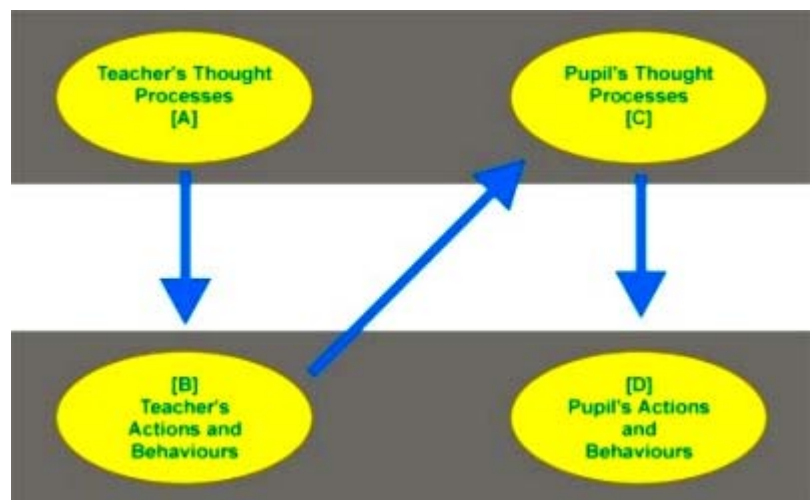



Figure 7: The Process-Product Research Paradigm (Freeman: 1996: 354)

He argues that the teaching-learning processes are conceptualised as follows: the teacher's thought processes lead to the actions/practices in their classrooms (A to B); these actions results in stimulating pupil's thought processes (B to C) which result in the actions and behaviours of pupils (D). The research paradigm of the process-product paradigm confines itself to the public world of actions and behaviours and uses this public domain (B and D) to make inferences of the underlying cognitive processes of teachers and pupils (A and C). In this dominant framework of research of the positivist/ behaviouristic stance, the teachers' thinking is of little or no real concern, since the priority is on learners' outcomes. "To consider teaching independently (of learners' outcomes), and to examine fully the connections between teacher's mental processes (A) and her actions (B), required a newly articulated research aim " (ibid.: 1996: 355). Such challenge in achieving this research aim Freeman argues is in part socio-political, and in part conceptual and methodological. (See discussion of methodological conceptions later in Chapter Three.)

The 1970's

Violin: *Allegro animato* (*fast and animated*)

The 1970's were an era characterised by the growing resistance to apartheid education in South Africa. The historical events surrounding the Soweto Uprising of students in 1976 are internationally remembered as a unique occasion where students were prepared to lay down their lives in their campaign for a more just education system. The actions of students spurred teachers to accept the role as political liberators. Teachers became voluble about their dissatisfaction with being functionaries of the State, about meting out poor quality education, about preparing Black pupils to service the needs of a cheap labour force for industry and



commerce. "Liberation before Education" became their rallying cry. (See Chapter 1: Linoleum Print).

This awakening spirit of the teaching force may be said to have emerged largely amongst the Black oppressed. Most White teachers were comforted by their exclusion from (and exposure to) the difficulties of a deliberately designed oppressive education system. The Black teaching force within this context therefore became preoccupied with basic conditions of service, basic provision of resources, the harassment of the State apparatuses within the schooling system, the arrest and detention of teachers and students. The era was characterised by a charged political instability as Black teachers and pupils came to openly reject any form of State driven formal schooling. This opposition was evident in the numerous confrontations between the State apparatus and the schooling communities of teachers and pupils. The development of teacher unions as rallying forums against apartheid education became evident (See Nasson and Samuel: 1990).


Piano: ***Adantino (at a moderate pace moving along)***

In the context of the USA and the UK the impetus for assertion of the teachers' voice took on a less public and overtly political form. Influential writers like Lortie (1975) in "Schoolteacher: a Sociological Study" paved the way for a more concerted effort to refocus the agenda of research within the context of the classrooms. Lortie argued that teaching was a "complex cognitive activity where individuals learn, shape and are shaped by the activity of teaching" (in Freeman: 1996). His most influential contribution was made around an analysis of the sustaining impact of the unconscious learning that pupils were imbibing during their schooling years. He called this learning an "apprenticeship of observation" which he regarded as the imprinting on the minds of learners of what they internalised and came to believe about what teaching is, and about what the identities and role of teachers are, or ought to be.

Zeichner, Tabachnick and Densmore (1987) in Calderhead (1987) suggest that learners acquire understanding of what is teachers' knowledge through other means outside the classroom as well. The theories of writers, Stephens (1967) and Wright and Tuska (1967, 1968), in the late sixties were resurrected during the campaign to raise the voice and influence of the teachers. Stephens proposed an "evolutionary theory" to account for how individuals learn what is teaching knowledge: as human beings we are constantly correcting one another, constantly telling each other what we know, pointing out moral dilemmas and answering questions. "These tendencies," says Feiman-Nemser (1983) "have been acquired over the centuries and are lived out in families and classrooms. Thus, children learn not only what they are told by parents and teachers, they also learn to be teachers" (in Zeichner et al.: 1987).

Wright & Tuska (1967, 1968) outlined a "psychoanalytical" explanation for how we learn about the nature of teacher knowledge. They suggest that the strong bonds of identification that children establish with their adult teachers help develop sustained schemas (mental images) concerning conceptions about not only what it means to be an adult, but also simultaneously what it means to be a teacher.

These above theories of being socialised into the conceptions of what constitutes teacher knowledge, behaviour, action, identities and roles nevertheless, bear the hallmarks of their historical era. A deterministic ring seems to accompany this research agenda which aims to "resurrect" the teacher from his or her villain status (early sixties) to a kind of "victim status". Britzman (1991) notes the overly functionalist characteristic of this research which tends to valorise the teachers as subjects in their own right, who are at the mercy of systemic forces controlling their oppressed and disempowered status. Goodson (1992) outlines the research era of the seventies as one which attempts to foreground the constraints under which teachers work, but which nevertheless could potentially "ceremonialise the exposure of the private individual", or provide a kind of "identification with the downtrodden". He discards the criticism that such research was a home for the radical left, since he argues that much of this research in attempting to make the personal political, did not in fact analyse sufficiently the systemic structures that thwarted individual teachers. He argues that this is a period of research where the aim was to develop spaces for teachers (not researchers) to be able to open up their voices to the



academic world. In this respect the development of the research of teacher thinking is seen to be a form of "counter-culture". Ironically educational researchers, and not teachers themselves, were the dominant voices being heard during this period.

In the USA, the National Institute of Education sanctioned the work of Shulman and Elstein (1975) who challenged the deterministic nature of research into teacher thinking. Shulman's work elevated understanding of how teaching might be seen as a "clinical decision-making endeavour". This research focused on the value of teachers' "own description of how he or she constructs the reality of his (sic) classroom, of what was done and why, and of how the students are taught, and how he or she feels about them" (NIE: 1975: 3 in Freeman: 1996). In the UK, the work of Sutcliffe (1977) was campaigning the need for emic/insider perspectives on education, counteracting the early conceptions of the research which saw schooling and teachers as relatively stable, predictable and regular.

The 1980's

Piano: allegretto (fairly fast)

The 1980's may be seen as an era of expansion of the platform laid by the research into teacher decision making. Such a research agenda had raised awareness about the need to re-look at the processes of teaching and learning not in terms of a set of dependent and independent variables to plot on a regression analysis. Instead, it aimed to provide explanations of what the nature of teaching / learning practices are, and how teachers understood these practices. Halkes and Olson (1984:1) comment: "Instead of reducing the complexities of teaching/learning situations into a few manageable research variables, one tries to find out how teachers cope with these complexities." The research resulted in providing insights into teachers' views and experiences of their own worlds.

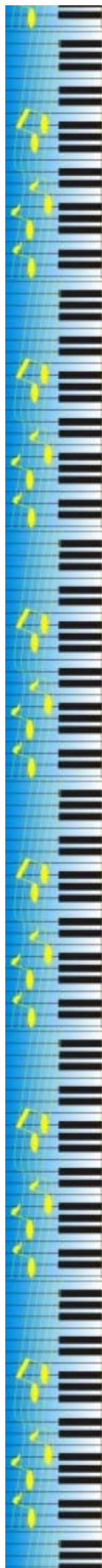
The research paradigm thus became sensitive to the nuances of particular school sites. Exemplars of this highly contextual analyses of schools, teachers and learners is conveyed in a publication entitled "Portraits of High Schools: A supplement to High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America" (Perrone and Associates 1985). It reports on a cross section of American public secondary education providing powerful descriptions of thirteen widely dispersed schools: large and small; urban, suburban, and rural; comprehensive and specialised; rich and poor; homogeneous and culturally and racially mixed. The research paradigm raised sensitivity to the highly contextual nature of teaching, acknowledging that teachers were likely to form vastly different personal conceptions of their roles and identities as teachers in relation to the particular ecology of the school contexts within which they had acquired their craft knowledge of teaching (Zeichner et al.: 1987).

The research methodology of lifehistory research became popular during this upsurge of focus on the contextual nature of schooling and teaching. The process of co-construction of the life stories of teachers was seen as a means of developing collaborative ventures between the traditionally elevated ivory towered academic researchers and the marginalised teaching force. This era is also noted for its emphasis on developing teachers as researchers (See Alritcher: 1993) and campaigns for the value of action research (Elliot: 1985; Carr and Kemmis:1986). A distinctly interpretative and hermeneutic characteristic seemed to dominate amongst the western countries (e.g. UK and the USA) promoting such research, whereas countries such as Australia were arguing for a kind of research paradigm of action research more in line with theories of radical pedagogy.

Freeman (1996:362) highlights the inherent drawbacks of research into teacher decision making:

"While the clarity and neutrality of decision making as a construct is very useful, it is worth noting its limitations. These fall into three principal areas: the fixed nature of decision making as an a priori construct, the lack of attention to socio-cognitive contexts of decisions, and the potential to overlook language as both the substance and the research vehicle for decision making."

The late eighties may be said to be characterised by the need to provide a more



socio-cognitive analysis of the teacher in specific contexts. Its aim was to encourage teachers

to research their own work as an attempt for them to develop ownership and explanation of the concepts being raised about teaching as an endeavour, practice and career. The difficulty of using language to access thought will be dealt with in Chapter Three: Section Three (that is, the exploration of alternative techniques to gain access to teachers' thoughts as well as relook at forms of data analysis which could generate qualitative understandings of teachers' thinking).

Violin: ***Vivacissimo (very lively)***


In the South African context the need for a more radical pedagogy was being argued as the forces of the mass democratic movement against apartheid were being mobilised. Teachers became part of the collaborative forces of academics, trade unionists and students who were intent on toppling the State apartheid regime. Rather than completely disregard the value of education (the seventies perspective), education was promoted as being the only weapon for liberation. Teachers were being asked to serve the interests of bringing about social justice and democracy.

The development of what came to be known as "People's Education" was seen as an alternative to the State delivered curriculum. However, their campaigns for asserting their political voice were not entirely successful. The failure of widespread adoption of the ideals of People's Education ("People's Education for People's Power") can be traced to several factors, amongst them being the conscious subjugation by State forces of its proponents, the lack of resources to fuel its broadcasting, the internal debates about whose ideology it represented (See Soobrayan: 1989; Wolpe: 1991). Nevertheless, the campaigns of the teachers under apartheid oppression became both a political and an educational struggle.

The identities and roles of teachers were not necessarily being forged as a consequence of traditionally written documents as is characteristic of the western tradition of educational research. The education of the teacher took the form of largely an oral discourse as teacher activists, academics, trade unionists, politicians used the platform of the many resistance meetings to educate and be educated by its public. Perhaps this legacy of oral discourse still prevails in the nineties amongst teachers who have come to value the immediacy of academic oral debate garnered in the sites of public meetings. The scepticism of formal written academic research is understandable also because it was usually the prerogative of privileged (White) researchers in the South African context.

Piano: ***Largo (broadly)***

Knowles (1992) in his survey of the research on teacher thinking identifies the proliferation that emerges within the international developed world contexts in the eighties. For example: Zeichner and Grant (1981) commented on the "washed out effect of university teacher education programmes" since newly qualified teachers were within a short period of service in the profession reverting to "teaching as they were taught". The two year longitudinal study concluded that teacher educational programmes had minimal impact on the teaching practices of newly qualified teachers and that more attention should be paid to the biographical heritages that students bring with them to the teacher education institution. Woods (1986) studied the kinds of strategies that novice teachers developed to cope with the survival demands of a highly complex school culture. The abstract conceptions of teaching methodologies learnt at teacher education institutions are mediated and often counteracted by powerful constraining variables from within the school. Calderhead (1984) noted the high levels of anxiety that novice teachers' experience during their early years of teaching. Barone (1987) provided insight into why new recruits to teacher education want to become teachers; these motivations are then traced to their biographical history. Again the powerful influence of significant teachers and adult role models are seen as important shaping parameters in defining student teachers' conceptions of the role and identity of a teacher. Numerous studies around teacher identity abound in this era: Martinez (1987) documented the impact of teaching styles of university teacher educators in shaping conceptions of what constitutes teacher knowledge; Munro (1987) explored the



impact of personal biography on teacher confidence, relationship with pupils, personal disposition to planning and organisation skills; Crow (1987) commented on the possibility for teacher education institutions to modify the student teachers' identity and become agents of influence within their socialisation into schools. Ball and Goodson (1985) provide a summary of the research into teacher biographies in their book entitled "Teachers' Lives and Careers".

The 1990's

Piano: *Sostenuto (sustained)*

Whilst the above research may be seen as having adequately covered the field of research into teacher thinking, its nature and development, questions about the fundamental conceptions of what constitutes the challenges facing the production /development of teachers in the 1990's emerged as a consequence. The era has become concerned with what kind of curriculum should be engaged in, in order to develop the quality of "personal practical knowledge" of teachers, what kinds of "lay theories of teaching" abide in the schooling system, what kinds of public metaphors for teaching exist within a cultural domain which influence the development of "culturally embedded archetypes of the teacher" (Sugrue: 1996). Ndawi (1997) in the context of analysing Zimbabwean teacher education argues that there is need not only to examine the issues around the quantity and quality of teacher education provision in the light of goals for universal primary education, but also to examine questions about the relevance of the particular kind of educational policy reform for the specific contexts of, for example, the realities of third world developing African nations. He argues against the structure of schooling which promotes an unrealistic (?irrelevant) expectation that academic (formal) education is its exclusive target. The need for pupils to acquire the technical and technological skills necessary in the development of the country is seen as a more important agenda for teacher education. The preparation of teachers to service these "relevant concerns" he suggests ought to take stock of what kinds of activities will scholars need to engage in during adult life. His analysis suggests that the agenda for teacher development and schooling is usually being framed by the interests of external agencies, such as international funders and donors. There is also a need to recognise the kinds of "demands of tomorrow" which teacher education institutions should address. For example, the issues regarding the kind of economic development plans that a country chooses has impact on the kind of "labour force" (their knowledge, skills, attitudes, values) that is desired. Asking these questions will necessarily involve re-questioning the traditional roles and identities of teachers.

Kennedy (1991) in drawing an agenda for future research on teacher learning at the National Center for Teacher Learning in the USA boldly comments on the need for research into teacher development and teacher thinking to be cogniscant of the complex set of new demands being placed on the teacher in the 1990's. The teachers' task includes being able to address the needs of a growingly more diverse student population, a more sophisticated (and complex) expansion of knowledge in relation to subject matter, the availability (in a variety of forms) of new knowledge which STs themselves were not exposed to in their schooling. The public's expectations of schooling have increased in the light of a global society, which draws less rigidly demarcated boundaries of cultural and national knowledge and experiences. She argues that the new teacher will have to be able not only to develop a deeper and richer understanding of the tentativeness of knowledge, but also educate the new generation about how to access such information. Learning to teach cannot simply be confined to the development of appropriate methodologies, which can be demonstrated during a teaching practice field experience. The demands and opportunities of an increasingly heterogeneous multilingual/multicultural classroom will need to become a prime concern when teachers serve communities where this phenomenon is the growing norm.

Tattoo (1997b) reflecting on her experiences of working with alternative models of teacher development in Colombia and Mexico suggests that there is need for a model of teacher development, which stresses a "transformative" emphasis. In her model for teacher development, the role and identity of the teacher will need to be expanded beyond "custodians of cultural transmission" to becoming agents of

active intellectual engagement collaboratively working with members of the education community (teacher colleagues, students, student teachers, pupils, administrators, managers, the community and teacher educators) in order to realise the goals of social justice, respect for diversity and democracy.

Zeichner et al. (1987:24) reviewing the earlier research of the eighties commented that "the nature of (teacher) knowledge needs to be viewed as more complex and subtle than has typically been the case". They caution against the kind of research which attempts to box teacher's "craft knowledge" (ibid.) into convenient psychological typologies and dichotomies, like "progressivist/ traditional; formal/informal; custodial/humanistic". They suggest that the new research agenda of teacher knowledge should avoid this reductionism since it is likely that teachers will, as members of a complex and contradictory modern (post-modern) society, reflect more inconsistencies and contradictions about their assumed identity, their professed identity, their identity in action. The signals are raised about admitting that schools are complex sites: that there is likely to be several diverse teaching cultures and attitudes to teacher knowledge within one school, one subject area of specialists within the school, even within an individual teacher. It is towards this level of complexity that research in the nineties should turn. My own research agenda is therefore, partly a response to this flagstaff. (Specifically, I choose to focus not on teachers who are within the school, but on teachers in the making, i.e. student teachers).

In extending debates around the need to recognise the complexity of teacher's knowledge, Knowles (1992) presents a model to highlight the role of individual agency. He suggests that the process of identity formation and role as a teacher is a process of individual negotiation in relation to one's biography and the kind of school environment within which novice teaching experience is gained. He still places the individual at the centre of making choices in relation to the positive or negative experiences that he or she may have encountered. (Refer to Figure 8 below).

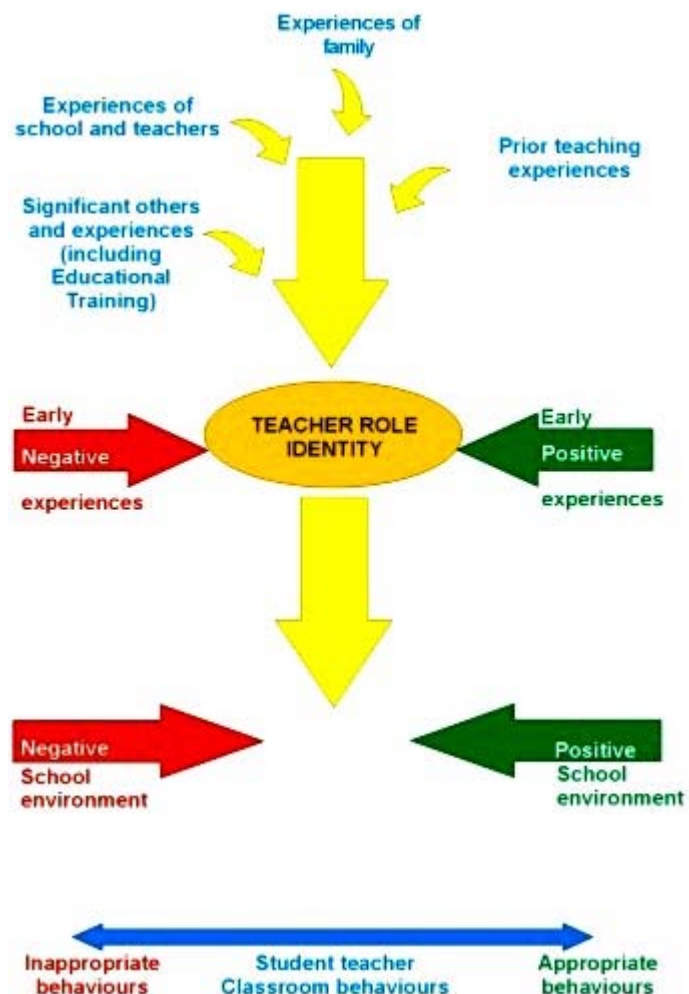


Figure 8: Interaction of Biography and School Environment: The

The concern for the expansion of the role of teachers is voiced in the forty-fifth session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) held in Geneva, Switzerland in December 1997. The conference, entitled "Teachers in the Change Process" drew together a variety of countries of differing cultures and levels of economic development. The director Tedesco (1997:1) tabled two major conclusions:

- *"The first is that teachers can no longer continue to be overlooked in the process of educational transformation. For, example, changes in the structure of education systems, in the administration and management of institutions, in the content of institutions, in the content of curricula, in teaching/learning methods, in educational materials and equipment, will not achieve the desired effect if they are not accompanied by an **integrated policy intended to strengthen the role of teachers**. This integrated policy cannot be apprehended as the last link in the change process. There is at present a pressing need to apply policies for teachers.*
- *The second conclusion concerns the need for innovation to be associated with evaluation tools, which will enable us to accumulate experience and learning. The educational changes presently underway must meet challenges for which there are **no single or definitive answers**. To create, to evaluate, and to experiment with will be necessary in educational policies designed to confront the new challenges raised by profound social, economic, cultural and technological changes that our modern society is experiencing." (my own emphasis added)*

This quotation is provided at length to indicate the synthesis of the reconstructionist and reconceptualist perspectives in the research agenda of the teacher development. The bringing together of the macro and micro concerns facing teacher development are highlighted in the campaign for more contextually relevant teacher "support" (sic) strategies to fuel the agendas of becoming citizens of the modern era.

Perhaps, the concerns raised seem to be priorities facing mainly the developed world where the luxury of access to modern infrastructure in the form of libraries, computers, technological aids is a norm. It is this tension that developing world countries/ contexts will need to address seriously in the 1990's: the need to "think globally, but act locally". However, in the absence of the minimum basic requirements to fuel quality education, it is not surprising to find teachers of the developing world contexts still preoccupied with an Input analysis to educational reform. The crisis is an economic issue: those who have access to wealth will also have access to better quality education.

Nevertheless, the competing influences (though not always apparent to the marginalised periphery countries) on the role of the teacher within any context is constrained by the forces of hegemony of the dominant superpowers whose agenda dominates research, funding and provision of education across the globe.

Violin: ***Vivo ma non troppo presto (lively, but not too fast)***

The intentions of the South African reconstruction era (post 1994 elections) may be said to be characterised by a version of this very tension: intention to improve the quality of education in line with their vision of a new democratic and just society,

yet fiscally constrained by the enormity of the scale of reform that is necessary in so far as provision of basic educational resources (Christie: 1992). (See Chapter 1:

Sections 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2 for the policy terrain characterising the post-elections era, and the kinds of complex tensions that exist in the Vision-Reality conundrum when looking at teacher development). (See also Chisholm: 1992; Raubenheimer: 1992/93; Greenstein and Mabogane: 1994; Buckland and Fielden:1994; Essop:1997).

To summarise this era, the teachers are themselves products of the old apartheid system of education; they have inherited prescribed roles and identities which many have openly rejected; they are supportive of the visions of reconstruction to provide better quality education; however they may not necessarily have the specific skills in order to enact this vision.

The following figure captures some of the dialogical tension that exists within the teaching force in relation to the transformation of the education system and the transference of the responsibility for school-based curriculum development to the teachers themselves:

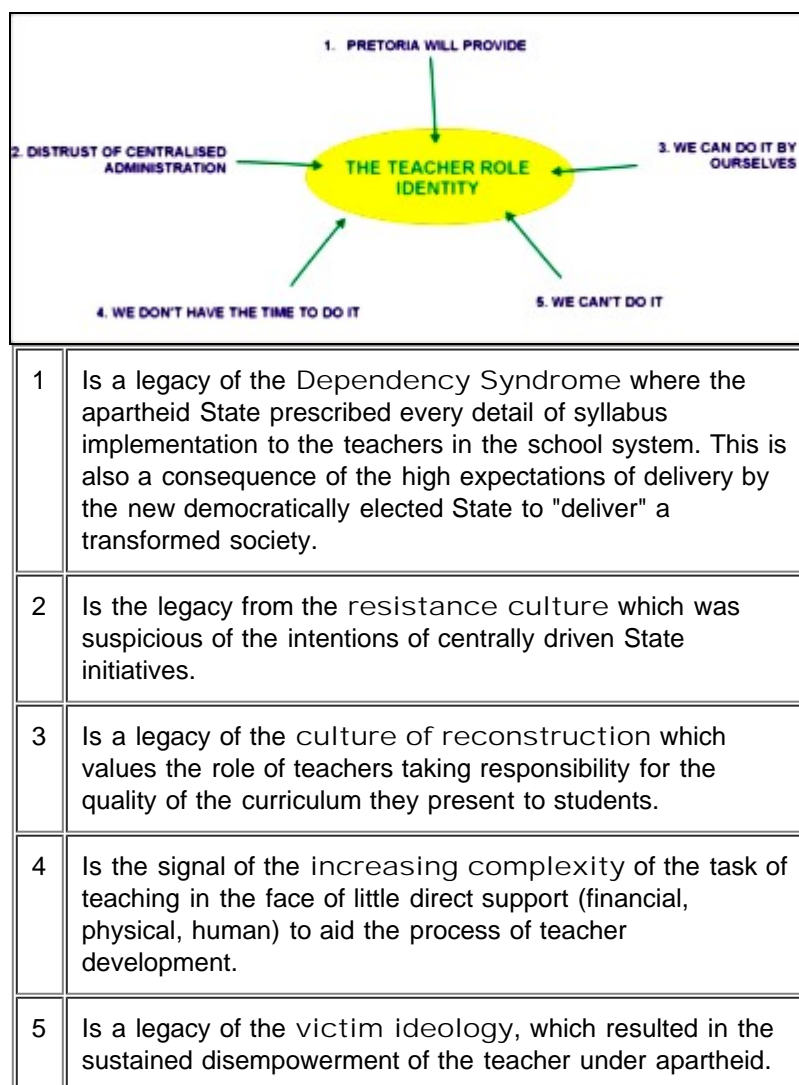


Figure 9: Competing Tensions in Teacher Identity in Post-1994 South Africa.

The last section (Violin: Vivo ma non troppo presto) outlines the complexity of teacher roles and identities in the context of a rapidly changing political context. Previous research has been conducted largely within contexts where the school environment was relatively more stable and predictable. With the implementation of the numerous policy reforms for the post-apartheid context in South Africa, the ethos of schools that STs will enter into as novice teachers would have altered in significant ways in relation to the regulations governing teachers' practice. However, the institutional "baggage" (historical culture) still lingers on. The demands being placed on recent / new teacher graduates are likely to be significantly different from the demands that were placed on teacher graduates in the past. However, it is also possible that teachers may be choosing to flagrantly disregard the dictates of the new policy initiatives. Therefore, it becomes crucially important to investigate what are the changing conceptions of teacher roles and identities in a rapidly transforming society and consequently, what does it mean to educate teachers in a rapidly transforming society. This issue is the concern of this research study.



Section Two: The Nature of Professional Knowledge

The Second Movement: Moderato

The process of teacher development could be characterised as a process of student teachers developing personal reflections and understandings of what teaching knowledge entails. Their own prior learning about teaching knowledge is thus reflected, mediated and reinforced during the teacher preparation programme. Their prior learning about teacher knowledge is usually framed via their heritage of schooling experiences gained during their formative years as learners at schools (See Lortie: 1975). These conceptions of teacher knowledge are often unarticulated by both the teachers within schools and by the STs themselves. This section attempts to make more explicit what kinds of teacher knowledge the organisers of teaching /learning processes are interacting with as they engage in the education process.

This section is organised into two focal areas to address the following questions:

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How can teacher knowledge be described?2. How does one activate these domains of knowledge during the teaching learning process? |
|--|

This section proposes to:

- probe deeply into one theoretical conception about kinds of teacher knowledge,
- articulate the often-undescribed sets of teacher knowledge that student teachers engage with during the formative process of becoming teachers, and
- review Eraut's model for how STs activate teacher professional knowledge.

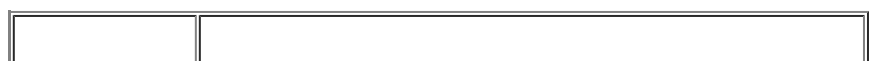
2.1 How can Teacher Knowledge be described?

Piano: Largo (*broadly*):

The answer to the questions posed in this section would no doubt constitute a dissertation in its own right. I choose instead to focus on the theoretical model of Michael Eraut (1996) who synthesises the ingredients, which have become the framework for my own conceptual understanding of this field. I use this theoretical model for understanding the nature of teacher professional knowledge in order to highlight the wide number of issues that could be considered when analysing the development of teacher professional competence in teacher education programmes.

As with all theoretical models, Eraut's model serves as a road map to explore the territory it describes. It is limited in that it represents one organisational description of the territory it explores.

Eraut (ibid.), defines professional knowledge as "the knowledge possessed by professionals which enable them to perform professional tasks, roles and duties with quality". While this general definition may be used to describe different professions which were researched (doctors, nurses, clergy, engineers, community workers, youth and clinical scientists), he argues that each particular profession embeds specific domains related to the nature and function of that profession. Teacher professional knowledge is classified along two dimensions: the first indicates the context within which the professional knowledge is used, and the second deals with the specific areas of knowledge of the profession. Figure 10 indicates the overlaps that may be said to exist amongst these different domains of knowledge.





	Area of Knowledge			
Context of Use	5 Subject-Matter Knowledge	6 Education (Pedagogic) Knowledge	7 Situated Knowledge	8 Societal Knowledge
1 Classroom Knowledge				
2 Classroom-Related Knowledge				
3 Management Knowledge				
4 Other Professional Knowledge				

Figure 10: The Domain of Teachers' Professional Knowledge (Eraut: 1996)

Refer to Table 4 for an elucidation of Figure 10.

Table 4: The Domains of Teacher Knowledge (Eraut: 1996)

Piano: **Largo** (broadly)

Contextual Knowledge	
1	Classroom knowledge is commonly referred to as the "practical know-how" of the actual processes of teaching;
2	Classroom-related knowledge refers to that kind of knowledge that teachers use when they think and talk about their classroom action. It is usually a form of knowledge that includes "educational theory, not necessarily acknowledged as such, and in contrast to classroom knowledge, is more easily described than applied" (ibid.: 1). Such knowledge can remain inactive if not engaged with in order to fuel one's classroom actions. It has only potential value, and like potential energy needs to be converted into kinetic energy ("classroom knowledge") in order to be available for use.
3	Management Knowledge encompasses jobs ranging from individual organisation of one's job activities, to organising the activities of one's learners, to the knowledge of small-scale management roles or formally designated tasks. This range includes the activities of discipline and control of pupils' behaviours; the collection, supervision and appraisal of pupils' work; collation of appropriate records; the organisation of a form / home room class activities.
4	Other Professional roles: The wider involvement of the teacher as a member of a school community of teachers, a member of a subject committee, a co-ordinator of "beyond-formal" classroom teaching activities (e.g.




sports, counselling) constitutes the dimension of this domain of knowledge. This knowledge includes the teacher's engagement outside of the school e.g. meetings with parents. Eraut (ibid.) places the area of curriculum planning, design and development amongst this area of teacher professional knowledge. He suggests that this knowledge contributes to the "life of the school and indeed to the profession in general" (ibid.: 2).

Area of Knowledge

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5 | Subject matter knowledge refers to the "information base" of the subject being taught by the teacher. The depth or breadth of this subject matter knowledge is often in dispute as questions are raised as to how much more than the "school content" knowledge of the syllabus a schoolteacher needs. Teacher education institutions are often accused of "overloading their curriculum" with superfluous subject matter knowledge with little learning of how to use this knowledge when engaging with school pupils. This component of teacher knowledge has been commonly referred to, in South African colleges, as "Academic Knowledge". |
| 6 | Educational Knowledge refers to the knowledge about the process of learning and teaching. Commonly referred to as "Didactic Knowledge"/ "Didactics" in South African colleges of Education, and more internationally referred to as "pedagogical knowledge". It includes debates around the continuum of teacher-led to pupil-initiated strategies for accessing and engaging with learning. The version of teaching and learning, namely fundamental pedagogics in South Africa, is an example of only one form of knowledge about teaching and learning. |
| 7 | Situated Knowledge refers to the kind of knowledge that teachers access as a consequence of working with specific learners within specific classroom settings, with specific abilities and within specific communities. Each group of learners is affected by the constraints of their physical, psychological and resource contexts and interprets these contexts in different ways on different occasions and opportunities. Teaching becomes a process of constantly reading and interpreting these situations. The knowledge base of this form of knowledge often emanates from beyond the specifics of the school or teacher educational institutional contexts. |
| 8 | Societal Knowledge refers to the kind of knowledge that requires teachers to focus on the future lives and careers of their pupils: where they will feature (or not) within the labour force in the society in which they live; how does the learnings in their particular school enable or hinder their advancement in life's opportunities; what are the wider goals of the immediate community of the school, the society, the nation? The "answers" to these issues constitute knowledge that will be interpreted into the kind of activities that the teacher engages with in his / her classroom. |

Eraut poignantly concludes this classification with the comment: "Once we recognise the breadth of teachers' professional knowledge, it becomes apparent that much of it is acquired outside the zone of influence of teacher educators, even during the period of formal teacher preparation" (ibid.: 3).



Much of the teacher education preparation is usually confined to the presentation of **explicit** knowledge in the form of "codified/ propositional knowledge" in the formal taught curriculum, and **implicit** learnings planned for student teachers during a school field experience of teaching practicum. The former propositional knowledge is usually the ingredient of the formal assessment practices, and is usually quite explicitly stated in books, assignment topics, syllabi, and examinations. The latter form of implicit learnings fuelling knowledge is often seen as having lesser importance and this is reflected in the marginalisation (in the South African teacher education system generally) of this as an "Add-on" dimension of teacher preparation courses. The marginalisation takes the form of the often poorly administered unit of the field experience or teaching practice part of the teacher preparation curriculum; the lack of committed personnel to direct its goals and ideals; the laissez-faire attitude of residential teacher educators (and mentor teachers) to the rigour needed during the teaching practice practicum; the lack of compassion and understanding of the gradual teacher orientation and socialisation of STs (Salmon and Samuel: 1995; Samuel: 1995).

In contrast to the above theoretical model of teacher knowledge I shall now briefly present a description of the "teacher competences" advocated in the policy discussion document (1997) of the South African Committee of Teacher Education Policy (COTEP) Technical Committee. This document at the time of writing this dissertation has not yet been given legal status as a policy regulation. My comments are therefore limited to the overall thinking which informs this document's conception of teacher knowledge.

This discussion document attempts to shift the discourse of teacher development away from the time- and input based approaches to teacher development (ibid.: 52). It suggests that teacher development should focus an output approach in line with the philosophy of an outcomes based education philosophy. This suggests that teacher development is to be conceptualised as the process of acquiring "applied competences" (ibid.: 58) which focus on skills, values and knowledge in order to execute professional competent performances. A lengthy definition of an applied competence supplied by the Education Training and Development Project research report is supplied in this document:

"(An applied competence) is the learners' demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks with understanding and reflexivity. Applied competence is the overarching term for three inter-connected kinds of competence: practical, foundational and reflexive competence. Practical competence is our demonstrated understanding to perform a set of tasks. Foundational competence is our demonstrated understanding of what others are doing and why. Reflexive competence is our demonstrated ability to integrate or connect our performances with our understanding so that we learn from our actions and are able to adapt to changes and unforeseen circumstances" (ETD Project: 1997: 26-27 in COTEP: 1997: 58).

The preoccupation of the above document does not attempt to understand the nature of teacher knowledge (which arguably encapsulates all of the above dimensions of the applied competences). It provides the necessary regulatory framework within teacher education institutions to allow for the design of curriculum programmes that can be registered by the new South African Qualifications Authority. This latter body aims to promote portability of credits from different sectors of the education and training system, and therefore is concerned with how the design of teacher education programmes allows learners multiple exit and entry points to access different parts of the education and training system.

The 1997 policy discussion document presents a set of compulsory core and elective outcomes to be achieved by the graduating teacher. It presents the compulsory core outcomes as clustered around four areas of learning: Communications, Life Orientations, Literacies and Teaching Studies. In each of these areas of learning the document lists the kind of demonstrable outcomes that a learner would need to show evidence of in order to receive a teaching qualification.

In the "compulsory elective outcomes" the concern is with providing the learners with a specialised knowledge in a particular area of learning. These electives therefore serve to distinguish between the different categories of teachers in General, Further and Higher Education (ibid.: 92).

It can be seen from this brief discussion of the above document that the specific detailed analysis of the knowledge required for the teaching/learning processes are not necessarily foregrounded. They appear merely as a listing in twelve pages of an approximately two hundred-page document. The listing of competences under each of the demonstrable outcomes commendably points in the direction to seeing the teaching /learning process as mediated by several intersecting factors: psychological, social, ideological, political, economic, and pedagogical. However, it uses the broad rubric of academic and occupational outcomes to organise these listings of competences (ibid.: 88). Whilst it argues that this rubric does not separate teaching knowledge into formerly separate areas of educational theory and practice, the listing that follows tends to frame these categories. Its broad categorisation of all of these "outcomes" as capable of being demonstrated is a highly presumptuous and theoretically debatable issue, which nevertheless goes to the heart of the critique of outcomes-based educational approaches. (This dissertation chooses not to delve into this area further). Perhaps the revised document (still to be realised) will more explicitly attend to exploring in more qualitative depth the specific characteristics of teacher knowledge. The document signals an important step, nevertheless, in understanding the teaching knowledge as a combination of theoretical, practical and reflexive qualities. It is perhaps too ambitious in believing that teacher preparation curricula are able to develop all of the professional competences listed.

2.2 Activating the Domains of Teacher Knowledge

Piano: *Allegretto (fairly fast)*

In order for the teacher actor/practitioner/ agent to make use of the domains of knowledge (described in the section above) in classroom practice, it is necessary to activate these above forms of knowledge. Eraut (1996) reflecting on his theoretical model of teacher professional knowledge comments that there are possible constraints on this activation occurring partly because of the constraints of learning from experience and partly due to the problematic role of theoretical knowledge. Figure 11 presents a schematic understanding of the processes by which the teaching knowledge can be activated during the teaching /learning process.

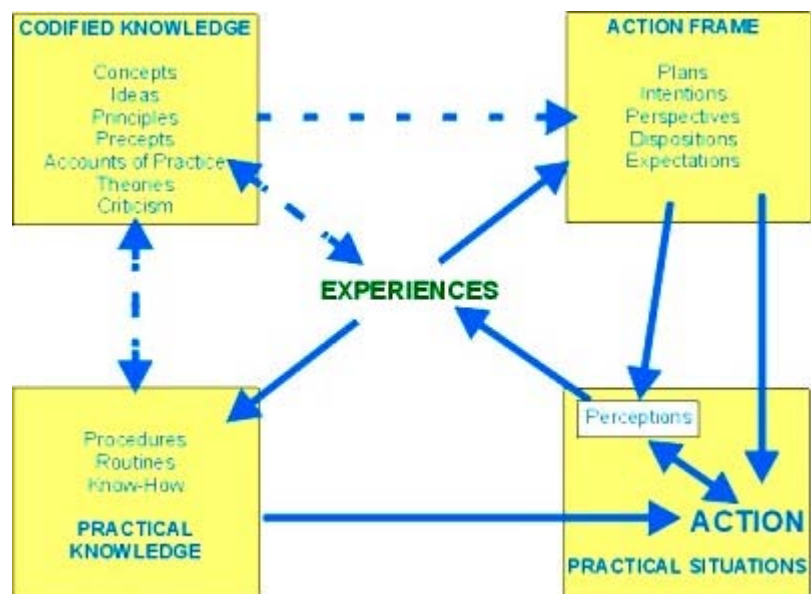


Figure 11: The Construction of Teaching (Eraut: 1996)

Eraut (ibid.) places "Experience" at the heart of this schematic representation highlighting the importance of the role of past and present socialisation of teachers into the understanding of the roles and functions of teacher practitioners. Many agents from within the teachers' immediate school environment constrain the



teacher practitioner to interpret the processes of teaching and learning in particular ways. However, the teacher still has the potential to counteract the forces which hegemonise him/ her to act in similar ways. The kinds of action (top right corner of the diagram "Action Frame") a teacher chooses are mediated by the teacher's own "personal filter" which allows his/her to offer interpretations and perceptions of his/her own socialisation process. These interpretations are nevertheless, constrained by the pragmatics of the situational context and locality of the context of the particular school, community and learners within which the teacher teaches. The teacher practitioner needs also to be willingly predisposed to engage with the kinds of experiences that s/he is accumulating during the process of their teaching actions, or during the process of learning to become a teacher. Hence the (student) teacher's own action frame might "corrupt" / influence the kinds of experiences that the (student) teacher activates for him or herself. These "corrupted"/ influenced experiences nevertheless become part of the teacher's personal repertoire in understanding their knowledge about teaching.

Alongside the (student) teacher's own choices for action ("Action": bottom right) are the many kinds of practical knowledge that have become ritualised or routinised in the particular school context. These ingredients of "Practical Knowledge" (bottom-left) act as powerful constraining variables into which novice teachers who are unsure of their own goals and intentions may easily become "swallowed". The "ingredients" of the practical knowledge may also act as a valuable support for novice teachers who may in time choose to ignore the constraining predisposition to perpetuate and reproduce "old practices" which do not match their understanding and knowledge gained from other sources outside the school domain of practical knowledge.

These "outside" influences may originate from the novice teacher's teacher preparation programme where knowledge was presented in a "codified form" outlining a range of (alternative) principles, values, precepts, accounts of practices, theories and criticisms. However, Eraut (ibid.) cautions that this latter form of "Codified Knowledge" (top left) has only a weak potential to affect classroom act-ion or the teacher's action frame (hence the dotted broken lines linking these boxes).

Codified Knowledge or "Propositional Knowledge", as Eraut prefers to call it, is often erroneously simplified to refer to only theoretical knowledge. Eraut suggests a distinction between public knowledge and personal knowledge to clear the misconception. Public knowledge refers to the kind of knowledge acquired most often through participating in organised forms of study: reading books, videos, interaction during the normative processes of socialisation in one's community, religious or academic organisation, etc. Its form usually results in a publicly agreed upon set of propositions.

Private knowledge, by comparison, is the kind of knowledge that individuals privately form, despite the publicly agreed upon propositions. This does not mean that there will not be an overlap between the public and the private forms of knowledge.

The Iceberg Principle

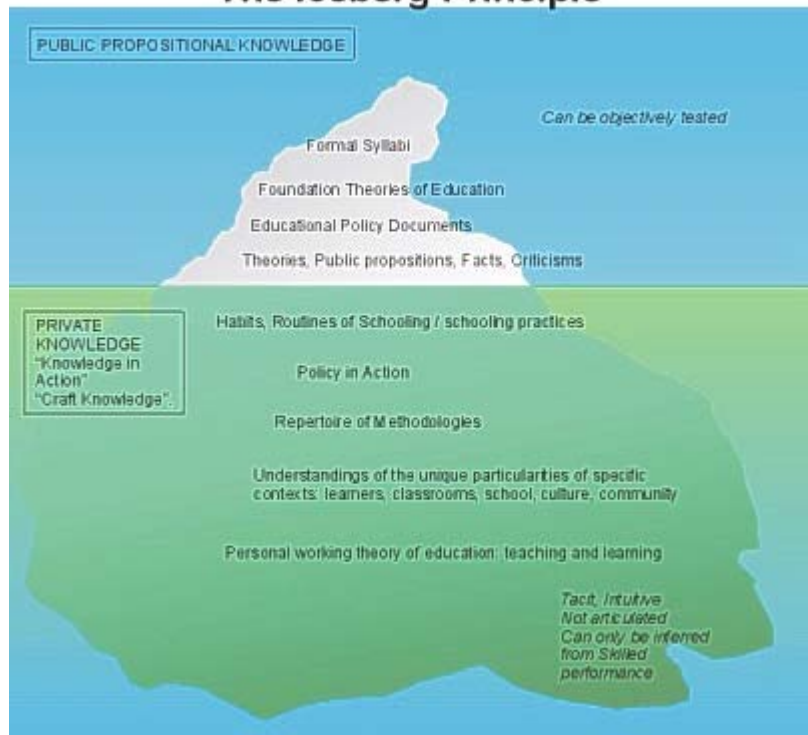


Figure 12: Teacher Knowledge: "The Iceberg Principle": Adaptation of Michael Eraut (1996) by the Multi-Site Teacher Education Research (MUSTER) 1998 Team


It means that the individual will come to understand that knowledge in a form and meaning that is uniquely personal. We develop our personal knowledge of the world by actively constructing, remembering, organising and reflecting on our unique experiences.

However, the personal knowledge that one gains is usually only "partially apprehended" since "much that is learnt from experience remains in tacit form" (ibid. : 5). It seems somewhat arrogant to claim that "people do not know what they know" (ibid.) but Eraut is referring to the difficulty of the researcher to access the personal theory of teaching and learning that teachers possess but are often unable to articulate.

Propositions are not confined merely to facts; instead they include a rich domain of concepts, principles, theories, specific information about specific groups of individuals, organisations, communities. These are often not publicly available knowledge and thus it is often difficult for an outsider to be able to fully "know" a specific research context.

Eraut's (ibid.) model highlights the teaching /learning process as a complex intersection and interaction between varying forms of knowledge. It accentuates the active decision-making cognitive processes involved. It also suggests that the formal propositional knowledge that dominates many of the pre-service teacher preparation programmes has only limited effect in influencing teacher decision-making strategies and is therefore only one small dimension of what constitutes teacher knowledge.

Using the metaphor of an iceberg Eraut (ibid.) suggests that the formal academic propositional knowledge represents only the tip of the iceberg above the surface of the water in relation to what knowledge (student) teachers require in order to execute professional practice (See Figure 12). This above the surface knowledge represents the kind of knowledge that usually can be publicly declared in the form of explicit theories, policies, criticisms or propositions. To use the ETD Project report's terminology, it is "demonstrable ability or understanding" or "applied competence" (ETD Project: 1997: 26-27). It can be objectively tested and therefore



finds favour with teacher education curriculum designers, academics or policy makers who seem preoccupied with providing evidence of student teachers having grasped teaching competence.

However, Eraut (ibid.) suggests that the more enduring and stable form of knowledge about teaching operate below the sea level of the iceberg. This knowledge, referred to as "knowledge in action" or "craft knowledge", is a more private form of knowing. It usually can only be inferred from teachers' performance. It cannot be presumed simply from the demonstration of certain teaching actions. It lacks the tangibility of "applied competences", "traditional propositional knowledge", "theoretical knowledge" or "academic knowledge".

This "private knowledge" is acquired through extended engagement in the practical situated contexts of everyday classroom interaction. It encompasses the range of knowledge required to deal with the routines of educational practices within the classroom, the school and the community. It involves developing deep personal understanding about how to deal with the unique particularities of specific contexts, specific learners, classrooms, and schools' cultures. This form of knowledge is potentially a highly individualistic perspective on the nature of teaching / learning processes.

In contrast to the South African policy discussion document (COTEP: 1997), Eraut's model provides a clearer exposition on the nature of the reflexive processes that are involved when engaging with acquiring teaching professional competence. Arguably teacher policy documents need not spell out their conceptual and theoretical analysis of how the process of teacher development could be enacted. Merely to declare that teacher development is a reflexive process is however insufficient.

Eraut's model of teacher professional knowledge and the construction of the teaching process raises some important ramifications when considering the kinds of curriculum experiences that are designed for novice student teachers:

1. the model clearly articulates the need for a holistic understanding of teacher development consisting of both public propositional knowledge (the tip of the iceberg) and the private craft knowledge (iceberg below the surface). Eraut suggests that mature professional teachers reveal their confidence about the teaching / learning process when they use their acquired "propositional knowledge" as a "loose but powerful metaphor" guiding their professional practice (ibid.: 6).
2. it rejects the artificial separation between theory and practice as separate constructs involved in the construction of teaching.
3. it promotes understanding of the nature of teaching as a developmental process that is acquired when teachers (especially novice student teachers) see the value of reflecting, articulating and developing explanations of their own practices.
4. it suggests the need for the provision of sufficient time and effort for student teachers to acquire these reflections on both their public and private understanding of the teaching /learning processes.
5. it suggests that the (student) teachers' experiences with teaching and learning are the cornerstone of their development as professionals. It seems to foreground the experiential value of teachers' own teaching practices within classrooms. This model does not overtly extend its range of experiential influences to acknowledge the wealth of biographical past experiences that (student) teachers possess in relation to their historical encounters with teaching and learning (as family members, as community members and as school pupils).

The above ramifications of this model exploring teacher knowledge provided the critical analytical tools for evaluation of the data, which is presented in Chapters Four and Five. Drawing on the theoretical constructs developed in Sections 2.1 and 2.2, the ensuing discussion (Section 2.3) evaluates the different models of teacher education curricula used to promote particular conceptions of teacher roles and identities and teacher knowledge.



Section Three: Models of Teacher Education Curricula

The Third Movement: Vivace

Piano: ***Presto (quickly)***

All teacher education programmes reflect in their curriculum a particular ideology. No educational endeavour is free from its value-laden conceptions of its learners, its views about how learners gain knowledge and the contribution it makes to the wider society beyond its boundaries. This section explores the tendencies of different teacher education curricula models in terms of the kinds of teacher roles and identities, and teacher knowledge they tend to promote. It is to be noted that a teacher education institution may not overtly proclaim its affiliation to any one of these models/ typologies. However, their modes of executing their curriculum may reveal the orientation or emphasis in relation to a particular typology. It is likely that an institution may proclaim one set of values/ beliefs/ ideologies yet in practice will vivify another orientation. Institutions may also be characterised by an ambiguity of affiliation or reflect an eclectic borrowing from different typologies/ models.

Different researchers have presented their own classifications and typologies of teacher education curriculum in relation to their own frames of analysis (Zeichner: 1983; Avalos: 1991; Elliot: 1993; Stuart: 1997). In this movement, I will focus specifically on how these characterisations conceptualise teacher knowledge, teacher roles and identities in different ways. This analysis will form the basis for my own review summation in Chapter Five regarding the implications of this research study for the design of relevant, appropriate and meaningful teacher preparation programmes to address the needs of developing teacher knowledge, professional roles and identities.

This section explores the following question:

- *What kinds of teacher knowledge, roles and identities do different teacher education curriculum models tend to promote?*

Zeichner (1983) draws a distinction between what he calls four "paradigms of teacher education" (See Figure 13). His priority in presenting these paradigms is to fuel discussion about desirable practices in teacher education. He places these four paradigms within a matrix, which has two important dimensions. The first dimension, (captured on the horizontal axis) focuses on the extent to which the curriculum of teacher education is specified in advance before the student teacher engages with the programme ("the received -reflexive axis"). The second dimension, (captured on the vertical axis) focuses on the conception of the stability of school context within which the student teachers are to execute their practice ("the certain-problematic axis": *ibid.*).

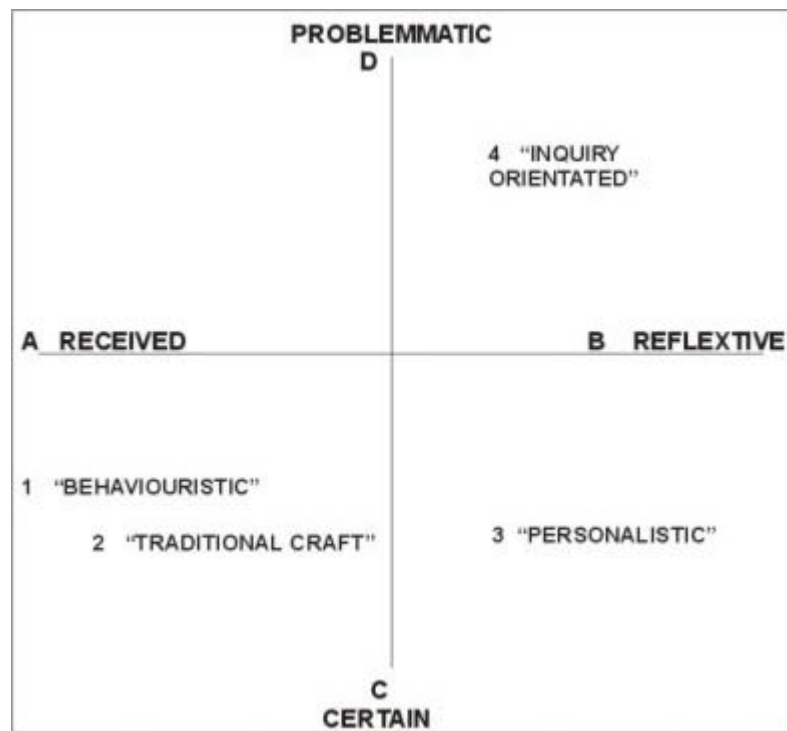



Figure 13: A Summary of Four Paradigms of Teacher Education
Zeichner: 1983: 7)

The horizontal axis aims to capture the teacher education institution's conception of the role of the STs in their own development as teachers. On the one end of the continuum (A) are programmes which suggest a passive role for the student teachers; where the content knowledge of the programme is already specified in advance; the student teacher "plays little part in determining the substance and direction of his / her preparation programme" (ibid.: 3). The teacher knowledge that is presented usually emphasises performances and demonstrable behaviours arising out of an emphasis on competency-based teaching. To use Eraut's (1996) classifications (See Table 4 in Section 2.2.1) this end of the continuum emphasises classroom knowledge, classroom-related knowledge, subject matter knowledge and educational knowledge.

The opposite end of this horizontal axis (B) highlights the active role of the learner teacher in constructing meaning out of the curriculum experiences fashioned. Such a teacher preparation programme conceptualises teachers as agents of their own development. The knowledge that will be developed in curriculum programme is a highly individualistic and personalised one, nuanced by the unique characteristics of the individual's own biography. Such a ST acquires teacher knowledge by engaging in a process of reflexive inquiry (as opposed to merely a "received" presentation of knowledge).

The vertical axis attempts to capture the degree of stability, regularity and predictability of the school environments. The paradigms of teacher education that see the school contexts as relatively "certain" (stable, regular and predictable) will conceptualise the act of teacher education as normalising student teachers to fit into the already existing school cultures. Therefore, the role of the teacher is perceived of as an agent of reproduction of that stability and certainty (C).

On the opposite end of the vertical axis (D), the school site is seen as a problematic arena. This is so because the competing and contradictory kinds of practical knowledge available to practising teachers as a result of there being so many different actors within the school system each with their own agenda. Schools at this end of the axis are recognised as sites which acknowledge the complexity of knowledge, knowledge production, access of knowledge, the value and interests of particular forms of knowledge being served by competing forces of power within and outside the school system. This end of the continuum foregrounds the following categories of Eraut's (ibid.) teacher knowledge classifications: "management knowledge", "other professional knowledge", "situated knowledge" and "societal knowledge" (see Table 4 in Section 2.2.1).



Zeichner (1983) locates his descriptions of four paradigms of teacher education curriculum within the matrix of the above horizontal and vertical axes. The first paradigm of teacher education Zeichner (ibid) labels as the "behaviouristic" paradigm because of its emphasis on positivist behavioural psychology. The underlying metaphor for teacher education used within this paradigm is that of "production", hence the teachers are conceptualised as technicians. Teachers learn the necessary behavioural skills to execute amongst pupils. He locates this paradigm within the bottom left corner of the matrix. (See Figure 13).

The second paradigm of teacher education is labelled the "traditional craft" paradigm. Stuart (1997) refers to this paradigm as the "master apprenticeship model of teacher development" or commonly labelled as an approach which postulates that one learns the "craft" of teaching by "sitting at the feet of the master teacher". The student teacher learns the "skill/art" of teaching through observation of the practices of good teachers. It believes that learning to teach involves a process of trial and error. The act of teaching involves more than just a repertoire of behaviours; it includes what Eraut (1996) refers to as the "below the surface of the iceberg" knowledge that is tacit, not often articulated but which is observable through watching closely the actions/ performances of the skilled teacher colleagues. Zeichner (1983) comments that many teacher education institutions use at least some of this paradigm's thinking in their own curriculum but are not likely to openly admit this kind of modelling practice of education because of their liberal conceptions that this is a form of conservative social engineering.


Within this second paradigm the student teacher is conceptualised as an apprenticed worker. His/ her identity is nevertheless pre-fashioned because of the duty to transmit the cultural practice from one generation to the next. It is located within the "received /certain" end of the matrix (bottom left: Figure 13) because its goals are not to alter but to maintain traditional craft practices. Stuart (1997) suggest that this model of teacher education professes that student teachers learn first from practice, and are presented later (if at all) with the propositional knowledge in the form of abstract theories, concepts, ideas and principles. The choice of appropriate school masters/ mentors becomes highlighted in this paradigm.

The third paradigm, labelled the "personalistic" paradigm, draws its resources from the psychological tradition, which emphasises personal growth and development. "According to this view teacher development is a form of adult development, a process of 'becoming', rather than merely a process of educating someone to teach" (Zeichner: 1983: 4). The underlying metaphor for this paradigm is that of "growth". The "skills" that teachers need to acquire within the teacher education programme emphasise the need to develop attitudes and perceptions about teaching, about development of the "self" in relation to the act of teaching and learning. Teacher knowledge is seen to be a highly individualistic construct and the teacher role is that of "the thinker". The development of the personality of the teacher is emphasised.

This dimension of teacher development is not overtly emphasised in Eraut's model of professional knowledge (See Table 4: Section 2.2.1). However, various permutations of this psychological model to teacher development exist in relation to the particular brand of psychology (developmental, humanistic, community) the proponents advocate.

Stuart's (1997) model of "academic" teacher education sits perhaps between Zeichner's third and fourth paradigm. This model conceptualises teacher education institutions as sites where STs gain the necessary theoretical knowledge (Eraut's propositional knowledge) which is thereafter applied to the context. This is also referred to as an "applied science" model of teacher education where "theory" is presented first, followed by application to practice. The content of many South African teacher education colleges may be said to follow this model which elevates the value of "theoretical knowledge" as foundational to developing practice.

Emphasis is laid on providing students with the necessary "subject matter knowledge" and the "foundational knowledge" in the form of disciplines such as sociology of education, psychology of education, curriculum studies, history and administration of education, etc. in compartmentalised packages. Each of these



individual disciplines are assessed separately usually in the form of rigorous, "standards setting" examinations. It is precisely this kind of teacher education curriculum that the COTEP Technical Committee's policy discussion document (1997) attempts to steer away from.

This model (nicknamed the "ivory towers model" by Stuart: 1997) conceptualises the role of the student teacher as a "student of teacher knowledge". Her/ His identity as an academic, a student of teaching and learning is emphasised, often to such an extent that her/ his practitioner status is marginalised. This "ivory tower approach" usually dominates in countries where colleges of education choose to imitate the research paradigm of university Faculties of Education, often preoccupied with producing educational researchers. The blurring of these roles of "educational researchers / students" and "teacher practitioners" however, still plague universities who are involved in both preparation of the pre-service teachers and post-graduate research students.

The delivery of "knowledge as packages" also results in student teachers not seeing the value of the educational theory and become preoccupied with wanting a theory-free teacher education. The fragmentation of knowledge into separate compartments, the separation of content and pedagogical knowledge, the dislocation of knowledge from debates around whose interests it serves results in a view of teaching that is sterile, and alienated from its practical context (Britzman: 1991). This often results in the practising teacher within the teaching profession regarding "college trained" student teachers as "better teachers" than university trained teachers because they are more closely aligned with the "practitioner world". However, there are serious dangers in developing teacher education programmes which are "narrowly practical" and "abstractly theoretical" (COTEP: Department of Education: National Norms and Standards document: 1997).

The emphasis of Zeichner's fourth paradigm, the "inquiry oriented" paradigm advocates the development of contextually relevant (situated) and societal knowledge to use Eraut's (1996) terms. The function and purpose of teacher education as a social endeavour is foregrounded in this paradigm. Teacher education is geared to develop amongst practitioners a strong sense of inquiry, asking questions about the nature of the education process, its goals, in whose interests are the particular forms of schooling organised. Knowledge is seen as a social construct, characterised by tentativeness and subject to contestation.

The fundamental task of teacher education from this point of view is to develop prospective teachers' capacities for reflective action and to help them examine the "moral, ethical, political and instrumental issues, that are embedded in everyday thinking and practice" (Zeichner: 1983:7). An interactive /dialectical relationship between theory and practice characterises this paradigm. Stuart (1997) refers to this as a "professional model" of teacher education.

Within this paradigm the teacher is conceptualised as an active constructor of curriculum experiences and s/he recognises his or her own constraints on action. As an active agent of their own education and development, this role is expected to impact on the manner in which teachers engage with the learners in their classrooms. The teacher is therefore seen as a "liberator" of himself /herself, as well as of his/her own pupils. This paradigm therefore includes emphasis on the teacher as a member of a wider social network within the school and the community and correlates to Eraut's (1996) "other professional role knowledge".

The above review of models of teacher education curricula highlight the following issues:

1. each model of teacher education curricula reflects particular conceptions of teachers' roles and identities ranging from restrictive to liberatory interpretations of teachers' functions and actions;
2. each model of teacher education curricula emphasises some aspects of teacher professional knowledge more than others;
3. arising from their particular paradigmatic orientations, each teacher education curriculum programme draws more exclusively from certain aspects of social science research than from others, e.g. from philosophy, from politics, from sociology, from psychology;

4. each teacher preparation curriculum programme is likely to reflect a combination of paradigmatic influences in relation to the power each of its proponents within the teacher education sector can muster to influence the design of the programme.

Table 5 below serves as a summary to this sonata on teacher development. It represents the intersection between the models of teacher education curriculum discussed above, plotted against the kinds of teacher knowledge they tend to promote. The last column of the table reflects the kind of teacher roles and identities that each model tends to promote. This table represents an intersection of the theoretical considerations of Eraut's (1996) model on teacher knowledge (Section 2.2.1), Zeichner's (1983) and Stuart's (1997) categorisation into the paradigms/ models/typologies of teacher education curriculum (Section 2.3).

Teacher Knowledge					Classification of Teacher Education		Teacher Roles and Identities
Forms of knowledge foregrounded					Teacher Education Model Paradigms	Teacher Education Paradigms	Teacher is conceived of as a...
Areas of knowledge					Stuart (1997)	Zeichner (1983)	
Content knowledge	Pedagogical knowledge	Management knowledge	Other professional skills	Area of knowledge			
				Content knowledge			
				Pedagogical knowledge			
				Management knowledge			
				Other professional skills			
				Professional knowledge			
				Personal knowledge			
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- represent the conceptual framework which guided the research study during:
 - the design of the data collection plan (See Chapter Three)
 - the design of the research instruments of this study (See Chapter Three and Appendices)
 - the organisation of the data yielded from the research collection processes (See Chapter Four)
 - the data analysis process (See Chapter Four);
- provide the basis for the development of a theory of understanding lives in transitional times (See Chapter Five Section 4.1);
- record a model representing a tentative understanding of the process of becoming teachers (Cf. the more refined model of understanding presented at the end of the study: Chapter Five Section 4.2).

The contiguous forces represented in Figure 14 are the macro and micro environmental forces that exert influence on the individual student teacher as s/he passes through the educational institution. A simple tracing of the student teachers' contact with educational institutions during the teacher preparation programme may be characterised as a trajectory from the school system (A1) into the teacher education institution (B) and thereafter, back into the school system (A2). Of course, this trajectory is not a completely linear one as STs often have several intermittent contacts with school environments during their study at a teacher education institution. Such contact is often made at first or second year level, depending on the students' placement during a school-based teaching practicum. (Some student teachers may also have served as non-certified teachers even before their first "pre-service" preparation.)

Neither the school context (A) nor the teacher education institute context (B) is static. Both institutional contexts (A and B) have a dynamically evolving culture i.e. a


set of practices, beliefs, ideologies, ways of operating- a way of life, which is constantly responding to the changing macro and micro forces within its ambit.

For example, in South Africa, the macro-education language policy changes now permit pupils of different racial and linguistic groups to learn together within the same school. This has resulted in schools being characterised by a more multilingual and multicultural ethos than in the past. However, each school is unique in terms of the specific characteristics of how it addresses this new situation at the micro-level. Some schools, where the admitted pupils already have the necessary cultural capital to succeed in an English only environment (perhaps because of their particular social class orientation), have done little to change the ethos of the school's lived-out language policy. Other schools, whilst accepting the non-first language pupils into their English first language dominant school, have made little attempt at addressing the problems that English second language pupils experience (Refer to Chapter One: Section 3.4.2: "Collaborative Cacophonies" for more detailed examples).

Each educational institution has a unique culture, which is influenced by its own particular biographical history, social context, resource availability, ideological leanings and curriculum practices. The specific institution's cultural ethos is established as a consequence of the intersecting influences from the varied micro environmental forces. Therefore, as student teachers journey from A1 to B to A2, they are being exposed to this changing cultural ethos.

Within rapidly changing educational scenarios, the gap between cultural ethos A1 and A2 may be significantly large. For example, the kind of school environment that STs studied in as pupils may have altered significantly during their journey from A1 to B to A2. The rapidity of change varies. Some contexts and institutions may be noted for several influences simultaneously affecting their cultural ethos. Consequently, this may result in large-scale upheaval of the cultural ethos of A1. However, these influences should not be interpreted deterministically, since each research context is able to foreground and/ or offset particular sets of influences.

Teacher preparation programmes should aim at training STs to engage critically in



cultural contextual analysis of the different environments within which they practice their teaching.

The larger macro environmental forces impacting on the cultures of both A and B may be affected by a variety of influences, for example, in the changing political climate and ideological terrain of a given country; in major changes in the policy legislating or regulating educational institutional life and governance; in significant alterations made to the national curriculum (like Curriculum 2005 in South Africa).

Micro-level environmental forces impacting on *the cultural ethos of school* (A) environments and teacher education institutions should not be under-estimated in terms of their influence on exerting powerful effects on the quality of teaching and learning. One particular influence is the kind of family background that the school pupils bring with them to the English language classroom. In this research study I focus on what early conceptions of the English language were fostered in these micro family influences. Other influences may include the specific characteristics of the teachers: their linguistic and teacher training backgrounds, their views about how pupils acquire understanding of English as a second language. Each school context develops its own internal set of influences, which contribute to the cultural ethos of the institution.

Similarly, *the cultural ethos of the teacher education institution* (B) also evolves in response to the internal influences exerted by the particular ideological, historical, social and resource context of the institution. This degree of volatility of the cultural ethos is presented in Chapter One: Section 1.2 ("The orchestra pit") which described the changing culture of UDW as an institution. My own personal contribution to the cultural ethos as well as the contribution made by my student teachers' presence is captured in Chapter One: Section 3.3: ("The conductor and the players").

Becoming a teacher (of the English language) therefore entails the process of steering through the changing cultural ethos of first the teacher education institution itself, then the "new" school contexts wherein teacher practice is conducted and retrospectively the cultural ethos of the "old" school one attended as a pupil. This is an iterative process which warrants a constant reflective perspective operating on several levels: on the personal /individual level, on an institutional level and on a wider social level.

This model was used as a framework, which informed the data collection process described in Chapter Three. It also provides a framework for understanding the process of how STs learn to become teachers of English in a rapidly changing post-apartheid South Africa (Chapter Four), and also forms a basis for the data analysis in Chapter Five.

Summary of Chapter Two:

Programme Notes for the Sonata: On Becoming a Teacher

In this chapter I have brought together the instruments of the Piano (the international voices) and the Violin (the local/ national voices) in a sonata of words and ideas on the nature and development of teacher knowledge.

I first located the research agendas of two broad categories of teacher education research: restructuring teacher education and reconceptualising teacher education. I then located my research study within the tradition of reconceptualising teacher education.

The sonata, which followed consists of four movements focussing on the following:

- the roles and identities of teachers;
- a particular model of teacher knowledge;
- models of teacher education curricula, and
- a tentative model for analysing teacher development in rapidly



changing contexts.

- In Section One I traced in the first *allegro* (quick and fast) movement the historically changing conceptions of teacher knowledge, roles and identities in relation to the changing socio-political teacher education research contexts. The evolution of the research into teacher thinking is mapped in this first movement by references to variously paced eras of international and local change.
- In Section Two I present the second movement which is largely a theoretical *moderato* (moderate tempo) piano movement, which explores the conceptions of the nature of professional knowledge. Its complexities and subtleties are revealed through the different moods, tempos and rhythms of the different sections of this movement.
- In Section Three, a *vivace* (more lively) third movement captures the wide range of options to choose from when designing a teacher education curriculum depending on one's paradigmatic perspective on teacher development, and what kind of roles, identities and knowledge one wants to promote. This section synthesises the characteristics and themes that were introduced in the first two movements, providing an analysis of the contrasts and similarities between the different models/paradigms in relation to their views about teacher knowledge, teacher roles and identities.
- In Section Four (the finale) a tentative model for understanding teacher development in the context of a rapidly transforming educational landscape is presented as a finale to the sonata.

In the next chapter I describe the specific research methodology used to collect data around the critical research questions of this study.

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Quiet Please! Research in Progress

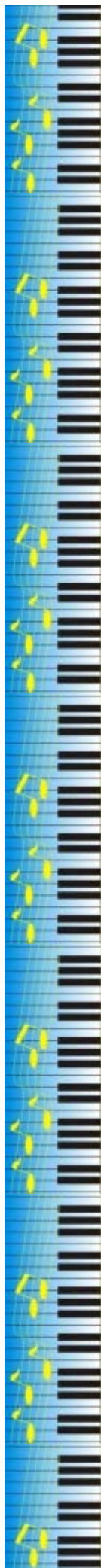


Orchestra seating is designed by the conductor to produce a certain blend of sounds. In this diagram, the strings form a semicircle around the conductor.

The woodwind instruments are arranged in the centre, with the percussion and brass sections at the rear.

Cover Page Design: Chapter Three: Image source - Microsoft Illustration from Microsoft Encarta 97 (CD-ROM interactive encyclopaedia)

[Click here to view a full size version of Table 6](#)



PRIMARY DATA		SECONDARY DATA	
Data Source	Number of Units	Data Source	Number of Units
DURING ON-CAMPUS PROGRAMME			
Written Autobiographies	9 (2)	Interviews: Expectations of Teaching in Multi-lingual classrooms	6
Collage Interviews	9 (2)	Collage	9
Reflective Journals	9 (2)	"Who am I session?"	1
DURING SCHOOL-BASED TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME			
Reflective Journal (contd.)	9 (2)	School Language Policy Reports	7
Stimulus Recall Interviews on classroom teaching (2 lessons x 2 students)	8 (4)	Classroom Lesson Observations	8
		Curriculum Materials (workbooks, lesson plans)	7
AFTER SCHOOL-BASED TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME			
		Peer Evaluations	9
		Self Evaluations	9
END OF COURSE PROGRAMME			
Focus Group Interview	1 (1)	Written Examination Papers	9

(The number of units in brackets represents the number of data sources that were used in the principal case studies in Chapter Four. These primary data sources constituted the main "harmonic line " of the data analysis section whilst the other secondary sources served as "counter-harmonies" or "complementary harmonies".)

- I illustrate the choices made about the process of data collection especially in the context of researching what may be said to be "looking into the invisible" i.e. teachers' thinking. I discuss the problematic use of language as a means to access teachers' thinking, and illustrate possible ways of addressing the conundrum in the relationship between thought and language in research methodology (Section 3.1: Accessing Teacher Thinking through Language Data).
- I also present the decisions made about how the data will be analysed (Section 3.2: Interpreting the Data).

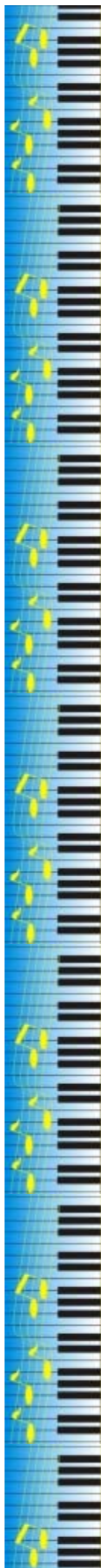
This chapter consists of three sections:

1. Setting up the Research Design
2. The Data Collection Plan
3. Analysing the Data

Musical Metaphors

A competent conductor of an orchestra is pivotal to the success of the group of musicians who are under his/her baton. It is not uncommon for music critics reviewing the performance of an orchestra to concentrate almost exclusively on the conductor's execution of his/her task. What are the roles and duties of the conductor?

*The prime purpose of the conductor is to provide an **interpretation** of the written musical score that has been created by the composer of the music. It is his/her task to ensure that the written symbols on the score of music are brought to life in the sounds that the orchestra produces. The musical score is usually coded with various **conventional markers**, which indicate the speed, tempo, tone and intensity of the section of musical phrases, sections and movements to be played. It is up to the conductor to interpret whether these gradations are executed judiciously by the performers playing the instruments. The conductor should have in his/her head, the kind of overall picture that s/he wishes to recreate in the different phrases, sections*



or movements, how they combine to produce the **consummate picture** of the musical piece being rendered.

Using his/her baton, s/he hearkens the different players of the orchestra to **anticipate** the quality of intensity, volume and pace with which s/he wishes the particular section to be played. In fulfilling this role, s/he therefore has to anticipate how the different instruments of the orchestra make their **entrance** into the musical conversation. The conductor has to be aware of the quality and value of the sound that each instrument is able to yield, and therefore, will need to indicate to the performer the manner in which the particular instrument, and indeed, the particular performer of that instrument, makes his/her **entrance**. A gestural cue through the use of the conductor's hands and the baton is used to communicate between the conductor and the orchestra.


The conductor needs (besides knowledge of his/her players and their instruments) to be deeply aware of the particular **composition** that is being rendered. It is obligatory, indeed intrinsic, that the conductor has a deep understanding of the technical values of the different **musical notations**. Of course, the skilled conductor often has internalised these skills and has usually no need to be able to read the score during a performance. On another level the conductor needs to be aware of the particular **characteristics** of the kind of music that is being played, the period within which the piece was composed, the kind of musical flare that was captured in the composer's written score.

A knowledge of the specific **context** within which the musical piece is to be rendered is also needed. For example, the conductor has to be aware of the particular acoustics of the room/ hall/ recital venue within which the music is being played.

Whilst it might seem that the conductor is constrained by these many conditions surrounding the performance of the orchestra, it is his/her sole duty **to make choices**. S/He may choose to flagrantly ignore the composer's recommended speed. Usually the exact speed of a piece is indicated in modern publications of music; directions are indicated to the performer in the form of a "metronome mark" inscribed at the beginning of a section. This mark indicates a clockwork precision on a pendulum-like instrument. The number of ticks per minute is regulated indicating the speed at which the piece is to be rendered. However, the conductor can choose to ignore the precise regulations as a consequence of his/her interpretation of the preceding and following musical sections that s/he wishes to present. S/He may therefore choose to speed up the tempo, or even slow it down in relation to the kind of contrasts that s/he wishes to make in the overall rendition of the piece. In this way, it is appropriate that the metaphor of "playing" music is used. **All musical playing is an interpretation.**

In the **first chapter** of this dissertation I have presented the orchestra pit of the University of Durban-Westville, Faculty of Education and the Special Method English course. This is the context within which the musical performance of this dissertation is rendered. I introduced the stage to the audience by raising the tabs (curtains) so that the various players of the full orchestra can be revealed. The players producing the musical performance in this dissertation are the novice student teachers of the year 1997 reading for a course preparing them to become teachers of English. The musical score is the teaching of English in a rapidly changing context with its variety of contiguous influences from macro and micro level forces.

I then take **my position on the podium as conductor of this research project**. I indicated in Chapter One the kind of biographical preparation that I had made in my career as a teacher of English, a teacher educator and now a researcher. As I take the podium, I am aware of the musical notation that I myself have been reading in the form of the policy regulations and the specific context of their implementation / interpretation in the South African teacher education and school scenarios. I have chosen to look at the process of playing out this research study in the context of a rapidly changing post-apartheid South Africa. The success of my rendition/ interpretation of this context will be the criteria against which to judge the performance of my musicians. I am aware of the quality of performance of the various educational players (teachers, subject advisors, student teachers, teacher



educators) and have heard them play their music before. My previous experiences of listening to the music of other educational players has made me sensitive to how I wish to conduct my study.

In **Chapter Two** I presented the kind of theoretical knowledge that is necessary when conducting a research study into the area of how teachers learn to teach. I present this kind of knowledge as a knowledge that has evolved according to the shifting emphases of the different historical periods. A deep understanding of the history of musical thought allows the research conductor to be able to evaluate the quality of the musical score that one is working with. I indicate what kind of knowledge is theoretically needed in order to execute the task of being a professional teacher and how theoretically teachers might activate this knowledge.

The players themselves have all had previous training about how to present their musical score: the student teachers have all a rich biography of experiences that they bring to the performance of teaching and learning. Different schools of thought (models of teacher education curriculum) emphasise different kinds of knowledge that teachers should develop during their preparation to become teachers. These different models of preparation are presented in Chapter Two.

Section One: Setting up the Research Study


In this **chapter** I present an account of what happens **behind the scenes** before the final rendering of the research study. I indicate the kind of **musical rehearsal** that tries to take into account the specific context of a rapidly changing society: the concert hall for performance of the research. I indicate the kind of detailed **rehearsals** that are needed when attempting to gain insight into teacher's thinking. Like the musical conductor who works with the orchestra in developing the quality of interpretation of the musical score and the systems of coding their relationship in paralinguistic signs, I present the research process as a process of developing the quality of **interaction between the researcher and the players**. Together, we developed an elaborate system of being able to allow the musical sounds to be produced (the data of this research).

Before the actual performance of the musical piece there are a series of steps that the players engage in, in order to prepare for the concert. Firstly, the players are expected to arrive well before the beginning of the performance. Their first task is to **warm up their instruments**. This process involves the random playing of excerpts of music so that the timbre (specific musical characteristic) of the instrument is consistently rendered. A "cold" instrument usually does not provide consistent and reliable rendition of notes. The sounds of this warming-up period are the sounds that usually greet the audience of the performance when they enter the performance space. It truly is a cacophony of disconnected and unrelated notes and strains of "music". This "musical noise" was the strains I described in the preface during my first orchestral experience. The experience of my setting up the research design was characterised by this "musical noise": several constraining and enabling factors working for and against the research study.

Once the players have warmed up the musical instruments individually, they would all need to **tune their instruments to each other**. By convention all instruments have to produce the note "A" with a frequency of 441 Hertz. The player of the oboe then plays the note "A" on his/her instrument. This is rendered at the appropriate frequency. All other instruments then tune in their instruments to reflect the same quality of frequency of sound when playing the note "A".

Thereafter, the different players ensure that their **own instrument is in tune**. This process involves the different musicians adjusting the mechanical parts of his/her own specific instruments to ensure that the musical scale of different notes are correctly rendered within the instrument itself. This means that the instrument is ready for performance both in its individual capacity and in its capacity to be played alongside all the other instruments, which accompany it in the orchestral performance. This cross-tuning and internal tuning is reflected in the debates about being able to access the mental thoughts of the research subjects i.e. the student teachers' thinking.

Section Two: The Data Collection Plan



In this section of the chapter I reveal the kind of preparation to render the music performance of student teachers' learning to teach. It begins with a process of "selecting the musicians" that will be used in this research study. This involves demonstrating clearly to the reader who the musicians of this research study are, and what **are the different instruments they were asked to play**. The various kinds of instruments that were used to render the musical performance are revealed here. The particular **strengths and limitations** of the different research instruments and their ability to yield answers to the critical questions are presented in this section.

The process of tuning the instruments to ensure that they render as accurately the quality of musical sound is captured in my analysis of the **appropriacy of the data** to be able to yield the data required. I also present in this chapter how the players themselves (i.e. the student teachers) were fine-tuning the instruments to reveal the data. I also show in this chapter how the different instruments of this study relate to each other. The **complementary roles of the different instruments** and their ability to reveal insight into teacher development in a rapidly changing context are features of this section.

The orchestra consists of **four broad groupings of instruments**, each with their unique characteristics: the string section, the brass section, the woodwind section and the percussion section. Each instrument of the different sections yields different sounds (data) but together they are able to produce a musical experience. This magical joining of the different instruments held my childhood fascination (recorded in the preface to this dissertation). The composer may at different points in the musical score foreground one or two instruments, but their individual rendering of the section is only appreciated in terms of how they offset against the backdrop of the whole musical composition. I have chosen to foreground certain "**primary data sources**" and instruments in this study. These primary data sources will be analysed in more depth than the other data sources and will form the bulk of the analysis section of the next chapter.

Section Three: Analysing the Data

This chapter concludes with the **analysis of the phenomenon of language as data to reveal teachers' thinking**. This section argues for an analysis of the information yielded by the instruments of this study as language first, and then data later. To draw a parallel to the musical metaphor, the aim of this section is to **hear** the detailed rendition of the notes, how are the musical notations rendered in the presentation from written words into sounds. However, the listener, needs to transcend beyond just how the notes are being rendered. It is also about how the different instruments of the orchestra **relate** to each other to produce a particular quality of sounds; how the particular conductor allows the specific instruments and players to **yield** their music; how the different sections of brass, woodwind, strings and percussion sections of the orchestra **talk to each other**. All of these relationships ultimately combine to produce/ create the music. **Playing in an orchestra is not an individualistic act**. The act of musical rendition is a factor of the interrelationship between the different performers, the relationship with the conductor, the ambience of the context and occasion within which the music is being played. **Playing music in an orchestra is a social phenomenon of interconnected relationships**.

The data revealed during the playing is thus, a consummation of the different quality of relationships and must be understood as such. The musical quality rendered by an orchestra is ultimately a product of these unique sets of interrelationships between particular people, particular instruments and particular musical scores.

In this chapter I provide the detailed characteristics of the **different instruments, the different musicians and the quality of relationships between the musicians and the principal conductor**.

As conductor of this research study, I now tap my baton against the podium to get all the musicians to concentrate on the creative musical expression ahead. I raise my baton. The orchestra is ready to play!



Section One: Setting up the Research Study:

Warming up the Instruments

In this section I provide a narrative account of how the research methodology unfolded during the process of the research study. I raise questions around the inherent difficulties of doing research in rapidly changing contexts, such as that of post-apartheid South Africa. I conclude this section with the presentation of a theoretical debate around the processes of collecting data about teacher thinking.

1.1 The Unfolding of the Research Design:

Tuning the Instruments to each other

The changing emphases of the research process was as a response to various contextual factors which emerged during the setting up of the research process and specifically the execution of the collection (and analysis) of the research data. I should however, like to partly distinguish this from an "emergent design" methodology of research: where there is a deliberate decision to allow the process of the research methodology to unfold in the course of doing the research (See Vithal: 1998a). In my study I had already formulated before entering the field the kind of focal questions and research strategies that I intended using in the study. I began with an already well-formulated plan for data collection. Nevertheless, I was open to the possibility of being influenced by the specifics of enacting the research design.

My original plan was to collect data around three focus areas:

- the student teachers' biographical experiences of learning English;
- the quality of curriculum intervention of university teacher educators in addressing the issues around teaching English in multilingual contexts, and;
- the use of classroom strategies by STs to address the teaching / learning of English in multilingual classrooms.


A simplified version of this original study would have involved analysing who we (teacher educators) teach in the teacher preparation programmes, what and how we teach STs and what effect this has on their classroom practice. The emphasis of this original study seemed to have been placed largely on analysing the effect of the teacher preparation curriculum (See Reddy and Jansen: 1995 for a discussion of strategies for curriculum analysis).

My research plan changed because of the following reasons:

As an exercise in understanding the specific views of schoolteachers about UDW's teacher education school-based curriculum, I conducted several interviews with mentor teachers who had supervised our students. This preliminary investigation presented me with sufficient insight into the difficulties associated with the "rituals of disempowerment" which constrained the actions of STs as they attempted to engage with the teaching / learning of English within a variety of teaching contexts. The design of the SMEC was regarded as a specific intervention to address these concerns arising out of the preliminary study. (For a discussion of the details of the preliminary investigation and the SMEC curriculum intervention see Chapter One: Section 3.1 "Searching for Song" and 3.4.2 "Collaborative Cacophonies"). This preliminary study seemed to be addressing the needs of the original investigation concerning the curriculum impact of our teacher preparation programme. My quest for deeper understanding of the issues around the preparation of teachers of English was however, not fulfilled.

After administering the first assignment of the SMEC which attempted to provide insight into the student teachers' biographical experiences of learning English, I became aware of the enormity of the scale and complexity of the investigation that I had originally planned.

Writing an autobiography was not an exercise that most students were comfortable



with. I began to realise the cultural loadedness of the activity of writing an autobiography. Writing reflective journals or diaries seemed to be within the cultural experience of only some of the students. Many of the students saw this activity as an alien one. This resulted in several hours of direct one-to-one consultations with those who had no experience in this mode of writing. The STs' assignments nevertheless, surprised and fascinated me.

Eventually the 82 students of the SMEC chose to ignore the limits of the length of their autobiographical assignments. They wrote detailed and insightful biographies of their experiences of home and schooling in relation to the learning of the English language. It was clear that they themselves saw the value of doing such an assignment. What did I learn from this that influenced my next steps as a researcher?

The consultation time with my STs about writing and assessing the assignments highlighted for me the importance of their reflections on their own background experiences of learning English. It became clearer to me that the focus of my investigation should be directed towards the following area of the preparation of English teachers:

- How do STs' experiences of teaching / learning English influence their understanding of what English language teaching entails?


Student teachers revealed, in my preliminary discussions about the autobiographical assignment, that they had a wealth of experiences of English language teaching/ learning, and these past experiences were weighing heavily on their engagement with the SMEC curriculum.

My interview (conducted in the early stages of the course) with a group of five students indicated that they were making judgements about their expectations about the SMEC based on their unique experiences with learning the English language both at school and university levels (See Appendix 3). This prompted me to narrow my research study to focus on these particular lifehistories of English language teaching / learning. This meant that the unit of analysis had shifted from a broad (too broad) focus on the curriculum impact of teacher preparation programmes. I became more interested in the STs' perceptions about their lived experiences of English language teaching / learning. This lived experience was not necessarily confined to their past only. The assignment showed me that they continued developing an understanding about English language teaching/learning, even within the teacher preparation course, and were drawing on their earlier experiences in significant ways.

My deviation from the original study was also fuelled by pragmatic concerns. In the support discussions around the autobiographical assignment I assumed a dual role of being teacher educator and educational researcher. On the one hand, I was educating STs about autobiographical writing. On the other hand, I was getting students to yield data about their educational background experiences of learning English. This process of reflection on their own biographies proved to be the first steps of their own development as teachers of the English language. Playing these simultaneous roles was particularly time-consuming. Being able to provide quality feedback to all 82 STs became a near impossibility for me as a teacher educator. My colleagues willingly obliged in sharing the workload of providing detailed feedback to the STs about their written reflections.

At the same time within the Faculty I was appointed as co-ordinator of the final-year teacher preparation programme which demanded several consultative meetings between the different members of staff who taught different and often duplicated disciplines of education to the final year graduating students. My task was to develop a more coherent inter-relationship between the various parts of the curriculum, which included the relationship between the on-campus curriculum and the school-based field curriculum. The development of a schools partnership model for our school-based practice teaching programme also became part of my duties. Work pressures demanded a more streamlined research design for my study.

The task of working simultaneously as teacher educator, educational researcher and contributor towards the transformation of faculty's



curriculum began to bear down heavily on my capacity to conduct my original research proposal.

When marking the autobiographies of the student teachers I realised that there was sufficiently rich data with which to work with in my research. I therefore, abandoned the focus on investigating the quality of teacher education curriculum intervention that teacher educators were making in relation to the preparation of STs for the teaching of English in multilingual classrooms (the second focus area of the original research design). My original intention was to make detailed observations during my colleagues' teaching of the SMEC. I also intended providing a detailed investigation into my own involvement in the teaching of the SMEC. This focus on the study of teacher educators' intervention was intended to contribute to an evaluation of the teaching strategies used to prepare student teachers. In the interest of scaling down the study to a manageable task I chose to abandon the focus on the teacher educators.

I chose instead to focus the unit of analysis of my revised research study on the student teachers themselves. The focus of the study was on what the Swedish researcher, Marton (1981) refers to as "phenomenography": where the aim of the research is not to examine what the phenomena per se are, but rather how individuals make sense of the phenomena. I chose to focus on *what* are the STs' experiences and knowledge of learning / teaching English, but more importantly *how* do STs make sense of these experiences and knowledge during the process of learning to teach. This more focussed emphasis allowed me to execute more manageably my simultaneous duties of teacher educator, educational researcher and faculty agent for curriculum development.

My role as a teacher educator and researcher meant that I had the privilege of being an "insider researcher". There are several advantages to being an "insider researcher":

- I was in fact researching my own teacher education context about which I am deeply familiar; I have been part of the discourses that were established throughout the course;
- I had been largely responsible for designing the course programme, and would therefore, have an insider perspective of its intended and actualised goals;
- I had access to the student teachers' nuanced participation during the courses I "taught";
- I had insight into the various kinds of activities to which students referred to in their reflective journals, which they maintained throughout the course of the programme.

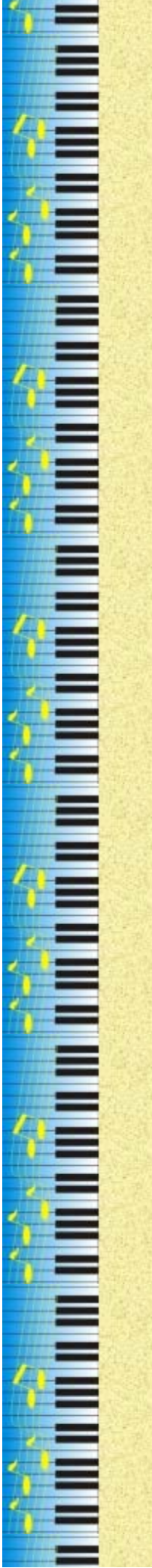
To be simultaneously researcher and teacher educator impacted intensely on my involvement with both the research and my teaching of the student teachers.

- I came to know the STs quite intimately and was able to design teaching/learning experiences more directly related to their own level of abilities and understanding.
- I was able to better read the context/ culture of the classroom/ lecture hall as all good teachers who know their students/ pupils ought to be able to do.
- The strategy of writing the autobiography allowed me access to draw on a range of specific case study experiences when discussing language teaching / learning methodology such that it became more "real" to the students.
- My insider role afforded me the opportunity to probe deeply into student teachers' perceptions. This was afterall, what I believed teacher education was about.

My agenda as a teacher educator and as a researcher was being simultaneously fulfilled.

The drawbacks of being an insider researcher also need to be acknowledged.

- It is likely that my closeness to the research context did not allow me a significantly "distanced" critical vantage point with which to evaluate the data that the students would yield.



My own biases about being a teacher on the course might predispose me to evaluate the programme and the student teachers' actions more favourably.

However, it was not my own interpretation that was the focus of this study. It was the student teachers' interpretations of the SMEC as part of their developing experiences with learning to become teachers of English that defined the focus of this study.

- It may be argued that the STs were always aware that I was their lecturer and that this "lecturer role" has an inherited set of "powers" which students might not have wanted to challenge. For example, in producing the data the STs may have been prone to producing what they thought I would like to have heard about the course. After all, the SMEC involved my having to assess the students (See discussion of assessment in Data Collection Strategy 12 below). This might have influenced students to reveal only dimensions about themselves that they would consider "appropriate" or "acceptable" to me as one of their course leaders.

For the above reasons it became important for me to create in my interactions with the students the necessary kind of open critical discursive space within which they were able to freely produce comments (data) without fear of intimidation or repercussion. This did not mean that I did not directly provoke students into alternative ways of viewing or reviewing any topic in the SMEC. The climate established within the SMEC classroom and within their school teaching practice placement was therefore, crucial to authentic data being collected. A variety of data collection strategies (described in Section Two below) was also necessary in order to provide different opportunities for the students to produce data in as many different forms as possible.


Valero and Vithal (1998) comment that the above refocusing and alteration to original data collection plans and research methodologies seem to be endemic to researchers within the context of a rapidly changing context. Reflecting on their research studies within the Colombian and South African contexts, they suggest that there is a need to foreground the complexity of doing research in unstable, developing social contexts. The intention of their submission is: explore alternative frames of reference for how to evaluate such research and how to scrutinise the research findings in terms of their value for the users in the specific unstable research contexts.

One of the characteristics of doing research within a developing world context is that the researcher is often expected to fulfil several roles simultaneously. Each of these different roles makes demands on the individual that may be sometimes complementary, sometimes contradictory. Particularly, I realised this phenomenon when having to deal with simultaneously managing the several roles of teacher educator, educational researcher and development agent while attempting to execute my original research design.

The "luxury" of being able to focus exclusively on a research project independent of one's other roles is rarely afforded to university academics in a rapidly transforming educational context. For example:

- as a teacher educator I was expected to contribute to my students' development as teachers of the English language;
- as a researcher, I was attempting to develop an understanding of how STs were making sense of these experiences that I was fashioning for them. My own involvement in "producing the data" and "evaluating the data" may therefore come into question;
- as a developer of the new co-ordinated and coherent curriculum, for the faculty and our emerging model of partnership with schools, I was in fact altering the quality of "normality" of patterns of the teacher preparation programme. This "interference" is part of my contribution as shaper of new teacher preparation curriculum. It ran parallel to my role as researcher using the participants (STs) as the data sources who were experiencing this changing curriculum.

Valero and Vithal (ibid.) suggest that "disruptions to data collection plans" may take



on more dramatic alterations within the context of a rapidly changing context. In fact, they suggest that "disruptions to carefully conceived plans are the norm rather than the exception" in research contexts which are undergoing fundamental transformations in their educational, social and economic order (ibid.: 1). For example:


- Researchers may be simply unable to gain access to schools within which research was intended to be conducted. This may be due to class boycotts, student or teacher strikes, unscheduled closing of schools due to political or social problems. The school context is merely a microcosm of wider social changes, and therefore, a variety of macro- and micro- level factors come to be played out within the school context. As educational researchers, the clearly laid plans of data collection are often unable to be carried out.
- The research subjects within the context of a rapidly changing society are also characterised by a kind of evolutionary (if not radical) transformation of their own personalities, ideologies and beliefs. The evolutionary status of such change entails that data collected from subjects about their beliefs; ideologies, attitudes, etc. are potentially subject to a range of fluctuations. These fluctuations do not (as to be expected) progress in neat trajectories.
- Researching the subjective interpretations of research subjects may alter significantly in relation to time, place and context during the data collection process.
- The researcher is likely to find that research subjects often offer contradictory subjective interpretations about the same events. Research subjects might profess one set of claims on "Day One" and a completely different set of claims about the same issue a few days or weeks later.
- As a researcher one may also find wide gaps between what the research subjects say (for example, about their classroom practice) and what they actually do (in their classroom actions).

Neat, definitive analysis of singular data collection strategies is unlikely to yield a fuller picture of this level of complexity within the research context. These apparent contradictions in the data nevertheless, point to the individual agent equally attempting to make sense of the many competing sets of values, ideologies and beliefs that "orbit" around his/her sphere of influence. The individual research subject might chose to foreground any one of these spheres of influence in relation to a variety of possible stimuli: the nature of the particular topic under review during the research process; the interviewer's personal background (race, gender, perceived political affiliations, status, etc.); the immediate prior experience with a particular set of learners, etc.

The solution suggested to address the above issues is not to imitate "sanitised" versions of data collection processes to satisfy the criteria for "standards of rigour" that has been predicated on stable research environments. It is necessary for researchers within rapidly changing contexts to present the levels of complexity, the levels of complementarity and contradictions in the data, the messiness of the research process –all of which are the hallmarks of the specific context within which we operate.

Of course this is not without its drawbacks. Vithal (1998a: 1-2) points out: when the research methodology attempts to be true to its context, it runs the risk of those outside of its context, deeming the research to lack the methodological rigour expected of educational research. The researcher is caught in a double bind: "if the criteria for rigour are preserved in the methodology, it runs the risk of becoming irrelevant to the context; and if the methodology is made relevant to the context, it runs the risk of being considered poor methodologically".

At the end of Chapter Two, I presented what I consider to be a model of the "level of complexity, complementarity and contradiction" when attempting to research, in rapidly changing contexts, the development trajectory of STs as they embark on the



journey of becoming teachers. In presenting this model I note the recommendations made by Guba and Lincoln (1982) about developing an alternative set of terminology to elevate the trustworthiness of the naturalistic paradigm of research within which this model may be located.

Guba and Lincoln (ibid.) suggest that the aim of the naturalist inquirer is not to present a single reality asserting itself as "the truth". Naturalist inquirers should aim to discover the multiple realities that co-exist within any research context. The role of the researcher is to represent this level of messiness after having been thoroughly immersed in the thickness of the context. The human informants of the research context should judge the value of the research itself to gauge whether their realities have been accurately represented. The trustworthiness of the research derives out of whether the informants find the data credible rather than whether the data proclaims an eternal truth.

Instead of being preoccupied with the representativity of research (external validity) Guba and Lincoln (ibid.) suggest the use of the construct "transferability". The naturalist inquirer should be concerned with describing as "thickly" as possible the specificities of the research context under review. This would enable any reader of the research report to choose the degree of distance between the context being described and his/her own context. The choice is left up to the reader to decide whether to transfer ideas, insights or interpretations across into their own contexts.

Similarly, the use of the term "dependability" is offered to counter the construct of "reliability" (ibid.). The trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiry should be assessed not according to how consistent a particular human action, phenomenon or behaviour is ("reliability"), but rather how dependent these actions, behaviours and phenomena are on the complex interactive, dynamic and dialectical processes under investigation.

The naturalist inquirer always foregrounds his/her own involvement in the construction of the data since "data do not speak for themselves": data can only be confirmed via the human intervention of the researcher.

The presentation of this view of research may be controversial if read superficially. Critics of the axioms of the naturalist research "paradigm" suggest that this might slide the pursuit of knowledge into a bottomless pit of relativism. A closer reading of proponents of the naturalist inquirer's view of research reveals that one of the aims of naturalistic inquiry is to provide in-depth rich information, which is uniquely context-bound. This assists the process of raising the spirit of researchers, providing the research world not with definitive answers, but rather with clearer questions to ask about one's own research contexts.

With these caveats about doing research in rapidly changing contexts, I now turn to another complexity of the specific research focus of my study: attempting to gain access into STs' thinking. This might be said to be a process of "looking into the invisible".

1.2 Researching Teacher-Thinking: Looking into the Invisible:

Internal Tunings

In this section I present the theoretical framework which guided the research methodology used in this study. Freeman (1996) argues that a particular kind of research "trustworthiness" (he uses the term "rigour") is needed when one is attempting to move into the realm of researching teacher thinking. Because one is looking into the teachers' perceptions of their learning to teach, it becomes crucial to examine how one gains access into these thoughts / perceptions. The standards of trustworthiness for research into teacher thinking therefore hinges on the clear demonstration of the kinds of choices that were made about:

- what constitutes the data that one would use to reveal the teachers' thinking,
- what were the processes engaged in during the gathering of the data,

- how the researcher and the researched engaged with each other
 - during the formulation of the data, as well as
 - during the process of interpretation of the data.

However, Freeman (ibid.) argues that there is no one particular approach as to how this data gathering, analysis and interpretation should be developed. The particular purpose of the specific research agenda of each study will influence the decisions made about the research methodology. He summarises these different kinds of research methodologies that may be used in the following table:


How are data gathered?		How are data analyzed?		
Data source	Gathering	Analysis Stance	Analysis Process	Analysis Categories
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observation/ field notes ● Documentary analysis ● Stimulated recall (videotape) ● Classroom discourse/language data (audiotape) ● Survey (data/questionnaire) 	<p>Time: "real" versus ex-post facto collection</p> <p>Relation of researcher to data:</p> <p>Emic ↑ Self-generated ↓ Collaborative ↓ Documentary ↓ Etic</p>	<p>What is the researcher's relationship to the study?</p> <p>Participatory ↑ Collaborative ↓ Declaratory</p>	<p>How are data linked to analysis?</p> <p>Linear ↑ Iterative ↓</p>	<p>How is the interpretation of the data arrived at, and by whom?</p> <p>Emic ↑ Grounded ↓ Negotiated ↓ Guided ↓ A priori ↓ Etic</p>

[Click here to view a full version of Table 7](#)

Table 7: Summary of Research Methodology in the Study of Teacher Learning (Freeman: 1996: 368)

The first column reveals the range of data that may be used to gain access into teachers' thinking. These include observation of classroom practice, documents produced by the teachers (lesson plans, classroom materials, worksheets, curriculum plans), teachers' descriptions of their practice gleaned through a stimulated recall (e.g. videotapes of their lesson actions), the (audio-taped) transcripts of their lessons or answers on surveys or questionnaires about their perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation. All of these data nevertheless, differ in degrees to which they can gain access to teachers' thinking (Refer to discussion of data collection techniques in Section Two below, where I justify the particular research strategy employed to answer the specific foci of the research study. In doing so, I will reveal the degree to which the instruments and data collection technique used is able to gain access to the STs' thinking).

The data chosen by the researcher can be self-generated as in the case of researchers researching their own practice, hence the researcher creates his/her own data. The researcher may choose to gather data as an external observer assembling the data from evidence that is gleaned through a variety of techniques (observation, documentary evidence, interviews, etc.). Freeman (ibid.) refers to this second form as a "declarative" approach to data gathering. The middle ground involves a deliberate co-construction of the data that results as a consequence of both the researcher and the researched jointly engaging in the process of constructing what they consider to be their (or the researched's) thinking/ learning. This "collaborative" approach is usually of the kind where the intervention of researching the teacher's thinking would not have ordinarily occurred without the intervention of the researcher. This last form of data gathering characterised the research methodology used in this study (Refer to Section Three below which outlines the strategies used for data analysis in this research study).



Since the emphasis is on teacher's thoughts/ perceptions, it is appropriate for researchers to use "ex post facto" (ibid.) data i.e. data that occur after the act of teaching, rather than data that is presented in "real time" i.e. during the act of teaching. This has resulted in many researchers into teacher thinking relying on stimulated recall sessions, reflective journals or clinical interviews as a technique for gaining access into teachers' thinking, decision-making. (Clinical interviewing might be said to sit perhaps midway between "real time data" and "ex-post facto" data.) Documentary evidence of teachers' work provide a "broader background and context for teachers' cognitive activity...they can also serve as an important means of triangulation" (ibid.: 1996: 370). The same may be said for direct observation of classroom activity. The teachers' commentaries on classroom practice (e.g. in stimulated recall sessions) may however, reveal more closely teachers' thoughts / perceptions. All these forms of data collection were employed in this study (Refer to Section Two below).

When evaluating the trustworthiness of the data analysis process of a research study, Freeman (ibid.: 371) presents three elements:

- **the data analysis stance,**
- **the data analysis process, and**
- **the data analysis categories.**
- The **stance** refers to the "attitude the researcher adopts towards participants in the study in analysing the data" (ibid.). The researcher may include the research subjects to engage collaboratively in making sense of the data, or s/he could handle the analysis on his/her own without the assistance of the researched.
- The **process** of data analysis refers to "the way in which the data analysis unfolds throughout the research process" (ibid.). In a *linear* analysis the researcher breaks down the data into meaningful units, records them in appropriate tables/ figures, and analyses these units and draws conclusions. An *iterative* process involves the researcher constantly going backwards and forwards to the research context, the data themselves, the data source, maybe even the research instruments and techniques. The analysis unfolds as the researcher assembles and reassembles the data with the goal of verifying the data.
- The **categories** of data analysis refer to the distinction between
 - "a priori" research categories, and
 - "grounded categories" (Miles and Huberman: 1994; Strauss: 1987).

The former are categories that are established before the data analysis begins and exist as a framework to organise and classify the incoming data.

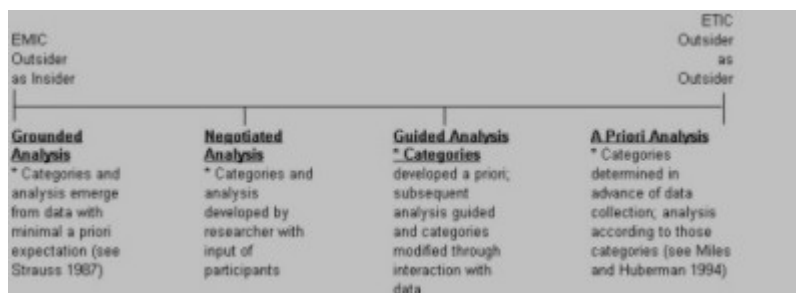
The latter refers to categories that are developed from, and hence are "grounded in" the data themselves. The researcher limits his/her views about what may be relevant or not before looking at the data.

Freeman (1996:371) posits categories, which may exist between these two ends of a continuum of data analysis categories. He calls them:

- "negotiated categories", and
- "guided categories".

The former refers to "those which the researcher and the researched develop through participatory, and usually iterative, analysis of the data " (ibid.: 371).

The latter refer to the categories that "spring from a priori categories that previous knowledge and experience might suggest about the topic, they respond to what the researcher finds in the data" (ibid.: 372). The following figure represents this continuum of research data analysis and interpretation.



[Click here to view full size version of Figure 15](#)

Figure 15: Data Analysis and Interpretation (Freeman: 1996: 372)

The standards of trustworthiness that are needed in researching teacher thinking need to be gauged in relation to how the researcher is able to gain access into teacher thinking, how and when the data is analysed. The choice of data collection, analysis and interpretation is crucial to the quality of the research.

In Section Two below, I justify each of the research data collection strategies against this theoretical framework of researching teacher thinking.

Summary of Section One: The Research Design

In this section, I have attempted to highlight the kinds of constraints that confronted me whilst adopting the simultaneous roles of teacher educator and researcher, and also the demands of being committed to the development agenda of reconstructing the teacher education system at macro and micro levels. I chose to narrow the focus of my study away from a broad "teacher education curriculum impact emphasis" towards a more manageable focus. My revised research study focussed on the STs themselves as the unit of analysis. I particularly focused on what interpretations STs were making of their biographical experiences of learning / teaching of the English language, both in their past (home and school) and during the teacher preparation course (at university and at teaching practicum schools).

This section continued with a theoretical debate about elevating the trustworthiness of research in rapidly changing contexts. It presented the case for a research methodology, which tapped the level of complexity, complementarity and contradiction of a transforming research context.

The conclusion of this section deals with developing trustworthiness in the data collection and analysis. I have articulated the kinds of "theoretical framework" for ensuring trustworthiness in a research methodology based on teacher thinking. I will now focus on the specific choices I made when designing the research methodology for my study.

Section Two: The Data Collection Plan

Playing Orchestral Instruments


2.1 Choosing the Case Studies:

Selecting the Musicians

In this section I shall describe the research strategies employed to answer the specific research question of the newly formulated study.

The critical research question of this study was:

CRITICAL RESEARCH QUESTION



How do student teachers experience the learning and teaching of English over different periods of their lives?

The research data was collected during the course of the one-year pre-service teacher preparation programme on which I currently teach at the University of Durban-Westville. I have described in Chapter One: Sections 3.3. and 3.4 the specific characteristics of this course and its student population.

In selecting STs from this course as subjects for this research, I used the technique of "purposive sampling" which Cohen and Manion (1994: 89) describe as follows:

"In purposive sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgements of their typicality. In this way, they build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs."

Walker (1980) describes case study methodology as "the science of the singular". Cohen and Manion (1994: 106-107) describe the aim of case study as being:

"to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with the view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which the unit belongs."

- The unit of analysis in this research study was the STs. Those serving as case studies were handpicked because they represented the diversities of students within my Special Method English class. The diversities had

been identified through my early engagements with the STs in the Special Method class. The criteria for selection were:

- geographic location of the schools attended by the student teachers,
- the race of the students,
- their gender,
- the linguistic heritage of their family/ community,
- their religious background,
- the other subject method that they were registered for;
- the degree/ diploma that they were studying.

These criteria were regarded as "purposive" to my study, which was probing into the linguistic and cultural heritages of a variety of STs from the South African context. The specific students were also selected because of their ability to clearly articulate their thoughts, feelings and reflections on their knowledge and experiences. This ability to articulate clearly was regarded as potentially useful to yield qualitatively rich data if they were to be chosen for the stimulated recall sessions based on observation of their classroom teaching.

The students chosen and the kind of "background" / heritage are represented in Table 8: Case Study Student Teachers' Heritages. The description of the category "young student" and "mature student" needs further explanation. "Young student" refers to those students who entered into their university career straight after their secondary schooling experiences. The "mature student" are those who had a lapse in their study after secondary school. This latter category are those who gained work experience before entering the Faculty of Education. Some of these experiences were developed before or after their first degrees (The label "young" or "mature" has no relationship to their level of cognitive preparedness).



#19 Photograph: (1997) "Case Study Students". From left to right: Kamalan, Ravesh, William, Romola, Michael (Researcher), Zakiyya, Imraan, Sanelesiwe, Thembi. Inset: Emmanuel

The strategy for data collection aimed to tap several "ways of knowing" about the STs' biographical lives as related to the issues around English language teaching / learning. A variety of strategies (described in more detail in Section 2.2 below) were explored for the students to produce the data:

- written autobiographies,
- oral presentation depicting their life experiences,
- construction of visual collages about their life experiences,
- interviews about their life experiences of English language teaching/learning,
- reflective journals representing their developing experiences of the teacher preparation programme, and school-based teaching practice,
- the observation of their classroom practice accompanied by stimulus recall interview providing commentary on their actions,
- peer and self assessments,
- a focus group interview at the end of the course, and
- written examination scripts.

This variety of data collection strategies was able to yield different kinds of data:

- data presented in the written mode (e.g. the autobiography, the reflective journals, the examination scripts);
- data presented in the spoken mode (e.g. oral presentations in class, interviews)
- data presented in the visual mode (e.g. collages).

I shall discuss in Section Three of this chapter why this range of expression modes is crucial in developing qualitative data when researching teacher thinking.

[Click here for an enlarged version of graphic](#)



ST	Gender	Age	Grade	School	Location	Teacher	Classroom	Observation	Stimulated Recall	Written Autobiography	Stimulus Recall Interview	Reflective Journal
1	Male	22	Grade 10	School A	Urban	Teacher A	Classroom A	Observation A	Stimulated Recall A	Written Autobiography A	Stimulus Recall Interview A	Reflective Journal A
2	Female	21	Grade 11	School B	Rural	Teacher B	Classroom B	Observation B	Stimulated Recall B	Written Autobiography B	Stimulus Recall Interview B	Reflective Journal B
3	Male	23	Grade 12	School C	Urban	Teacher C	Classroom C	Observation C	Stimulated Recall C	Written Autobiography C	Stimulus Recall Interview C	Reflective Journal C
4	Female	20	Grade 9	School D	Rural	Teacher D	Classroom D	Observation D	Stimulated Recall D	Written Autobiography D	Stimulus Recall Interview D	Reflective Journal D
5	Male	24	Grade 10	School E	Urban	Teacher E	Classroom E	Observation E	Stimulated Recall E	Written Autobiography E	Stimulus Recall Interview E	Reflective Journal E
6	Female	22	Grade 11	School F	Rural	Teacher F	Classroom F	Observation F	Stimulated Recall F	Written Autobiography F	Stimulus Recall Interview F	Reflective Journal F
7	Male	21	Grade 12	School G	Urban	Teacher G	Classroom G	Observation G	Stimulated Recall G	Written Autobiography G	Stimulus Recall Interview G	Reflective Journal G
8	Female	23	Grade 9	School H	Rural	Teacher H	Classroom H	Observation H	Stimulated Recall H	Written Autobiography H	Stimulus Recall Interview H	Reflective Journal H
9	Male	20	Grade 10	School I	Urban	Teacher I	Classroom I	Observation I	Stimulated Recall I	Written Autobiography I	Stimulus Recall Interview I	Reflective Journal I

Table 8: Case Study Student Teacher Profiles

Only four students: Ravesh, Emmanuel, Sanelesiwe and Thembi were used to yield data from classroom observation and stimulated recall sessions. During the course of the school-based teaching practicum I was involved in the supervision of 24 students. These 24 students were located in four different schools. William, Romola and Zakiyya were not placed in schools that I supervised. Data collection in these latter contexts would not have been possible. It was pragmatically impossible to collect data from all the nine subjects.

The broad aim of this data collection plan was to yield data, which would contribute to two forms of analysis:

- Narrative analysis, and
- Discourse analysis

I will discuss these concepts in more detail in Section Three below and in the introduction to Chapter Four.

Suffice to say now, is that the first level of data analysis aims to reconstruct the lifehistory of the STs whom I chose as the focus of this study.

The narrative analysis involved the synthesis by the researcher, of all of the above data sources in the form of a narrative depicting the developing process of learning to become a teacher of English. This narrative draws on all the contexts within which experiences of English language teaching and learning were garnered over different periods of the students' lives.

A sample of three texts was used to provide the second level of in-depth discourse analysis. The three texts were extracts from the ST's:


- written autobiography (constructed at the beginning of the teacher preparation programme);
- transcripts of the stimulus recall interview (during school-based teaching practice, in which the student provides commentary on his/her classroom action of teaching English);
- reflective journal (at the end of the school-based teaching practice).

A "dimensional sampling" of the nine case studies was made to select two case studies for the detailed data analysis strategies described above. This "dimensional sampling" Cohen and Manion (1994: 89) describe as:

*"involv(ing the identification of) various **factors of interest** in a population and obtaining at least one respondent of every combination of these factors"* (emphasis added).

The factors of interest considered were:

- the student teachers' gender,
- the particular biographical experiences of schooling, and
- the school contexts at which these students were placed to serve their practicum experience.



During the data collection process these issues of interest became foregrounded as important criteria for further analysis. I chose to sample the STs by keeping some factors constant and others at variance with each other. Thus, two students were selected for the detailed narrative and discourse analysis.

- Sanelesiwe, an African female English second language speaker, was teaching in a largely English first language "Indian" school environment.
- Emmanuel, an African male English second language speaker was teaching in a largely English first language "Indian" school environment.

Both students share a similar heritage in that they were both second language speakers of the English language and had similar experiences of primary and secondary schooling in a rural context, where isiZulu was the dominant lingua franca of the school and community. Despite isiZulu being the mother tongue of the African school population, English was the official medium of teaching and learning within their schools. Both STs conducted their school-based teaching practice (SBTP) in fairly large (in excess of 650 pupils) urban former "Indians only schools", which now consisted of both African (isiZulu L1) and Indian (English L1) pupils. The STs differ in that their SBTP schools, despite their proximity to each other, reflected notable contextual differences. These differences manifested themselves in terms of the level of support the STs received from their mentor teachers; differences in managerial styles and strategies in addressing multilingualism or curriculum development in general; and differences in pupil engagement with the learning programme. I chose to look at one male ST and one female ST because it became evident during the data collection process that significantly different interpretations were being made by the two gender groups about how they understood the process of be(coming) teachers.

It can be seen that the changing context of schooling in post-apartheid South Africa is being revealed in this research data collection plan. The student teachers had originated from one kind of schooling context, which was characterised by largely mono-racial schooling. These contexts had rapidly changed with the onset of de-racialised education which affected largely, the former "Indian, Coloured and Whites only" schools. The African school contexts have not changed in their racial composition, especially in terms of pupil population.

All these schools in the new context were nevertheless, being regulated by the same policy proposals of the new education system. However, each of the schools are still drawing from the legacy of apartheid education. Student teachers were thus being placed into school contexts within this polyphony of values, ideologies and cultures competing at macro and micro-school level. (Refer to model for understanding post apartheid teacher development presented at the end of Chapter Two: Section Four).

Thus, the two student teachers, Emmanuel and Sanelesiwe became the focus of the narrative and discursive analysis of this study. The data yielded by the auxiliary seven case study students was used in a cross-case analysis at the end of Chapter Four.

2.2 Collecting the Data:

Making Music

The remaining part of Section Two is organised into four sub-sections focusing on the different stages of the data collection processes:

- 2.2.1 During the On-campus Teacher Preparation Programme
- 2.2.2 During the School-based Teaching Practice (SBTP)
- 2.2.3 After SBTP , and
- 2.2.4 At the End of the SMEC: 1997



#20 Photograph: (1997) "Focus Group Interview at the End of the SMEC: 1997"

It should be noted that the data collection procedures used in this study emerge from within the context of the teacher education preparation of student teachers of English during 1997. The research study often embodies elements of achieving pedagogical goals to enhance the quality of student teacher preparation, and of providing data for the research study. In describing the data collection process I shall capture both these dimensions.


The data collection was also narrowed to include only STs preparing to become teachers in the secondary schools. This arose from the fact that I was teaching this group of students and had greater insider access to the curriculum they were experiencing both on campus and at schools.

The focus of this study is on the STs' biographical experiences of learning / teaching English. I have chosen to focus on the experiences that have been accumulated within the following contexts:

- home/ family environment;
- immediate community environment;
- primary and secondary school environments;
- university undergraduate years;
- teacher preparation programme (the Special Method English Course); and
- school-based teaching practice placement within schools.

The research study aimed to tap into how STs made sense of their earlier experiences and knowledge gained before joining the teacher preparation programme. The analysis of this data would reveal how, (and if) they draw on those experiences and knowledge when learning to teach during the course of the teacher preparation programme.

The data collection activities used also tap into how STs made sense of their present experiences whilst engaging in the process of their teacher preparation programme. This allowed me as a researcher to gauge how STs were developing



understanding of the skill/ art of teaching the English language in relation to their biographical heritage of English language teaching/learning.

It is not intended that learning about teaching processes be presented as a neat linear trajectory of influence from past experiences to new understandings. The data collection processes therefore, aimed to understand how the past experiences and the present teacher education experiences were inter-relating with each other. The Afrikaans word "*botsing*" (knocking against/influencing/ colliding) evokes the correct image of the dynamism of the interconnectedness between past, present and intended future experiences that is needed when attempting to understand the development of the STs' experiences of the teaching/learning of the English language.

The process of exploring how STs experience the teaching/learning of English intends to reveal in more depth what Eraut (1996) refers to as their "Action Frame" (Refer to Chapter Two: Section 2.2). This action frame is regarded as embodying plans, intentions, perspectives, dispositions and expectations that are largely fuelled by the past and present experiences of the STs. The "action" dimension of the construct suggests that it is an active powerhouse of ideas and propositions, rather than a storehouse of dead thoughts.

The data collection plan aimed to reveal a polyphony of voices and influences interacting, shaping and reflecting their experiences of the emergent teachers of English. It also aimed to explore the strong individual character and personality of the ST. The data collection process also aimed at capturing the varying degrees and range of complexities impacting on the ST's own practices within uniquely diverse school contextual environments.

2.2.1 During the On-campus Teacher Preparation Programme:

In attempting to gain insight into the kind of experiences and knowledge of learning / teaching that STs bring with them to the teacher education programme the following research data collection activities were engaged in:

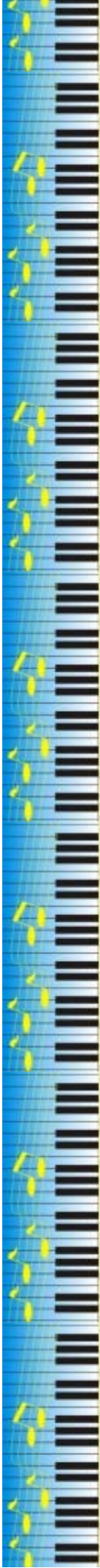
Apprenticeship of Observation:

Musical Training

- 1 the students' composition of their written autobiography of language teaching and learning;
- 2 interviews concerning their expectations of the teacher education programme, and of learning to become a teacher of the English language;
- 3 oral presentation of students' personal biographies of home and schooling experiences of learning languages; and
- 4 the composition of a visual collage of memories and influences in their lifehistories.

1 Writing the Autobiography

The task of the first term's work revolved around the students becoming familiar with the variety of contexts of English language teaching/learning in South Africa. These are contexts within which qualifying / qualified teachers are most likely to



teach. The range of options of different racial, geographic, cultural, linguistic and religious contexts, has expanded because teachers of all race groups (in principle) are legally able to teach in any school under the control of the single education department of post-apartheid South Africa.

As described in Chapter One, the University of Durban-Westville, Faculty of Education had been originally set up to service "Indian education". Students of mainly African and Indian race groups are currently in the teacher education programme. Many students in the 1997 SMEC cohort would not have experienced multiracial/lingual schooling. It was decided to educate the students of different race groups about each other's school contexts, which were products of the apartheid legacy. The most valuable resource was the STs themselves. Students were asked to work in pairs with individuals who did not share the same background as their own. This meant a deliberate mixing of persons from different race, geographic and cultural backgrounds.

It is interesting to note that STs commented that they rarely had face to face dialogue with students of different race groups even though they had studied for approximately three years at the same university. This exercise was in fact aimed to actively and practically enact the kind of political rhetoric of racial interrelationship and dialogue often espoused to by many in the reconstruction era of post-apartheid South Africa.

The student teachers had to devise a joint set of 'appropriate' questions that would try to tap the personal histories of learning the English language of members of the pairs. This exercise yielded the data for answering my research question concerning STs' experiences of the learning/teaching of English. This entailed that the paired-off students formulate what they considered essential factors/criteria related to the teaching/learning of the English language in a transforming society.

Using the list of appropriate questions students formulated an interview schedule. In a subsequent class the student pairs conducted their interview with their partner using the interview schedule they had co-designed. The interviewer recorded the detailed responses to the questions asked. The roles of interviewer and interviewee were then reversed. The pairs then exchanged their interview notes and data records.

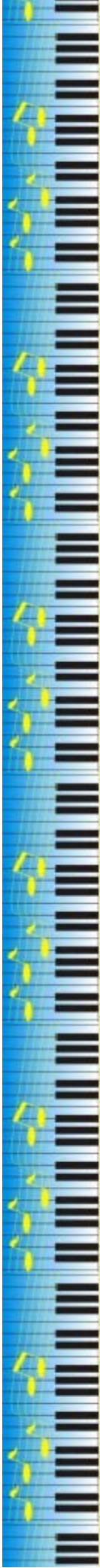
Using the material from the data records, notes and transcripts of their interviews, each student was then asked to write an autobiography about their experiences of learning English within the contexts of their own families, communities and schools. A detailed assignment handout urged students to consider the writing of the autobiography to include:

- *"reflections on your prior experiences and beliefs,*
- *a critical analysis of your experiences and beliefs, and*
- *the application of your insights to your current or future teaching/learning practices"*

(See Appendix 2: The Power of Teacher's Narratives: Using Autobiographies"). This handout was based on the kind of exercise used by Karen Johnson with her student teachers in Pennsylvania State University (1996a).

The students were urged to capture the richness of their experiences by being "informal, concise and relevant" (ibid.) Students were asked to include memories and impressions of former teachers and themselves as learners. The critical analysis aimed to tap the students' current understanding of experiences and beliefs about how individuals learn languages and what influence this might have on dimensions about themselves that they would like to maintain or reject in their own role and identity as a teacher. By describing a critical incident out of their past schooling experiences the assignment asked students to apply their insights into teaching and learning. The students were asked to recall this incident and suggest how it might influence how they approach being a teacher in the future.

The oral ST interviews were met with initial hesitation. Students were uncomfortable with the lecture sessions being student-driven. They were accustomed to and expected the contact session to be characterised by teacher-



fronted sessions about English language teaching and learning.

Other initial problems were that only some students (Indian students mainly) were familiar with writing autobiographically. However, they too were unsure of the role of critical reflection demanded in the assignment.

I decided to present exemplars of autobiographies of STs from Karen Johnson's class (mentioned earlier). These exemplars provided my students with greater clarity of the assignment, but nevertheless, highlighted the uniqueness of their own different contexts and experiences of English language teaching/learning from the ones being described by their American counterparts. This raised their confidence to present their personal accounts of English language teaching/learning garnered in the South African context.

I became aware of the kinds of expectations that STs were bringing into the teacher preparation programme concerning the role of the lecturer and the students. They had been accustomed to the contact sessions being lecturer-driven and their role as being passive recipients of the "correct version" that lecturers presented. This course aimed to live out the ideals of collaborative construction of knowledge by teachers and learners: a goal that was hopefully being "taught" to the students via the methodology in which the course was being presented.

The data set consists of nine (of the purposive sample) student teachers' written autobiographies although the entire SMEC class (82 student teachers) did produce such a document.

2 Interviews: Expectations of Teaching

English in Multilingual Classrooms

The opening session of the 1997 SMEC involved reading the letters written by the previous year's students of the course (refer to examples cited in Chapter One: Section 3.4: "Composers and Composition"). The students (1997) were then asked to comment on their expectations of teaching English in a multilingual context in post-apartheid South Africa. Many of the previous year's students had highlighted their practicum school-based experiences of teaching in a multilingual classroom. The 1997 class then selected a representation of STs who would be interviewed by me concerning their expectations about teaching English in a multilingual classroom.

The class chose five students whom they felt represented gender, race and cultural diversity. The aim of the interview:

- as the researcher: was to tap indirectly into STs' insights into the variety of multilingual contexts of English language teaching/learning in post apartheid South Africa, showing what kind of understanding they had of the obstacles and
- challenges they were likely to find in their future language classrooms, their perceptions of their preparedness to handle such multilingual classrooms, the strategies they were likely to use in their classrooms;
- as teacher educator: was to tap into the students' expectations of the SMEC in order to gauge their conceptions of what a language teacher education programme should accomplish.

This interview indirectly tapped students' own experiences of multilingual classrooms from their schooling, by asking them to describe how they would identify a multilingual classroom if they encountered one? The Interview Schedule Number 2 (See Appendix 3) was a semi-structured instrument used to understand ST expectations of multilingual teaching/learning by drawing on their personal experiences. Interview notes were recorded on the interview schedule during the approximately 45 minute session.

The data set consists of the recorded notes from five interviews.



3 Oral Presentation: Who am I?

As part of the administrative organisation of the course a personal biographical form was circulated recording the following information: gender, marital status, courses taken at university, secondary school attended, languages spoken/understood, non-academic activities, previous employment.

A group of students from the class were asked to provide a statistical analysis of the completed forms of the students (with their permission). This analysis formed the opening session of the contact session entitled "Who am I?" The aim of this session was to make students comfortable with expressing their personal identities, with developing a collegial spirit in the class, and with anticipating the kind of autobiographical work that I have described above.

A group of students were asked to chair and organise the one and a half-hour session. The organisers of this group consulted and felt that that it would be useful to organise the presentation to include the following:


1. the statistical analysis of the students' biography forms;
2. an oral recourse of a critical incident by two students of their schooling days;
3. the reading of a poem composed by one of the students about what it means to be a ST in South Africa today;
4. the hosting of a panel discussion using the five students I had interviewed about their expectations of teaching in a multilingual classroom: in relation to their personal schooling experiences; and
5. the presentation of a set of questions on what does English language teaching/learning entail in South Africa today.

I was impressed with the degree of openness that students displayed when they were approached to contribute to this "public" discussion of their "private worlds". The group and I cleared with all participants their willingness to engage in this activity. No one declined to participate. In fact, since the STs themselves were organising the presentation, the students felt more confident. I was asked by the organising group to chair the panel discussion of five students that I had interviewed (described in Data Collection Strategy 2 above).

This decentering of the lecturer's position in the course was crucial during the early stages. This set the tone for how the Special Method class would proceed for the rest of the year, and contributed, no doubt, to the level of authenticity of data revealed. The "data collection" environment was perceived to be affirming and safe for the participants.

The process of revealing their personal worlds was also tackled with sensitivity because of the ethical issues involved in such a process. Melnick (1997) and Harris (1997) in commenting on the merits and demerits of using autobiographical approaches in teacher education programmes, suggest that this is a risky business because:

- the data is often highly personal, and once revealed in research publications or in the forum of a lecture classroom, the information becomes public information;
- there is a possibility of defamatory legal suits being pursued by those offended by the kind of data revealed;
- anonymity can be secured though the use of pseudonyms, but the highly individualistic characteristic of the students' data is often easily traceable to its source and contexts;
- the researcher (teacher educator) cannot always guarantee that the fellow colleagues in a teacher preparation course will not pass insensitive remarks that might "damage" the psychological well-being of the teller of the tale;
- there is also a need to understand that different individuals have different personal views about how much of themselves (if any at all) they wish to reveal/expose to an "outsider"; and
- the researcher also cannot protect individuals from the consequences of



what their revelation presents. For example, if the student autobiography reveals his/her criminal record in the process of telling the story, the researcher cannot protect him/her from the social consequences of attitudes and inter-relationships that his/her colleagues might show towards him/her thereafter.

It is therefore, extremely important that the risks characteristic of these methods of data collection and publication be made explicit to the students (data source). There is need to work in a climate of co-operation and confidentiality within the group about information divulged. It is interesting to note that the students in this study specifically requested that pseudonyms need not be used. They felt that using their real names would protect their individuality.

On the positive side, Melnick (ibid.) and Harris (ibid.) suggest that using an autobiographical approach within a teacher education programme develops a strong sense of community as STs become more respectful of the diversities within their class. They are more likely to accept (within the classroom itself) the individual who is representative of the marginalised groups in the "outside" contexts of wider society. Whether this extends beyond the classroom is a matter for further analysis.

4 The Collages

Having written the autobiographical account of their experiences of English language teaching/learning, the following assignment was presented to the students:

DESIGNING THE COVER OF MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

What is a collage?

A collage is a collection of materials of different sources, different textures, difference styles, codes, mediums, texts,...which have been assembled to reflect a "coherent" message. In selecting items for a collage an artist chooses "items" which will contribute to the overall effect that s/he wishes to produce. The "items" are then arranged in a manner that reflects a progression, sequence of ideas, thoughts, and feelings. The usual issues of form, texture and compositions of the items placed in an artistic representation apply also in constructing a collage.

The assignment

This assignment is part of the process of developing critical self-reflection. You are asked to assemble a series of materials that will feature in a collage that will present your life as depicted in the autobiography you are writing. This means that you will need to select photos, pictures, objects, etc. that you think have significance and importance to you. These "items" reflect moments; people or events in your life, which you think, have shaped the kind of person you now are.

If you do not have personal photographs think creatively of how you can represent the "life moments" e.g. use pictures from magazines, newspapers that depict similar events, people...think creatively.

On an A3 (double the size of A4) sheet of paper creatively design the front cover of your autobiography text. Of course the cover should be visually appealing so that someone looking at the cover might want to read the text.

Choose a creative and interesting title to this autobiography. Think also about how the choice of lettering and font for the title and name of the text indicates something about who you are.

Be creative and enjoy the exercise.

The above detailed description of the assignment, was linked to the written autobiographical assignment; it was an opportunity to present in a mode other than language (more of this discussion later in Section Three below). It was an exercise that promoted the representation of the students' lifehistory.

The students were given approximately three weeks within which to complete the assignment and they were also presented with visual exemplars from postmodernist artists using the technique of collage making. My own personal interest in visual art became handy. Students were invited to view a collage that I had constructed in my office depicting the kinds of friends, family and students that I have taught.

Both the visual collage and the final written version of the autobiography were negotiated to be handed in at the same time. This was to ensure that the students make more tenacious linkages between the two exercises.

The data set consists of nine student teachers' collages.

Looking at Myself:

How do I play?

I shall now describe the details of the data collection strategies used to yield data about ST experiences of teaching/learning English during the SMEC on-campus teacher preparation programme.

The on-campus data collection procedures included:

- interviews about student teachers' visual collages;
- the writing of a reflective journal by the student teacher and the researcher during the course of the teacher preparation programme.

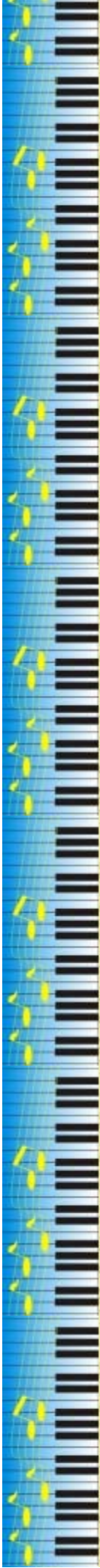
5 Interviews with student teachers about their visual collage

Having produced a visual collage of their life experiences about the learning / teaching of the English language, a version of a stimulated recall session was embarked upon to tap into how student teachers interpreted these experiences. It should be noted that this data collection procedure was conducted within the ambit of "phenomenography" (Marton: 1981: 366). The aim is not to foreground the phenomenon of the collages themselves, but rather how STs made sense of the phenomena (i.e. visual stimuli) chosen to be presented in their collages.

The visual collage was displayed as a stimulus for an interview discussion focusing on the student teachers' interpretation of their lifehistory of learning English. The collage itself acted as a kind of interview schedule with the necessary probing "questions" answered through the responses of the student teacher. This interview was video-recorded on the university premises. The following semi-structured interview schedule (Interview Schedule 3: see Appendix 4) was used by me (the interviewer) to probe the students to recall their interpretations of their life experiences and knowledge of teaching and learning English:

Interview Schedule Number 3: Student teachers' perceptions of their life experiences as represented in their visual collage

In this interview we will attempt to understand what you consider to be the shaping influences in your life. We will explore how you think these past/ present life experiences influence your conceptions of being a teacher of the English language.



1 You have chosen to represent your life experiences through these particular selected images. Can you explain why you chose these particular images and what you think they say about yourself; who you are?

2 How do you think these past/ present experiences influence you as:

2.1 a future teacher

2.2 a future teacher of the English language?

I will refer in Section Three below, to how this mode of recording data by the STs themselves and data gathering process are beneficial to research into teacher thinking.

The interview consisted of the STs leading the discussion by pointing to the visual images they had chosen and explaining why they chose the particular images as representative of particular life experiences. The interviewer's role was to probe the student to clarify interpretations of the images.

The data set consists of nine videotaped discussions about the visual collages of the nine case study students. These videotapes were transcribed into a written script.

6 The writing of a reflective journal by the student teacher and the researcher during the course of the teacher preparation programme

The following extract from the assignment handout for this activity is presented below:

REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

The reflective journal that you will begin will be a vehicle for you to continue the dialogue that has begun in the process of writing your autobiography. Of course, the main dialogue that you will be engaging in, will be a dialogue with yourself. This journal is a record of your development of thinking about English language teaching. (It is not a diary of every thing that you encounter as a Special Method student.) Its prime aim is to sharpen your emerging "personal working theories" about English language teaching and learning. Therefore, the reflective journal should include:


Reflection: Should address, but not be limited to:

- your experiences that are being developed in the Special Method class (SMEC);
- your role as a student in this class;
- the role of the lecturers in this class;
- the learning/ teaching activities in which you are engaging;
- the beliefs/ assumptions about how you acquire understanding of your role as a teacher of the English language in a multilingual society;
- the beliefs/ assumptions about how first and second languages are learned and how they should be taught; and
- the beliefs/ assumptions about the role of the teacher and the role of the pupils in first and second language teaching / learning.

These may overlap: extensive detail is not necessary; get to the point; what is central about your developing experiences in the SMEC. Don't merely describe. You MUST evaluate (give personal opinions). Substantiate your views with direct recall of specific teaching / learning events from the SMEC, but critically comment on these incidents/ events.

Critical Analysis: Should address, but not be limited to:

- conceptions of how your prior experiences and beliefs about English language teaching / learning are being confirmed , challenged or rejected;



dimensions about yourself that you recognise as a consequence of this SMEC , and which you wish to maintain when you are a teacher of English;

- dimensions about yourself that you recognise as a consequence of this SMEC , and which you wish to alter when you are a teacher of English; and
- dimensions about teaching / learning that represent your greatest challenge.

Application: Should address, but not be limited to:

- a description of a critical teaching / learning incident in your SMEC that has evoked a strong reaction from you; and
- your description should include how you understood the incident, how you responded to it, and how your understanding of and response to this incident reflect your conceptions about yourself as a teacher of the English language.

Submission dates:

Submission One 28 May 1997 14h00 Reflections on SMEC to date

Submission Two 18 June 1997 14h00 Reflections on SMEC to date and

Views about School based teaching practice

Your reflections should not use jargons and clichés that float around. Instead it should aim for honest personal understandings. The writing style should be informal but concise and relevant. Impress with simplicity and honesty. As a means of working towards these submission dates you may choose to write a record on a weekly basis. This reflective journal should be kept in a notebook, which you will continue to use during school-based teaching practice on a daily basis.

This assignment handout is an adapted version of material presented by Johnson (1996a) at a workshop at the University of Port Elizabeth, Teacher Education Institute, June 1996.

It can be seen that the assignment is presented as a continuation of the process of writing the autobiography, which promotes a critical self-reflection. The assignment is also an attempt to bring together the past and present experiences of language teaching/learning of the STs. It aims to tap STs' understanding of their own growth /development processes as they are exposed to the course curriculum. It is an attempt to get STs to be personal, honest and simple in their presentation of a personal working theory about language teaching/learning. The assignment urges students to be comfortable with tentativeness and to see the process of writing the reflective journal as a developmental process. As a teacher educator this reflective journal was also an opportunity for the student to consolidate what sense they were making of the course curriculum. As a researcher the written records provided data about how student teachers were making sense of their present experiences in relation to their past experiences of English language teaching and learning.

The data set consists of nine reflective journals of the nine case study students.

2.2.2 During School-based Teaching Practice

The following section describes the data collection strategies that were used to tap into the STs' experiences of English language teaching/learning during the process of a six-week placement within a school setting.

Being a Schoolteacher:

I am a Musician



The school-based data collection procedures included:

- the collaborative investigation into the school language policy;
- the continuation of the reflective journal by student teachers, documenting analysis of the practicum experiences;
- classroom observations of student teachers' teaching;
- stimulated recall interviews based on classroom teaching;
- the collaborative production of curriculum materials (workbook, lesson plans) addressing the goals of an action research project; and
- student teachers' peer and self-assessments during school-based teaching practice.


7 The collaborative investigation into the school language policy

During the school-based teaching practice the STs were required to involve themselves in a process of action research. The proposal involved the setting up of a collaborative team between the STs at the school, the resident teachers and the university lecturers who visited the school. The student teachers were placed within their practicum schools in the form of teams. These teams of student teachers were deliberately mixed as far as possible to represent different genders and race groups. Approximately 8-10 students were placed in any one school comprising two / three teams of students. Each team was attached to a single resident teacher. Since student teachers usually pursued two major methods in the secondary teacher education programme, the students were attached to two different teachers in the school context, and could therefore belong to two different teams within the school-based teaching practice programme. These arrangements are partly as a consequence of the design of the faculty's teaching practicum philosophy of collaborative work. The collaborative work extended to the possibility of team organisation, team planning and team teaching of classes. In principle, the resident teacher and the university lecturers were to be seen as equal partners in these teams. I have documented (Samuel: 1995) the gap between the ideals of collaborative teaching and the practicalities of implementing this design. More discussion of this in Chapter Four Section Four.

As part of the requirements for the SMEC, the students as members of the team were expected to identify a particular problem regarding English language teaching/ learning within the schools at which they were placed, and in particular the classes that they taught during the six week duration of the teaching practicum. As a means of gaining insight into the complexity of language teaching and learning in the changing contexts of schooling in post-1994, the first task set for students was to investigate the language policy in operation in the school.

The language policy was interpreted as being more than the official documents (if they exist at the school). It was seen as the policy that becomes enacted in the manner in which the pupils of different language groups are admitted, streamed and taught within the classes. It includes an analysis of the kind of linguistic competence of the staff of the school. An analysis of the languages in use throughout the school day, in different contexts are also part of the understanding of the language policy in operation.

The student teachers were presented with research instruments including interview schedules for the principal of the school, observation schedules tracking first and second language pupils of the school and questionnaire protocols for teachers. As part of the orientation to the school environment and culture the students were required to conduct this investigation. Different individuals of the team were allocated to collect the data and the writing up of a synthesis of the findings yielded from the data collection process were formulated in an essay describing the language policy of the school at which the ST were placed.



Examples of the kind of data produced by students, and an analysis of this kind of action research process has already been published (see Msimango and Samuel: 1997).

The student teachers at the seven case study schools (i.e. the schools at which the case study students were placed) were involved in the process of compiling such a research document. The written report of the school language policy therefore becomes a source of data about how STs were interpreting the kind of school contexts in which they were placed in so far as the handling of English language teaching/learning. Again it is not the phenomenon of the data itself (i.e. the written report) which was foregrounded as data for this research. Instead, the report provided an indirect access to how these STs were making sense of the kind of school contexts they were placed in, and what kinds of interpretations of their experiences of language teaching/ learning were being fostered during the research process and the writing up of the report.

The data set consists of seven school language policy reports written by the case study students who were in seven different schools.

8 The continuation of the reflective journal by the student teachers during school-based teaching practice

I have already highlighted the kind of reflective activities that the STs were expected to engage in during the SMEC on-campus programme (See Data Collection Strategy 6 above). The reflective journal for school-based teaching practice was an extension of that process. Appendix 5: Extract from the "Action Research booklet for School-

based Teaching Practice: Special Method English 1997" highlights the terms of reference for this assignment.

- Its specific focus is on the co-operative development of student teachers as team members, which is a goal promoted during the process of practice teaching at the school site.
- The assignment booklet is seen as a guide to the process of developing reflective practice, and therefore urges the students to be analytical about many dimensions, facets of teaching/learning whilst being a student teacher in the school context.
- The document promotes critique of the fellow team members, the resident teacher, other teachers and administrative staff and the university lecturers.
- It is a daily record kept by students.
- Only the writer of the journal and the university supervisor may access the journal, as its confidentiality is an important ingredient to promote honest and open criticism in the form of the dialogue between the ST and the university supervisor. (I was the supervisor for the selected four student teachers and thus had access to their reflective journals).

This reflective journal provided detailed descriptions of how the STs were making sense of their experiences of school-based teaching practice. The record also traced the students' progress (or lack of it) on a daily basis. It was a record of their daily school activities, thoughts, feelings and perceptions, which began on the day before going into schools and concluded one day after the school-based teaching practice was completed. I responded in writing or orally to the STs arising out of comments that I would read whenever I visited the school. These visits were at least once a week during the six-week period.

As a teacher educator/supervisor, the reflective journal was a valuable tool to gain insight to the student teachers' coping (or not) with the daily tasks of being a teacher of the English language. As a researcher, the reflective journal provided rich data indicating how STs were reflecting, mediating and reinforcing their experiences and knowledge gained from their past, and the present teacher preparation programme. The data set consists of nine reflective journals of the case study students.

9 Observations of student teachers' classroom practice

It must be noted that this data does not constitute information into teachers' thinking about how they make sense of their teaching experiences and knowledge. It merely provides the background information about what teachers did within their classrooms. It provides a means for further data collection into the teachers' thinking. Eraut (1996) (referred to in Chapter Two: The Second Movement: The Nature of Professional Knowledge) sees this dimension of teacher knowledge as the "Practical Action" which includes the procedures, know-how, and routines of school culture.

The data set consists of two lessons of each of the selected four case studies which were videotaped. Freeman (1996: 370) refers to this as "real time data": data that captures the act of teaching as it occurs. A total of eight lessons were video-taped. The details are as follows:

LESSON NUMBER	DATE OF TAPING	STUDENT TEACHER	SCHOOL	LESSON TITLE
1	20 August 1997	Thembi	Nqabakazulu	Poetry : "The Rebel"
2	21 August 1997	Ravesh	Earlington	Language: Advertisements
3	25 August 1997	Sanelesiwe	A.D.Lazarus	Choral Verse
4	27 August 1997	Emmanuel	Centenary	Short Story: "The Dictionary"
5	28 August 1997	Thembi	Nqabakazulu	Reading: Comprehension
6	29 August 1997	Ravesh	Earlington	Language Facts and Opinions
7	01 September 1997	Emmanuel	Centenary	Short Story: "The Dictionary"
8	03 September 1997	Sanelesiwe	A.D.Lazarus	Reading: Comprehension

Table 9: Observation of Lessons of Student Teacher Case Studies


In the data analysis in Chapter Four I looked in more detail at lesson numbers 3, 4, 7, and 8.

Permission from the relevant schools was obtained for the videotaping of these lessons. One principal requested that permission be also sought from the pupils in the class. This was done.

During the taping of the lessons, by a university technician, I took observation notes to serve as cues for the stimulated recall session which took place immediately after the teaching of the lessons.

10 Stimulated recall interviews based on classroom teaching

This stimulated recall technique has been used widely in the area of researching teacher thinking (See Freeman and Richards: 1996 for a survey of the variety of



studies that have used this approach). I have been particularly influenced by the work of Johnson (1996b) and Guitierrez Almarza (1996) who have worked in the context of teacher development at Pennsylvania State University, and University of London respectively. Guitierrez Almarza (1996) comments that research into teachers' knowledge can be accessed at two levels:

- at the level of theoretical understanding (refer to Eraut's: 1996 "codified knowledge" in Chapter Two: Section 2: The Second Movement: The Nature of Professional Knowledge) and,
- at the level of classroom activity (refer to Eraut's: 1996 "practical knowledge" in Chapter Two: *ibid.*).

Different and complementary methodologies of gaining access to teachers' knowledge need to be employed in order to tap into both these levels. The method/ technique of stimulated recall should therefore, be seen alongside the other

methodologies which were used in this research study in an attempt to gain insight into the relationship between teachers' thoughts and actions.

Freeman (1996: 370) refers to data yielded from stimulated recall as "ex post facto data": data collected after the act of teaching and aimed at getting inside teachers' heads to reveal their interpretations of the phenomenon of their teaching act.

Butt and Raymond (1989: 71) in Guitierrea Almarza (1996) highlight the value of the stimulated recall technique:

"The interest (is) in teachers' thinking and its interrelationships with action. It is logical, then, that we focus directly on the qualitative nature of teacher's thoughts and actions...What teachers do and think within their professional lives depends...upon the meanings those individuals hold and interpret within their personal, social and professional realities and everyday life situations. Just observing an event or a phenomenon, even through the eyes of a participant is not sufficient. One needs to go further to understand the relationship between antecedent, subsequent, and consequent events through engaging in dialogue with the teacher."

I used the stimulus recall technique in the following way in this study:

1. the student teacher taught a lesson, which was videotaped (Tape A: stimulus tape);
2. immediately after the teaching of the lesson, the student watched the videotape (on the school premises) ;
3. using the video recorder remote control the student teacher stopped the videotape at points which s/he thought appropriate to comment on the thoughts and decisions being made during the act of teaching; and
4. the interviewer (I) also intervened intermittently to probe the ST about the strategies that they were using in the classroom, and to account for their choices (refer to extended list of questions below).
5. the "running commentary" (Johnson: 1996b: 32) provided by the student teacher, and the interview by the lecturer were videotaped (Tape B: recall tape). The recall sessions aimed "to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena" (Cohen and Manion: 1994: 106) of the student teachers' thinking about their classroom practice. The interview was also fuelled by a list of possible questions to be asked. This was a form of a semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 6):

Interview Schedule Number 4: Semi-structured questions for Stimulus Recall session: Student Teachers' Commentary on their classroom actions

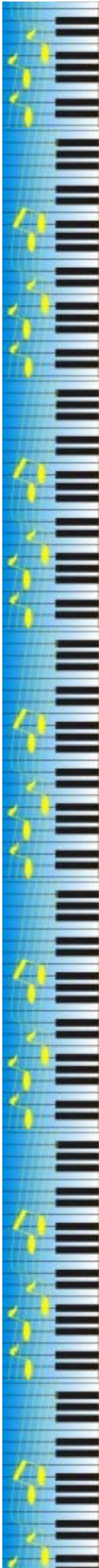
- 1 Describe what were your intentions for this lesson.



- 2 Show where we see these intentions being realised/ or not.
- 3 What strategies are being used in this lesson?
- 4 Why did you choose the strategy/strategies? What factors influence your choice of strategy/strategies?
- 5 What alternative strategies could be used?
- 6 Where/When did you see the strategy/strategies used?
- 7 From whom did you learn the strategy/strategies?
- 8 Was this strategy used in your own school classroom?
- 9 Has the mentor teacher influenced your choice of strategy?
- 10 Has any particular methodology/technique/strategy been prescribed to you? If so, who prescribed its use?
- 11 How have your theoretical views of English language teaching/learning influenced your choice of strategy? Which theory/ theorist? What do you understand as the tenets of this theory/ theorist? How did you make use of this theory in classroom action?
- 12 Did any personal, cultural, social, religious considerations influence your teaching of this class?
- 13 What influence did your peers in the student teacher team have on your actions in this classroom?
- 14 How do the specific characteristics (culture) of this particular school influence your teaching in this class? What are the factors of the school culture that you consider to have changed the most? Does this influence your teaching in this school?
- 15 How do the specific characteristics of the pupils (e.g. level of language competence) of this particular class influence your choice of strategy? Show how this features in your lesson.
- 16 What influence does the formal school syllabus used in this school have on your teaching?
- 17 What influence does the university supervisor have on your teaching?
- 18 What influence did your teacher preparation curriculum have on your teaching? Show how this features in your lesson?
- 19 Do you consider this a successful lesson? Why? Why not?
- 20 If you had to teach the lesson again what would you do differently? Why?

Not all these questions were posed during the course of the interview because the trend and focus of the conversation were being directed by the ST. The teachers' own thoughts were the prime focus of the interview. It should be noted that the questions probed into a range of influences from both the "far past" and "immediate present": e.g. the home and schooling experiences as a young learner of the English language, as well as more immediate influences in the form of the teacher preparation curriculum and the very close environment of school-based teaching practice: the supervisors, the mentors, the peers and the pupils. This was used to tap into the level of complexity of the variables impacting on the teachers' thinking and actions.

The role of supervisor/teacher educator and researcher seemed to merge during the interviews. It is not entirely possible to frame a question without loaded intentionalities. The STs were well aware of my supervisory role and during the interview asked me to provide an analysis/evaluation of a particular strategy/action that they had used. Whilst it may be seen as "interfering with the



data", it also indicates how teachers often are unable to articulate the processes of their decision-making in the classroom (refer to Eraut's: 1996 "iceberg principle" in Chapter Two: Section 2.2: The Second Movement: Activating the Domains of Teacher Knowledge). They therefore, require an outsider to comment on their actions. The co-construction of the data formulation during the data gathering process must be acknowledged here.

However, the viewing of the videotape allowed the teachers to slow down the pace of the classroom processes and they were soon quite adept at critiquing their actions.

Whilst all students remarked on the intensity and value of this process as an educative tool to enhance their teaching performance, they were also strongly influenced by their view that the school-based teaching practice was a part of their formal curriculum in the teacher education course. It was a "course" for which they would be evaluated with an assessment. It was not uncommon during my supervision of STs for them to ask me whether they had "passed or failed a particular lesson". This arose out of the legacy of the kind of supervision that they had knowledge of: where the role of the teacher supervisor was merely to assess the ST after the observation of "crit lessons". Whilst the stated goals of teaching practice of the faculty distanced itself from such a process of seeing teaching practice as the awarding of marks to the STs based on the teaching of observed lessons only, the student teachers nevertheless, were aware that their classroom action was an important component which would affect their assessment at the end of the course. The policy of assessing student teachers during school-based teaching practice is also not consistently applied by all members of faculty supervising lecturers. Many lecturers still conceptualise their role in the "crit lesson" mode described above, despite the official stated policy of the faculty not to do so.

The student teachers were thus receiving mixed messages from different supervisors who shared different conceptions of their role during teaching practice. I had assured my students that my role would be a supportive and developmental one. The extended conception of the teacher as a professional was highlighted for STs (see discussion of the action research project below: Data Collection Strategy number 11). Students nevertheless, often foregrounded my role as the ultimate assessor of their performance during teaching practice.

The dialogues between the student teacher and myself yielded rich data concerning how the student teachers were making sense (or not) of their classroom action. The simultaneous influence of different roles of the teacher educator/supervisor and researcher in relation to the student teachers must be acknowledged in the data yielded.

It must be noted that the stimulus recall footage was being taped by a technician whose presence in the room may have influenced STs' comments. (More of this discussion in Section Three below).

The data set from recall tape B consists of eight transcripts of the videotaped interviews: two interviews with each of the smaller set of four case study student teachers. The descriptions of the lessons observed appear in the above section describing classroom observations.

11 The collaborative production of curriculum materials (workbook, lesson plans) addressing the goals of an action research project

During the school-based teaching practicum, the STs were engaged in an action research project. The aim of the project was presented to the students in a guide (Samuel, Govinden, Perumal and Reddy: 1997), which explained the process of action research, collaborative teaching and curriculum development. These features of the field-based curriculum were seen as embedding the conception of the manner in which STs learn to become professional teachers in line with faculty's policy (Faculty of Education: 1997) for school-based teaching practice. The student teachers were to be assessed (formatively and summatively) on all these dimensions of being a professional teacher. As described in the section above, the

STs often chose to foreground only their classroom action as the substantial basis upon which they could be assessed.

The guide described the goals of the "Action Research" project as follows:

*"This assignment is based on the principles of **Action Research**...Essentially it involves your becoming critically aware of the role of a language teacher as a **curriculum developer** (which was discussed in Module One). It focuses on the need for **collaborative participation** between the various individuals within the school system who can assist in developing the quality of your own teaching and professionalisation whilst simultaneously engaging in the process of **school-based curriculum development**. This assignment aims for you to embark upon a process of **reflective inquiry** as you explore the triumphs and difficulties of English language teaching within your school. After reflection upon the unique complexities within your particular school, together with the resident teacher(s) and your buddies, you are to develop a firm proposal of action in relation to a particular identified problem in the area of English language teaching/learning" (Samuel et al.: 1997).*

The students were to document in their reflective journals their planning, and design of lesson strategies that they would embark upon as a team. The university supervisors contributed to the team plans and designs. The students then assembled a workbook of all the strategies they had embarked upon during their six-week placement at the school. This included the worksheets and lesson notes, which were used during the process of addressing the identified problem at the school. This became a demonstration of their ability to produce contextually relevant curriculum material, a copy of which was made available to the school at which they taught.

In a rapidly changing educational policy context, these student teachers were being developed to acknowledge their role as school-based curriculum developers responding critically to the unique particularities of the school contexts within which they operated. Their ability to work with both the existing practices within the school and the expectations of new curriculum policy formulations such as Curriculum 2005 were being put to use.

The documents, produced in the form of the workbook, only partially constitute data revealing STs' thinking about their teaching roles, identities and actions. This data is only an indirect form of access into student teachers' thinking. Since the

workbook is the product of several individuals operating in the team, it cannot be said to represent the thoughts/thinking of any one of the contributors. This data set was therefore regarded for its value to provide a contextually rich understanding of the student teacher under investigation in the case study. The data (curriculum materials) will be seen as part of the shared construction of the process of engaging in the world of teaching when one is working within a collaborative approach. The data represents the "Action" component of Eraut's (1996) model of teacher professional knowledge (see Chapter Two: Section 2.1 The Second Movement: The Nature of Professional Knowledge).

The data set yielded from this data consists of six workbooks produced by the student teacher teams. The two workbooks (numbers 1 and 6) produced by the teams within which the two students Sanelesiwe and Emmanuel were placed, were used for detailed data analysis in Chapter Four.

NO.	WORKBOOK TITLE	STUDENT TEACHERS INVOLVED IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE WORKBOOK	SCHOOL
1	"Developing Writing Skills"	Imraan Emmanuel	Centenary

2	"The Write Stuff"	Ravesh Kamalan	Earlington
3	"Bend the Branches while they are still young"	Thembi	Nqabakazulu
4	"What about Women?"	Romola	Verulam
5	"Escape into English"	Zakiyya	Islamia Lockhat
6	"Learn English the Write Way"	Sanelesiwe	A.D. Lazarus

Table 10: Student Teachers' Curriculum Workbooks

12 Student teachers' peer and self- evaluations during school-based teaching practice.

As indicated in the above discussion the issue of assessment during the teaching practicum was proving to be a stumbling block to my role as a developer/supporter of students' growth. The students were therefore granted the status of co-evaluators in the final assessment of their professional development. The student teachers resisted adopting this role since they felt that it was the responsibility of the lecturers/ supervisors to award marks. After school-based teaching practice the student were asked to make recommendations about how the marks for the practicum would be established. After much heated debate about each of the participant's roles they chose a system of weighting according to the following percentage scale:

NO	WHAT WAS ASSESSED?	WHO ASSESSED?	PERCENTAGE OF ASSESSMENT ITEM WAS GRANTED?
1	The School Language Policy Report (a team effort)	lecturer	15%
2	The Curriculum Workbook (a team effort)	lecturer	40%
3	The Curriculum Workbook	peer group team	5%
4	Peer Assessment of Professional Performance & Conduct (average)	peers who served on the same team during practicum	5%
5	Self-Assessment of Professional	individual student teacher	5%

	Performance & Conduct		
6	Portfolio of student teachers' achievements during practicum	lecturer	10%
7	Reflective Journal	lecturer	10%
8	An arbitration mark was afforded to the lecturer to finally decide the mark to be awarded	lecturer	10%
	TOTAL	lecturer 85% students 15%	100%

Table 11: Assessment of Special Method English Coursework

The skewed proportion afforded to the lecturers to assess efforts of the students was recommended by the STs themselves. They were not open to any other arrangement regarding who should assess. These negotiations around the assessment lasted approximately three hours. This above table was regarded as a kind of compromise. The absence of the school staff from the assessment process is noteworthy. Student teachers felt that the resident teachers were either opposed to their activities in the school, or abandoned them completely within the classroom. Therefore, they felt that the resident teachers had little knowledge of their abilities as teachers. More analysis of this issue will follow in the next chapter. In the light of the above discussion, the reports of peer and self-assessments constituted valuable data. This data provided valuable insight into the criteria necessary to assess professional development. The data showed ST's thoughts about the kind of knowledge that professional teachers of English should possess, as well as the ideal roles they should assume. The data also provided insight into how STs evaluated their own as well as their peer's experiences as English language teachers.

The data set consists of the self-assessments of the nine case study students, and their assessments of their peers in the school teams.



#21 Photograph: (1997) "Michael Talks to Ravesh and Kamalan".

2.2.3 After School-based Teaching Practice

Looking back at Teaching :

Can I play?

After the school based teaching practicum the students were involved in:

13 a focus group interview reflecting on the learning experiences during the teacher preparation programme.

This data set was seen as a culmination of the activities surrounding the case study students' involvement in the research project. The aim of this session is captured in the introduction to Interview Schedule 5: "End of Year Reflections: Focus group interview: nine case study student" (See Appendix 7):

"The purpose of this interview is to reflect on your experiences of the Special Method English course, now that you have completed this year of study. This is an opportunity to look back on this whole academic year together as a group. Do not hesitate to contribute your objections or affirmations of what your colleagues say during the course of this discussion. We will be focusing on the following main areas of concern:

- *your experiences of the Special Method English course;*
- *your experiences of school-based teaching practice;*
- *your views about how this course has influenced you in relation to the profession of teaching ; and*
- *your future plans."*

The interviewees were seated around a table on which was placed many of the artefacts that were used and produced during the course of the teacher education programme and the research study. The artefacts included the collages of the nine students, their curriculum workbooks, reflective journals, lesson preparation books, the posters that had been produced during the live-in course, objects that had been collected during their solitude search during the live-in course, the candle used for the dedication ceremony at one of the live-in sessions, copies of handouts that were used in the taught course programme and interview schedules of earlier interview session. On the walls were posters that were used during the teacher preparation programme. A musical tape "The Elements: Wind" by Chaurasia (1995), an Indian classical music composer greeted the students when they entered the interview room. This was the same piece of music (inspired by the Vairagyashataka of Bhartrahari Sanskrit , A.D. 7th century) which I had played at the beginning of the year when the SMEC began. All these stimuli were used to evoke recall of the particular influences that were brought to bear during the teacher preparation curriculum.



#22 Photograph: (1997) "Romola Talks to Zakiyya".

It was in this atmosphere that the focus group interview occurred. The interview was audiotaped and videotaped.

The data set for this session consists of the transcripts of the audiotape and consists of a two-hour long interview involving eight of the students. One student was unable to attend.

The data reveal the student teachers' reflections on their experiences and constitute data concerning how student teachers experienced the teacher preparation course as a whole. The interactive nature of the focus group interview provided the opportunity for students to be challenged and affirmed, thereby providing more in-depth data indicating the student teachers' beliefs. As interviewer, I assumed the role of facilitator of the discussion that emanated.

2.2.4 At the End of the SMEC:1997 Programme

Formative and Summative Reflections:

After the Concert

At the end of the course data was gathered from

- the written examination papers of the students indicating their learning experiences during the teacher preparation programme.

This data set consists of the written answers that student teacher presented to a formal written examination at the end of the year. The faculty's rules stipulate that the marks for the Special Method courses are calculated with 50% awarded for course work, and 50% for the examinations. The coursework marks were generated according to the negotiated mark schema that STs had agreed upon (see Table 11). The percentage awarded to the examinations is relatively high when compared with other courses in the Faculty. My own mixed views about the value of the examinations follows. The examinations are a summative evaluation that is useful to gauge what students have acquired at the end of the course. Many of the students comment that the fast pace and the intensity of the volume of new experiences and knowledge that they operated with in the final year, leaves them with very little time to consolidate what they have learnt. The preparation for the examinations is therefore an incentive to synthesise and consolidate one's perspectives from the different parts of the course.

It may also be argued that the high percentage (50%) afforded to the examinations, undermines the effort that is needed in the formative exercises which are being evaluated during the course of the year. The recalcitrant student might choose to ignore the formative value of the many exercises set during the course of the year and merely study to pass the examinations.



#23 Photograph: (1997) "Imraan and the Photographer".

It is for this last reason that the kind of examination questions set by the Special Method lecturers aimed to bring together all the formative learning that may have been accumulated during the course of the year. The examination questions set are therefore in line with the course's aims to integrate theory with practical experience and to promote the skills of critical reflective practice (Refer to the Special Method English Examination Paper for 1997: Appendix 8).

These written answers to examination questions are a useful data set for this study since it presents the written version of student teachers' knowledge about teaching and learning at the end of the course. It must, nevertheless, be interpreted cautiously since the data revealed in examinations are often more indicative of the students' ability to cope with the examinations themselves, rather than reveal their understanding / knowledge of the matter tested, in this case the teaching/learning of the English language. The students may present less than what they truly know about teaching and learning of the English language on their examination scripts.

The data set consists of the written examination scripts of the nine student teachers. Each student was expected to answer three questions in a three-hour examination. The following table represents the questions answered by the nine students:

Number of student teachers who answered questions	Focus of the examination questions
7	Developing Reading Skills
6	Critical Reflective Practice and Action Research
5	School-based Language Policies
4	Language Acquisition
2	Curriculum Development
1	Teaching English in the new South Africa
1	Teaching Literature
1	Textual Analysis

Table 12: Written Responses to Examination Questions

Summary of Section Two:

Data Collection Plan

In Section Two I have presented a detailed description of the appropriacy of the data collected to answer the critical research question of this study which probes into student teachers' experiences of English language teaching / learning over different periods of their lives. The research methodology adopted in this study draws heavily from research methodologies based on educational research into teacher thinking and lifehistory research.

The theoretical model presented in Section One for developing trustworthiness and understanding of doing research within the field of teacher thinking and in the context of a rapidly transforming society, is presented as a backdrop to the design of the data collection plan. The description of breadth and depth of the data collection plan highlights the strengths and shortcomings of the research design in accessing teachers' thinking.

This section also reveals the links between the research methodology of this study and the theoretical models presented in Chapter Two: namely, Eraut's (1996) model of teacher professional knowledge, and the model for understanding teacher learning in a rapidly changing context.

Based on the discussion of the appropriacy of the data to reveal insight into teachers' thinking as they learn to teach, the data collected have been organised into two groups. The primary group reflects data that is regarded as central to the research question and forms the bulk of the analysis of this study. The secondary group reflects data used to triangulate the primary data and therefore serves a subordinate analysis. The two groups may be represented as follows:

Table 6: Summary of Primary and Secondary Data (re-produced here to facilitate referencing & readability)

PRIMARY DATA		SECONDARY DATA	
Data Source	Number of Units	Data Source	Number of Units
DURING			
ON-CAMPUS PROGRAMME			
Written Autobiographies	9 (2)	Expectations of teaching in a multilingual classroom	5
Collage Interviews	9 (2)	Collage	9
Reflective Journals	9 (2)	"Who am I?" presentation	1
DURING			
SCHOOL BASED TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME			
Reflective Journal (contd.)	9 (2)	School Language Policy Reports	7
Stimulus Recall Interviews on classroom teaching			
(2 lessons x 4 students)	8 (4)	Classroom Lesson Observations	8
		Curriculum Materials (workbooks, lesson plans)	7
AFTER SCHOOL BASED TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME			
		Peer Evaluations	9
		Self Evaluations	9
END OF COURSE PROGRAMME			
Focus Group Interview	1 (1)	Written Examination Papers	9

[Click here for a full size version of Table 6](#)

The number of units in brackets represents the number of data sources that formed the main focus of analysis for the study. An in-depth analysis of the data from two of the students will constitute the main "melodic line" to the study represented in Chapter Four.

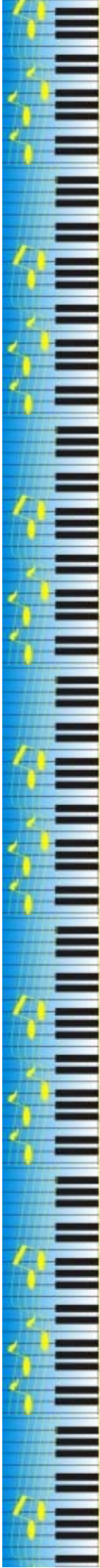
The "harmonic" or "counterpoints harmonies" of the other case studies will accompany the study's analysis at the close of Chapter Four.

I shall now turn to discuss why this research design attempts to address the problematic use of language as a means to access teachers' thinking.

Section Three: Analysing the Data:

Musical Interpretation and Appreciation

In this section I shall present a rationale for the kind of data analysis strategies used to analyse the data yielded from the data collection plan. In the description of the rationale for the data analysis strategies, I shall draw on the debates emerging from within the field of post-structuralism and recent linguistics research. This field is a minefield of potentially valuable theoretical and methodological perspectives about researching the relationship between language and thought (See Gee: 1990, Bahktin: 1981, Maxwell and Miller: 1991).



The data collected during my study is presented primarily in the form of language i.e. in written words of the tasks set for the STs, and in spoken words in the various interviews set out in the data collection plan. How does one go about analysing this language data in order to provide insight into how teachers learn to think about teaching and learning of the English language?

3.1 Accessing Teacher-thinking through Language Data

Hearing and Listening to the Music

I do not pretend to be able to do justice to this large body of literature since to be able to describe only one part of its contribution to educational research, would require another full dissertation. I shall describe a small part of the theoretical and methodological conceptions, which has bearing on my study, which attempts to understand how do student teachers learn to teach in a rapidly changing context.

More especially, I show why particular forms of data analysis are needed in my study which I believe acknowledge the contribution of this recent research providing insight into the relationship between teachers' thoughts and the language used to present and represent those thoughts.

From the beginning of my research study, I have been aware of the language which STs use when communicating with their lecturers. My comments in the opening chapter of this dissertation indicated my concern that there was a disjuncture between what student teachers claimed were their beliefs, thoughts, and values of teaching English and their actual actions in the classroom. I made these comments as part of the overall rationale for this research study: my colleagues and I had begun to notice that STs were able to espouse the academic discourse of language teaching in their written examinations, but were often not able to draw on these theoretical understandings when being observed in the classroom (Refer to Chapter One: Section 3.1 Finding the Research Focus).

Hargreaves (1977: 17) provides one interpretation of the source of the problem:

"When teachers are asked to display their values (to researchers, parents, colleagues, etc.), they doubtless feel constrained by that situation to express their ideals and to assert a strong degree of coherence, consistency, and integration among those values. Practice will not be a simple reflection of those values because practice arises in a very different situation which has a quite different structure and set of constraints".

In this analysis, Hargreaves points out that not only is there a necessary distinction between teachers' language and their actions, but also that language is constrained by social contexts of the discourse between the talker and the listener, reader and audience. Hargreaves points to the view that language is not an individualistic act of communicating one's inner thoughts, feelings and emotions. He suggests that the social constraints on language predisposes the individual to chose particular forms of language, particular registers, particular views about what to say, what not to say, to whom to say it. This concept is in line with earlier sociolinguists (e.g. Hymes: 1962) who argued that language is a social phenomenon and as such needs to be understood in terms of the social relationships between the interlocuting communicators. In his seminal article "On Communicative Competence", Hymes (ibid.) argues that a communicatively competent performer is one who is able to understand what is possible, feasible and acceptable language within a range of contexts or domains. This inspired the communicative language teaching approach, which urged language teachers and learners to look at language beyond just the grammatical structural forms.

The language that is used at any point in time and space between two (sets of) interlocutors is also a function of the quality of relationship that they both wish to establish with each other. Farh (1974) argues therefore, that there is no such thing as "freedom of speech" because all language usage is bound by the limits of the social context, audience and purpose within which the utterances are made. Even a choice to violate or flout the maxims of communicative co-operation established by and within any social context, is still predicated on the existence of



those social maxims.

This analysis is not confined to the choice of extended pieces of discourse, but may also be used to analyse the choice of individual words that one as a communicator chooses in any given social context.

In his often-quoted statement, Bakhtin (1981: 294) argues that:

"Language lies at the borderline between oneself and the others. The word in language is half someone else's. Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions. It is populated - overpopulated with the intentions of others."

The above discussion highlights that it is simplistic to believe that language is able to offer direct insight into the individual's own thinking e.g. that the researcher believes what the teacher says (language) is what the teacher himself/herself individually thinks (thoughts). The choice of language is not a matter of individual choice, which allows the analyst to draw conclusions by believing that what the "speaker/ writer" says is completely a function of his /her own thoughts.

Research in the field of teacher thinking has been dominated by the assumption that the language teachers use when talking/ speaking is able to represent their thoughts (Freeman: 1993). He further argues that in this dominant research paradigm, "language data' has been treated as 'data' before it has been thought of as 'language' ". Freeman regards this as the "representational approach" to the study of language and thought which assumes that "language data can offer a transparent window into teachers' mental lives" (ibid.: 27). He calls for a re-examination of the language data as language itself: i.e. to understand the data (language) that is presented by the research subject as "data that must be understood within the social fabric of the research process that produces them" (ibid.).

In the latter approach the data yielded during the collection processes is seen as a product of the interrelationships between the researcher and the researched.

*"In a **presentational approach**, language data is examined for how it means by analysing the relationships created by the particular researcher /teacher dyad and the language sources from which those relationships are drawn... Language data is studied in relation to itself so that the teacher's reasons (for doing what they do) are analysed through the language in which they are expressed" (ibid.: 22).*

The "language sources" are said to emanate from a multiple of social experiences that individuals engage in during their lives. As an individual, one is simultaneously a member of various speech communities that are not confined by space or time. Therefore, the dictates of choice of any one particular form of language are regulated by the kind of particular membership to any one community that one wishes to foreground at any given moment.


The role of the researcher is to be able to analyse the language data in terms of the kind of social discourse that the individual subject (the student teacher in my study) wishes to elevate at the point of data collection. The discourse forces operating within the social moment of collection of the data, is therefore crucial to understanding what the language data means.

A deep understanding of the social context within which the data is gathered is therefore crucial to the understanding of what the language data means.

In my research study it was therefore crucial to allow maximum presentation of the student teachers' individual thoughts allowing for their agenda and foregrounding to dominate in the data gathering process. I tried to minimise the kind of imposition of my presence in the data gathering process. Whilst this is an ideal to which I strove, it should not be naively believed that my presence as the other interlocutor during the data collection phase did not influence the kind of data yielded. I tried to minimise my influence over the presentation of the data in the following ways during data gathering:



- 1 in the writing up of the autobiography, STs had to generate their own criteria which they considered appropriate when trying to tap their colleagues' personal histories of English language teaching/learning. The STs designed their own schedules to interview paired-off partners and the data generated from these interviews were used to write their autobiographies (the data which is analysed in this study). My own influence in this exercise as a teacher educator should not go unnoticed. Students demanded more assistance in the form of exemplars of autobiographies. These I presented alongside my detailed assignment handout (see Appendix 2), indicating the terms of reference of the assignment. The data yielded from such a process is certainly a co-construction of both the researcher and the researched and should be analysed as such.
- 2 in designing the collage, I was also influential in the kind of data presented by the students. My assignment handout set the terms of reference for the intercommunication between the students and myself. We had chosen to use a form of communication other than language as a medium or mode of communication. The visual images were an alternative means of gaining access into teachers' thoughts. Nevertheless, the images may also be seen as a kind of "text" (albeit not in words) that attempts to represent their thoughts. Also, the students in their rendition of the assignment, chose several examples of language texts e.g. extracts from school reports, letters from friends, words or phrases. They chose the powerful medium of language. The students were also allowed to provide their analysis of these collage texts. The interviews about their collages are also finally rendered in a spoken text, which was later transcribed into a written text. This final written text is therefore a product of several layers of meaning-making. They are a product of the social interrelations of the data being gathered in the context of an assignment of a teacher preparation course, of composer interpretations, of interview interrelations and therefore needs to be analysed as such.
- 3 it was the Special Method class who chose the representatives for the interview (Data collection strategy number 2 above). What influence did this selection process have on the kind of data yielded? I believe that the students selected were aware of their responsibility of being representatives of the class when they engaged in the interview. When analysing the data, one needs to remember that the data was gathered at the beginning of the course when the students were not familiar with me as a person or as a teacher. I had not taught any of these students previously and they would have been unfamiliar with the person with whom they were interlocuting during the data-gathering interview.
- 4 a dialogue between the student teachers and myself was established via the comments that I offered them on their reflective journals. I consciously tried to provide opportunities for students to critique the kind of entries they made in their journals. In this way, the reflective journal can be seen as a particular kind of discourse. Whenever I visited students at their practicum schools, the journal was the first document that I read. Often the written comments were followed by lengthy discussions with the students, either individually or in teams. This engendered a particular kind of social interrelationship, which must be analysed when looking at the journals as data.
- 5 the stimulus recall sessions provided a particularly rich set of data. Their analysis must however acknowledge the particular nature of the social discourse that was established. I have already highlighted that the dual roles of teacher supervisor/ assessor and researcher came into play in this interview. Also to be noted is the presence of the technician videotaping the discourse. His presence within the room during the stimulus recall session, rendered him another participant in the social discourse. It may be said that the STs were not only dialoguing with the interviewer (myself), but also with the audience that they perceived the technician to represent. The interview therefore should be analysed as a social discourse between three, rather than two people.



- 6 the focus group interview at the end of the course is also characterised by an attempt on my part as a researcher to provide as much opportunity for the STs to present their experiences and interpretations of the course programme. My role in this interview was that of facilitator of the discussion initiated by the students. I chose the stimuli to be included in the room and this may be said to have channelled the kind of discussion. However, at this stage the students were much more familiar with me both professionally as a lecturer, supervisor and researcher, and personally as an individual. They would have by this stage been able to identify my personal views about English teaching and learning. The data should be analysed also in terms of what kind of relationship they would be projecting with respect to me (as their lecturer, supervisor, researcher and another person), and also in terms of what kinds of views that they thought were acceptable or not to me. The fact that some of the students chose to openly contest the views which they believed were the dominant views expressed by the course leaders therefore, becomes valuable data and should be analysed in terms of these levels of interrelations and interconnections within the community of interlocutors in this interview.

In the above description of the processes of gathering the primary data, I have attempted to highlight the several levels of data analysis that is necessary when trying to conduct a presentational analysis of the language data. This kind of analysis highlights the importance of seeing the data as language first, and as data later. The data as language is therefore, subjected to an analysis as instances of the social fabric of linguistic discourse between social partners within the locus of time, space and context. This discourse is influenced by forces over and above the immediate interlocutors involved. The multiple layers of the past, present and the future are all embedded simultaneously in the language data that is presented by the research subject.

However, Freeman (1993) argues that both representational and presentational forms of analysis act as complementary strategies to yield rich data into the quality of teachers' thoughts. The representational analysis of language data has important socio-political aims in that it provides opportunity for teachers themselves to say in their voice what their views and opinions are. When using a representational analysis of the data collected, it is necessary to record *what* the teachers are saying. He argues that: (ibid: 27)

*"when, as often is the case in research on teachers' knowledge, analysis of language data means simply reading what there is and taking the teacher at her word, the processes of change and development in knowledge and thinking can be **claimed but they cannot be seen**. However, when that same data is also viewed from the linguist's stance, as language, and the words are taken for themselves, then new possibilities arise and it becomes feasible to examine how the data means" (emphasis added).*

In representational analysis the teachers' words are taken at face value. However, Bahktin (1981) dismisses the idea that the teacher's voice has individual, sole authorship. Wertsch (1991:49) argues that Bahktin's constructs of "dialogicality" and "multiple authorship" are necessary characteristics about all texts, written or spoken.

Freeman (1993: 18-19) concludes therefore that:

"in this view, voices, like language, exist in social communities and people take them on; they are mutually created... Voices exist in and as a social medium. To understand them researchers must accept that what they hear is a function of who they (researchers) are as individuals within the social community....(L)anguage is a fabric of relationships which link people, not a vehicle by which individuals communicate meaning".

In the discussion of the data analysis strategies proposed for the primary data of this study I have indicated the levels of presentational analysis that would be necessary to capture this dialogicality and multiple authorship.



3.2 Interpreting the Data:

Musical Appreciation

In this section I shall explore the concepts of "stance", "process" and "categories" (Freeman: 1996: 371) during the data analysis stage of the research study. These concepts were explored earlier on in this Chapter (Section 1.2), as theoretical constructs necessary for ensuring the trustworthiness needed when doing research into teacher thinking.

I have not included the subjects (i.e. the student teachers) in the process of interpreting the data itself, because this was not practically possible given that many of the students have returned to their homes after the conclusion of the teacher education programme. Distance and cost factors prevent me from engaging in detailed collaboration in analysing the data. In this regard the data analysis **stance** may be said to be **non-participatory**. I myself have analysed the data at the end of the research data collection phase. The participatory role of the student teachers was established during the data gathering/ formulation processes.

In the narrative description of the unfolding of the research process, I hope to have shown that the research **data gathering and collection** was an **iterative** one: my research design was being constantly modified during engagement with the research project. This is presented in Section 1.1 as a consequence of the rapidly changing research context of post-apartheid South Africa. The data analysis, given the range of data that has been collected in this study, can only be described as an iterative process.

The process of organising the data in the narrative analysis into a particular chronological sequence is an analytical act of the researcher. When analysing the data for inclusion in the narrative, I was involved in searching for similarities, trends, patterns that emerge from the various data that were collected. In this respect this may be regarded as a grounded analysis approach (Glasser and Strauss: 1967) which generates "categories" from the data themselves rather than through the imposition of a set of a priori categories which will organise the data in pre-determined units of meaning. The choice of chronological/ contextual markers (home, family, community, school, university and school-based teaching practice experiences) in the narrative analysis was chosen to assist readability of the narrative.

However, the data was also subjected to an analysis that attempted to understand how all the various pieces of the data fit together (See Chapter Four: Sections Two to Five). As the data was collected over a period of one year, it was necessary to analyse the data gathered at different points in time, from different sources and use different methodologies to access teachers' thinking. The contextualising of the data within a framework of social relationships developing along a chronological/contextual timeline was seen as a pragmatic strategy to reveal more coherently how STs made sense of their experiences of learning/teaching of the English language: the research question of this study.

The primary data of this study is representative of the four different stages of the teacher preparation curriculum programme: i.e. the on-campus programme, during the school-based teaching practice (SBTP) programme, after SBTP, and at the end of the course. The specific context of macro forces from the wider society and micro forces within the teacher education institution and the particular schools at which the teaching practicum was conducted, were analysed as contiguous forces adding to the many layers of competing "dialogical" influences on the students' learning to teach in a rapidly changing society. The presentation of the data record will hopefully reveal the multiple layers of competing, contradictory and complex forces impacting on the teachers' development of learning to teach.

Summary of this Chapter: Conducting Research



In this chapter I have provided a narrative account of the unfolding of this research study: from its original conceptions to its present focus. This unfolding is presented as a consequence of conducting research in an unstable context such as that of the reconstruction era of post-apartheid South Africa. The study is located within the area of teacher thinking which is an under-researched area in the South African teacher education scenario. Looking into the minds of teachers is presented as a methodological challenge, which can nevertheless be addressed through innovative methodologies and techniques in the context of detailed data gathering and analysis strategies. A case is made for the analysis of data to include both a representational analysis regarding teachers' language as capable of representing their thoughts, as well as a presentational analysis taking the data that is produced by the teachers as instances of language first, and then data later.

The chapter outlines the detailed research methodologies that were used in attempting to answer the research study's critical question. Using the theoretical model for developing the trustworthiness of the research study, the information collected in this study is organised into primary and secondary data. The former are regarded as central to providing insight into teacher thinking, and the latter are regarded as data which will serve as a means of triangulating the data yielded from the primary sources. Two student case studies form the detailed analysis of this study in Chapter Four, even though nine students were originally included in the data collection processes. The data from the auxiliary seven case studies are used in a cross-case analysis at the end of Chapter Four.

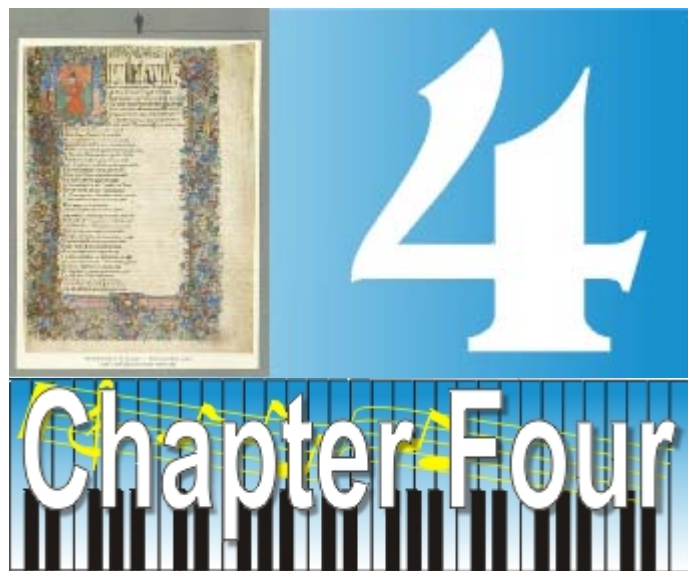
The primary data of students' written autobiographies about language teaching and learning, reflective journals about their experiences and actions during the on-campus and school-based components of their teacher preparation curriculum programme, interviews about their lifehistory, their classroom action and post-course evaluations will constitute the major portion of the analysis of this study.

During the analysis of the data, common trends and themes were generated from across the two case studies. In Chapter Four broad comparisons between the focused two students and the seven auxiliary case study students of the purposive sample are presented.

Chapter Four will focus on the analysis of the data in relation to the critical question of how STs learn to teach in a rapidly changing social context. The role and influence of the various competing and dialogical forces impacting on teachers' thinking will be foregrounded. Since this research may be regarded as opening new territory for research into teacher education within the South African context, the study will conclude with new avenues for possible future research. It is to these issues that I now turn.

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#24 Cover Page Design Chapter Four: (1992) "Extract from a Manuscript from the Mid-fifteenth Century: The Beginning of the Prologue of 'The Conterbury Tales' by Geoffrey Chaucer" (Wain: 1992: 16).

Chapter Four Title Page

Orientation to Chapter Four

Section One: Narrative Analysis: **Melodies**

Text One: Emmanuel: The Taste of Forbidden Fruit

Text Two: Sanelesiwe: Cherries, Misses and Ma'ams

Section Two: Discourse Analysis: **Listening Attentively**

Emmanuel

Text Three: Writing my Autobiography at the Beginning of the SMEC
2.3.1 Representational Reading
2.3.2 Presentational Reading

Text Four: Stimulus Recall Interview during SBTP
2.4.1 Representational Reading
2.4.2 Presentational Reading

Text Five: Reflective Journal Entry at the End of the SMEC
2.5.1 Representational Reading
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Sanelesiwe

Text Six: Writing my Autobiography at the Beginning of the SMEC
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2.7.1 Representational Reading
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Text Eight: Reflective Journal Entry at the End of the SMEC
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2.8.2 Presentational Reading

Section Three: Synthesis of Emerging Issues from the Two Main Case Studies

Section Four: Cross-Case Analysis: **Harmonies and Counter-harmonies**

Section Five: Synthesis of Emerging Issues from the Cross-case Studies

Summary of Chapter Four: Words, Lives and Music

• Orientation to Chapter Four

Chapter Four is divided into five sections:

- Section One: Narrative Analysis : **Melodies**
- Section Two: Discourse Analysis : **Listening Attentively**
- Section Three: Synthesis of Emerging Issues from the Two Main Case Studies
- Section Four: Cross-case Analysis: **Harmonies and Counter-harmonies**
- Section Five: Synthesis of Emerging Issues from the Cross-case Studies

Sections One and Two will present two levels of analysis of the data collected during the research process. The first level, I choose to call a narrative analysis, and the second a discourse analysis.

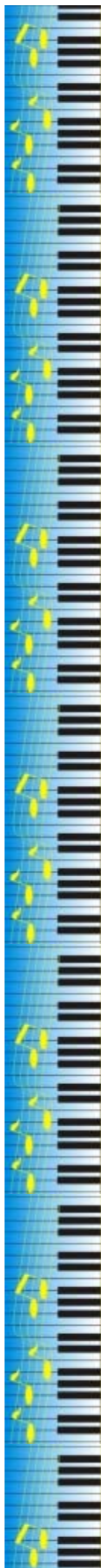
The tradition of narrative analysis is as old as the first acclaimed written example of English Literature. Over 600 years ago Geoffrey Chaucer composed his famous poetic description of the Mediaeval Christian world - "The Canterbury Tales". In the times of feudal England, Chaucer depicts the varied characters who embark on an annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas Becket. The journey assembled devout and cynics alike on their quest to seek purging of their sins. The travellers take a rest at Rochester, midway on their journey from London to Canterbury to replenish their horses, to eat, drink and be merry. To pass the time of their overnight stay, the innkeeper engages in a form of entertainment: the telling of stories. Several of the pilgrims are introduced by the innkeeper to the audience; then the characters tell their tale.

Wain (in Coghill:1992: 12) in his introduction to a modern day publication of this perennial classic commented on the skill of Chaucer to capture the lives of the characters he portrays:

"Chaucer parades his pilgrims before our eyes with unforgettable clarity. His writing has retained its freshness across six hundred years. Small wonder, since he built it out of non-perishable materials. It is highly visual, but always a hard-edged, unsentimental way with no blurring of one effect into the next. He presents his characters, diverse as they are, in clear outline and primary colours, deliberately making them as vivid and memorable as the figures on a pack of cards; except that whereas the card-figures are frozen into two dimensional immobility, Chaucer's people are in constant movement, riding along, talking, laughing, gesticulating, quarrelling. The scene he puts before us ... is all energy, variety and colour; it is the great verbal pageant of the Middle Ages. "

In the text Chaucer, the author attempts to get into the worldview of the character who is telling the story. By assuming the stance of the narrator of each of the tales, he is able to capture the hypocrisy or devoutness of the teller; their public and private worlds often colliding before the reader. The stories each character tells, betray their personalities. Amidst the stories, the text is interspersed with the dramatic commentary of the Host (innkeeper) who acts as a modern day referee, judging and interpreting the actions of his players. Nevertheless, it is Chaucer's mastervoice which surfaces as the analyst of the "society in (its) first phase of unrestrained capitalism...depict(ing) the last moment of high Middle Ages" (ibid: 12).

My own narratives in Section One of this chapter draw on this Chaucerian analytical technique. I assume the first person narrator of two of the student teachers who were part of the research process. The first story, which I call "The Taste of Forbidden Fruit" is that of Emmanuel, a devout Rastafarian who chose to become a teacher. Sanelesiwe's story is the second text, called "Cherries, Misses and Ma'ams". Both these individuals come from the same area of rural KwaZulu-Natal. These stories in their similarities and differences tell the tale of becoming teachers of the English language. Both these student



teachers, one male, the other female draw on their experiences of growing up in an African environment and their ability to cope with the demands of teaching English in a more linguistically diverse school context than the one that they had lived in during their schooling. One student experiences the practising of teaching in a troubled school environment poised with the demands of inter-racial integration, of hostile relations between pupils and staff. The other develops understanding of becoming a teacher in the context of a relatively more "successful" school environment, seeming to provide a more harmonious teaching of the English language.

The story spans a period from their childhood and family background, to their teaching and learning experiences at school, university in the teacher preparation programme; back into the changed and changing world of post-apartheid South Africa schooling. The texts I present are as much a product of the owners of the experiences as it is of my narrative voice. I have tried as far as possible to use the actual spoken and written words of the texts that the student teachers yielded during data collection. This is done to capture as closely their voice via their individual dialect of using the English language. This representation of their stories is the first level of analysis of all the data gathered.

Section Two presents a discourse analysis of the data. Using the framework for accessing teacher thinking through the language data produced (See Chapter Three: Section Three) I embark on two forms of discourse analysis, namely representational and presentational analysis. Briefly, discourse analysis points researchers into understanding how the data produced in the data collection process is a product of the interrelationships between the researcher and the researched. The kind of data yielded is a consequence of the context, audience and purpose of the dialogue/discourse that is established in the research process. The use of multiple forms of texts each yield different facets of this relationship. Therefore, one cannot take the research subject's words only at face value (representational analysis). One needs to analyse how they are saying what they are saying to the researcher (presentational analysis). Both these forms of data analysis centralise the language-making process in the research data collection endeavour.

This second form of discourse analysis is therefore used to act as a foil against which to provide validation of the claims being made in the narrative analysis.

Arising from the two forms of data analysis of the two main case studies, Section Three of this chapter provides a synthesis of the key issues which have been foregrounded about the process of learning to teach the English language in the transitional context of post-apartheid South Africa. This chapter culminates the musical rendition that was being prepared for in the previous chapter. It presents the sounds of the teachers' developing lives as professionals that are heard here in its harmonies and counter-harmonies, in its melodies and strains, in its crescendos and diminuendos, its joyful vivaldis and quiet adagios.

Section Four deals with a cross-case analysis. In this section the data of the seven auxiliary case study students are analysed and summarised in comparison with the two principal case studies. The general issues arising from the cross-case analysis are presented in Section Five. These seven stories are entitled:

1. Imraan Mobs, Mores and Morality
2. Zakiyya Anglo-Arabic Conversations
3. Romola Friends, Fraternities and Fraternisations
4. Kamalan Ordinary Touches
5. Ravesh Cruising through Others' Spaces
6. William Too Many Voices
7. Thembi Cultural Dislocations

In Chapter Five I shall place these key features of the process of learning to teach alongside the data yielded from the auxiliary case studies provide contrasts and comparisons with the findings described above. This will form the platform for the concluding thoughts of this dissertation.

All the previous chapters of this dissertation have been working up to this

crescendo (musical climax) of the presentation and analysis of the data. Therefore, this chapter functions as a musical performance with its accompanying melodies, its harmonies and its counter-harmonies. Sit back and listen to the music...



Please click on images for enlarged versions

Extract from Book: (1992) "The Canterbury Tales: Geoffrey Chaucer".



[Please click on images for enlarged versions](#)

"The Prologue to Student Teacher Melodies" - Michael Samuel

Section One: Narrative Analysis: Melodies

This section presents two stories (Text One and Text Two) of the process of becoming teachers of English. It documents how the student teachers experienced English learning and teaching over different periods of their lives. These stories have been organised using the following chronological signposts to assist readability and comparison between the two students, Emmanuel and Sanelesiwe:

1. My Home, My Family, My Community, My Schooling Years and I
2. My University Experiences
3. My Final Year in the Teacher Preparation Programme
4. School-based Teaching Practice
5. Teaching Action
6. Reflections on Becoming a Teacher
7. Where I am Now

These stories are titled:

Text One: The Taste of Forbidden Fruit (Emmanuel)

Text Two: Cherries, Misses and Ma'ams (Sanelesiwe)

Each of these stories is captured in a unique font to signal the students' individual voice.



#26 Photograph from Collage: (1997) "Emmanuel".

Text one

The taste of forbidden fruit

Emmanuel

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- Being in the world, but not of it
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Where I am now

- Parting comments


The taste of forbidden fruit

My Home, My Family, My Community My Schooling Years and I

"Cut your dreadlocks or leave my school"

Just mention the word "Rastafarian" and images of a stoned dagga user with untidy dreadlocks undoubtedly staggers into mind. Strains of Bob Marley and Peter Tosh accompany this image: the music of a continuous reggae beat. Most people know the beat, but not the words or messages in the music. This is all they know about us Rastafarians. The principal in my standard ten year was also guilty of this kind of judgement without understanding. He simply saw us, a group of my secondary schoolmates and I, as rebels who would not abide by the school rules. "Either you cut your dreadlocks or leave this school," was what we were told. I had to compromise because I knew that I wanted to complete my matric. I could have abandoned my Rastafarian principles then. The kinds of prejudices that I was experiencing trying to live out my philosophy was enough to make you tow the conventional line.

Although I hated my matric principal for making me cut my dreadlocks, I must say that I must thank him now that I am at university. You see, when I came to my interview to be selected for teacher education, I was not wearing dreadlocks because I had just finished my matric. My friend who accompanied me was wearing dreadlocks and we both came to the interview. Well, I got in and he didn't. I don't think he could have failed the interview; we were coming from the same



area and he was quite clever. I must be one of the few people who come from my area who got in at the university. And I was a Rastafarian too who was going to become a teacher. I don't think there are many of us around. Of course, I didn't tell my interviewers that I was a Rastafarian, and you can see how conventional I look in my student registration card, which I made in my first year. I only started to grow my dreadlocks again when I began university.

My junior secondary principal was more understanding. He was a remarkable person. He was the person who was prepared to take on the principalship at my school in Hammarsdale. Nobody would have liked to have been a principal of such a chaotic school. This school is in a rural area, which was known for the political violence during the time before elections in 1994. Many of my friends' parents had been killed during this era, or had their houses burnt down. They were often abandoned or had no where to stay when they were going to school. It was a real working class area where having daily food was a luxury. And there was so much conflict, which was brought even into the school. Nobody would have liked to be principal in that school, but this young teacher decided that he would take it on. He was a nice man.

He called us into his office when he saw us wearing our dreadlocks and he asked us to explain what were our reasons. He knew that we were amongst the top pupils in the school and he wanted us to finish our schooling. We explained. He agreed to compromise. We were allowed to wear our dreadlocks without caps. You see the Rasta colours could be confused as being the colours of one political party. So he didn't want us to promote support for any political party in the school, otherwise he would have had other students wanting to wear their political T-shirts to school too.

This principal managed to rule the school by abandoning corporal punishment. When he spoke in the assembly, everyone was just quiet. He had an air of authority, which came from the respect we showed him. He made the school function: everyone wore their school uniform, there was discipline in the school; school pupils were not leaving the school whenever they wanted to. If we were making noise in the class and he walked by on the corridor, then there would be that immediate quietness. I really liked that man. Aiyh!

Suits and Ties

My own father had, I can say, no influence over my family or me. In fact, I only met my father face-to-face for the first time a few years ago. I knew of his existence but we never saw him in our home. I can say I was brought up in a single parent home. My mother was the one who raised us. She was a worker in a factory and served them for many years before she was retrenched. Our family always had lots of financial problems.

We did not have any books, or magazines or TV in our home. Also it was not customary for African children, more especially from working class families, to have parents read to them when they were small. We just couldn't afford those reading materials. My first experience of reading books was when I went to school.

From small I used to admire the teachers in my area. They were always smartly dressed with a suit and a tie. They had that status in my community, then...

I always used to say as a child that I wanted to become a teacher. Even in my primary school, you can see in a photograph, I used to walk like those teachers, I used to imitate how they used to carry their coats. I was so proud of wanting to become a teacher.



#27 Photograph from Collage: (1997) **"Emmanuel at Secondary School Standard 6".**

"From small I used to admire the teachers in my area. They were always smartly dressed with a suit and a tie... I wanted to become a teacher."

Schooling: an escape into another world


I first learnt English in my third year of schooling. This was the first time I had seen books in English. My teachers taught me how to sing a poem about the body parts in English. I knew how to recite the poem. I learnt to count using English numbers. In grade four our teachers forced us to use English whenever we spoke in class, or if we wanted to excuse ourselves from the classroom, for example to go to the toilets. Outside the class, all the time I spoke my home language, Zulu.

My senior primary school teachers were obsessed with "completing the syllabus". In the English class this involved learning grammar with each lesson devoted to learning about a certain structural form of the language. It was not helping us to communicate in the language in conversation. To me then, school was supposed to be independent from our daily lives. The structural grammar we learnt was the kind of academic knowledge that I thought teachers had to teach pupils, irrespective of the pupils seeing any value or not in what they were learning. This is what schooling was supposed to be about: different from our everyday existence, an escape into another world. The teacher used to read short stories to us in primary school, but there was no deep analysis of those stories. We were asked simple questions: who did what? what were the characters' names? where were they walking? what happened to them...? Anyone could answer those questions.

In my later primary school years, there was this English teacher who always referred us to the dictionary whenever we asked for explanations of words or phrases that we did not understand. "I am not your walking dictionary," she would remark. Our comprehension lessons were characterised by the teacher giving us texts to read and without any guidance on how to read, she would set us questions. After completing the exercise at home, the next day she would just give us the correct answers. She would not really attend to our difficulties. She just moved on to the next lesson in the syllabus: maybe passive or active voice, or tenses.

How do you pronounce "apple"?

My grade eight teacher had a different view about how second language speakers learn to use English. He would narrate stories to us in Zulu, which had a similar theme to the one we would be dealing with in the English text, he was to read. Of course, all of us did not have the English text. This was the time when the government never used to supply texts to African schools, and the parents had to



buy the school books themselves. Therefore, there were only a few texts in the class belonging to those who could afford the texts. The teacher would then get the pupils to read different parts of the story, with each pupil "dramatising" the spoken words of those characters. He would read the narrator's voice for those pupils who did not have a text in front of them.

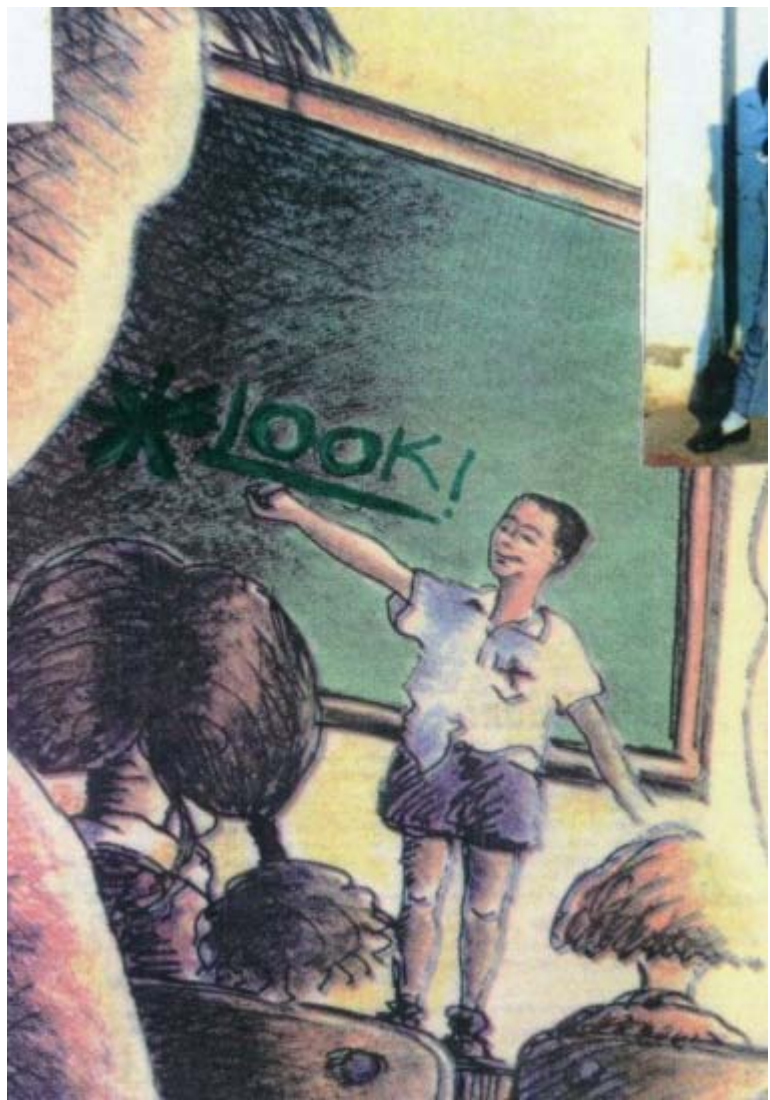
It was difficult trying to make a dramatic presentation of the written words especially since we were still early second language learners, but that teacher made us to see that we must read aloud according to how the characters in the story would have delivered those words in real life. This made us learn how to speak English. The story that he usually told us in Zulu before reading our textbooks, used to provide some kind of clues to the English story to be understood. I think he was a successful teacher because he realised the value of using the pupils' mothertongue in the classroom. "Practice makes perfect, " was what he always told us in encouraging us to speak English.

Things turned for the worse in my tenth year of schooling. My English teacher was a terror. He always carried a stick with him and he would beat you for any mistake you made in English. We were all scared of him because he never smiled and was always serious. We ended up concentrating a lot on developing our English skills because we were scared. I will never forget that he gave me five lashes because of my "wrong pronunciation" of the word "apple"!

My History teacher, Mr. Shangazi, used to be interested in our participation in the class. He would always speak with several questions in between his sentences. For example, he used to constantly use phrases like "Hitler was trying to develop what in Germany? To develop a united nation, to do what?" This made us to be on our toes to constantly try and work out what the next argument he would be making. He also tried to get us to see the value of us participating in the class.

I remember my secondary school as being largely in the "look and listen" mode. This dominated the strategies used by teachers. They would simply stand in front of the class with all the pupils seated in rows facing the board. The teacher would talk for most of the time telling us the kind of knowledge that they would be testing in the examination. The classes were largely textbook bound. We would only discuss issues that were in the textbook without any analysis of what the textbook author's biases were. Our job was to be passive learners, to develop our memory skills.

Mr. Shangazi was slightly different. He used to help us develop our memory skills, by writing our responses to his questions on the board. We were then expected to copy down these summaries on the board. These summaries were very useful when learning for the examinations. I remember in my matric examination I wrote five-and-a-half pages on a



#28 *Photograph from Collage*: (1997) "**Emmanuel: The Pupil Teacher**".

history essay because I remembered those notes that the teacher used to jot down on the board.


But my teachers used to always complain about me because I sometimes used to ignore taking down notes from the board. I used to like forming my own notes when I was studying on my own. You learn better when you do things yourself.

The pupil-teacher

My teachers in secondary school also used to value me as a pupil. I was part of a group of pupils whom they used to call on to present lessons in the class. This happened very often especially in my English classes. I thought this was a great opportunity to teach the fellow pupils in my class. It was like I was being their teacher, so I imitated all that my teachers did. I used the "look and listen" mode of teaching too. I used to be given additional texts by the teacher to prepare for the presentations. I would go home and prepare these lessons and stand confidently in front of the class and teach the pupils. It made me feel very confident in using the English language. I was being motivated to become a teacher.

Of course, now I look back on this "teaching" style and think of the consequences that it had for me in terms of my relationship with my fellow colleagues in the class. The relationship I had with my teachers tended to affect the way in which other pupils related to me. There was this sort of distance between them and me. They thought that I was superior to them.

I tried to be able to make them feel that I was not superior but the teachers always praised me for my work. We then decided as a group of friends to develop our own learning groups outside of school. This was especially in the times when the school programme was disrupted or when we were preparing for our examinations.



Teaching ourselves

We created self-study groups, which consisted of voluntary members. There were different study groups for the different subjects and there was a strict code of conduct if you belonged to a group. For example, you were always given a task to prepare for the next study group. This might involve the preparation of a section which you will be expected to teach to the rest of the group. If you did not prepare the "lesson", then you were given a warning. After a certain number of warnings you could be excluded from the group if you did not deliver. I used to be a member of several study groups and I used to use the additional materials that my teachers gave me to study for the "presentation lessons" in class. I must say that I passed matric because of these different study groups. This is why I value peer learning. I think you learn so much more from people who are of your own age group. You remember things better if you hear them from your peers.

But not all my peers succeeded in school. I am the only one from these friends who came to the university to study. Most of them are now working. One of them was killed in the community violence after he left school. Two of them became taxi-drivers: I still see them when I go back to my area in Hammersdale. One of them went to Bible College and is now a priest in this area.

Each individual is a creation of Jah

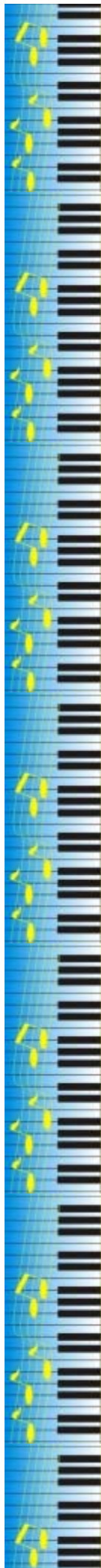
My grade eleven and twelve years were the worst years of my schooling. I was being forced to abandon my Rastafarian way of life. But inside me I was becoming more and more attracted to the philosophies of this way of life, this religion. I had become more resolved that Rastafarianism was the philosophy of life that I thought was appropriate. This philosophy taught me more about the kind of community in which I was growing up. I could provide my own evaluation of their values. There was too much disrespect for human beings. Rastafarians believed in a deep respect for humans. Life is regarded as sacred and we should respect the individual person as a creation of Jah. This appealed to me a lot. Individuals need to take full responsibility for their own choices, and therefore, for the quality of the life that they fashion for themselves. Life will treat you with the same degree of respect that you show towards yourself and your fellow human beings. Therefore, one has to be very aware of the kinds of influences that you bring to bear on yourself. There is a strict code of what you can eat. I am a strict vegetarian because I believe that when eating meat one imbibes the blood, aggression, emotions, and life of another living animal. I will only take in nourishment that emanates from the earth.

The Fruits of life

Living out this philosophy was not always easy. My mother used to find it very difficult to cook food for me. This began a series of conflicts between my family and I. I was perceived to be draining the family food budget. My siblings began to treat me very poorly because they argued that additional vegetables were being consumed because I began cooking my own meals. Eventually, home life became very unappealing to me because of all the arguments we used to have. I decided to move out of my family home and then chose to live together with a group of my Rastafarian friends. This meant my having to move to another school in a nearby township.

My adolescent years were characterised by the conflicts of the world of school (which valued me as "a good pupil"), and the world of communal living as a Rastafarian. This second world also showed up its fair share of problems. It began to fall apart when our host Rastafarian mentor began to complain that my Rastafarian school colleagues and I were not able to financially contribute to the household. We then decided to set up our own home close by to my family home in a kind of squatter settlement. I went back to my old school during my secondary school years. Life was tough because we did not have any money. We had to live off scraps rejected by others. I was determined not to go back to my family home in defence of my principles of Rastafarianism.

My secondary school teachers constantly argued against the influence of the



Rastafarian way of life. I was determined (maybe stubborn) to prove to them that I was in charge of my own life. My academic performance (and that of my Rastafarian school colleagues) could not be faulted. We were always amongst the top of the class.

Financially, it became near impossible to cope with living independently without any income. My friends and I decided to set up a fruit-selling stall outside the school gates to generate some income. This income would put food on our table at least. It was not a booming business and there were many times when I was so hungry in school that I could hardly concentrate. Our fruit-selling stall at school was our only means of survival. My Rasta friends and I had organised a group of women to sell the fruit on our behalf while we were at school.

However, my teachers began to spread rumours and negative stories about these fruit-sellers. They urged pupils not to support our fruit stall. I think that they were deliberately forcing "our business" to go under so that we would be forced to abandon our Rastafarian beliefs. This made me only more determined.

It was when our business was in complete ruins that I declared that I wanted to leave school, abandon this "sinful way of living" and join a community of Rastafarians who had settled themselves in a cave in the deep rural area of Shongweni. I had visited there and was impressed by the way they lived away from the world, living off the land.

I need to write a full story about this experience of living in this community and the effect it had on me, my family, and my schooling career. To describe it briefly: my mother was furious; my teachers pleaded with me not to go; I was determined to abandon them all and prove them all wrong about us Rastafarians. The eventful day dawned when I rudely stormed into the principal's office and condemned the whole schooling endeavour. My new-found vocabulary about Babylon and Zion littered my comments about the ills of schooling, teachers, and the world. I set off to live in the hills.

My family household rapidly declined. Years later my mother explained to me that I was the cause of the ruin of my family. She felt that I had finally abandoned her and left her with little hope to carry on in the struggle to raise her family. My sister fell pregnant; my older brothers became drunks and layabouts. My mother lost her job, and eventually went to live elsewhere leaving my siblings to fend for themselves.

My life in the cave on the hillside of Shongweni allowed me time to reflect. I really came to value the kind of ideology of communal living as a Rastafarian. It made me deeply respectful of other human beings. I was dedicated to the peaceful existence we shared as brothers and sisters of the community we lived in. However, we were breaking the law: we were illegally occupying someone else's land. Eventually, we became nomads after the South African Defence Force evicted us off the land.

On one of my visits back home I realised the squalor of our family homestead. It disappointed me greatly. By this stage I had made peace with myself about who I was and I soon realised that it was pointless my living this idyllic life as a Rastafarian whilst my family was falling to ruins. I also reflected then that I was extremely rude to the principal when I left school. He was such a nice man and I had treated him so badly. I decided to go back to school to pay him an apology. I remember this incident very clearly. As I approached the school gates, I noticed that the principal was getting ready to get into his car to go off to some meeting. When he saw me, he stopped and greeted me warmly, welcoming me saying, "Oh, Maqwashu, it's so good to see you again. But I am in a hurry now. But I'll see you later...I've got something to tell you." This was our last conversation.

When I returned to the cave I was pleased that I had at least started making peace with my principal. I waited that day at school for him to return but he never did. Then the sad news arrived. On the day after I had spoken to him, my principal was found shot. He was killed, murdered. Gunned down early in the morning. At seven o'clock in the school office. "Who did it?", we still don't know. Why? Why? It really troubled me greatly. I think teachers in this school didn't like him because he

demanded hard work from them. Why was he killed? By whom? What did he want to tell me?



[Click here for an enlarged version of graphic](#)

#29 Collage: (1997) **"Emmanuel: Students Speak".**

Guilty Conscience or Vision?

I know that the following story might seem that I was being driven by my guilty conscience, or that I was hallucinating, or that I was under the influence of drugs. But on two separate occasions I had a vision of my school principal. I can see the image clearly even now: in my "dream" I was seated at a table studying

for an examination. My principal appeared to me and stood beside me. He then pointed to the History textbook from which I was studying. "If you study these sections"" he said pointing to parts of the text, "you will pass your matric examinations."

This vision made me re-examine the kind of life I was leading in the Rastafarian society. I thought about my mother's comments that I was the ruin of the family. I thought about going back to school. I then decided that my mission in life was to restore my family household.

This story too will take a whole novel, something, which I plan to do someday. I went back home and began the process of rebuilding the household. This included cleaning up the overgrown plot of land around my household, scrubbing and cleaning up the dirty house, finding means to secure social welfare to address our abandoned status as teenage children, trying to find food to put on the table.

Eventually, I was able to secure a part-time job as a handyman and gardener to a local businessman (who eventually sponsored my first year at university). I was successful in first getting my sister to return home, and then after much hardship to get my mother to return to take her position within our home. This is one of my great triumphs in life.

I was making amends. I decided to go back to school to complete my studies. My teachers were very happy when they saw me return to school. I soon settled into the "normal life" of school. It was the new principal who forced me to cut my dreadlocks. I complied even though I did not abandon my Rastafarian ideologies.

Spectators

In my English classes during my last years of schooling, I was not fortunate to have inspiring teachers. My grade eleven teacher said that she would no longer teach us "English language" but concentrate on teaching us the two sections of "English literature" that we were to answer in the examinations. So for the whole year we only studied one novel and one drama. I now know that what she meant by this was that she would no longer teach us grammar. In the English literature

class, we were like spectators watching her performance. She would first give us a list of words from a novel; then she would discuss the meanings of these words. Most times she did not make the connections of the words to the issues being raised in the novel. Then she would give us another set of words to work on at home. This is why I valued the self-study groups that we set up on our own as pupils.

#30 *Photograph from Collage: (1997) "Emmanuel at University".*



Grade twelve was even worse. The teacher would read the novel and the drama in class. By this time all of us had texts which belonged to the school. The government was supplying African schools with texts. We would read aloud the whole text in the class with different students reading different parts. The teacher would then explain in Zulu what certain sections of the English text meant. This was problematic especially when it came to examinations and tests, because these were set in English.


One day she organised a debate and unilaterally decided who would be the motion and opposition of the proposition to be debated. Very little support was given on her part to assist the pupils prepare for this oral activity. When we finally delivered what we thought was our best effort, she openly condemned our efforts. She made us feel very small when she said that we were not fit for Grade Twelve pupils. This was very degrading. That is why I preferred to study alone or with my peers in the study group outside school. I disliked that the teachers never respected us as human beings with the capacity to be individual thinkers, innovative and critical. We were regarded as objects whose destinies were to be determined by the limits the teachers set for us. School life was such a contrast to my experiences of living in the Rastafarian community.

My University Experiences

University: The Good Books

When I was accepted into university it was like all my dreams had come true. My mother and I simply cried with disbelief when I told her that I had been accepted at the University of Durban-Westville. The story of securing finances to get to university, I'll tell elsewhere some day.

University was the place where I thought I was going to find the answers to all of life's questions. This was the seat of knowledge where all the answers were being



kept. I approached my university education with the kind of deference to knowledge that my teachers had instilled in me. The large library with shelves of books with all the knowledge that had to be learnt, impressed me. I was like the customer who approached the salesperson in a large bookstore looking for "the good book". I believed that intelligent people (like those who wrote books) were those who had the answers to life's questions. I was going to become like those intelligent persons.

People, programmes and philosophies

My undergraduate years at university brought a range of mixed experiences. I was for the first time exposed to a range of different people from all different linguistic, cultural, religious and class

perspectives. My own Rastafarian beliefs allowed me to see this as a valuable opportunity to acknowledge the humanness present in all these differences. Of course, I did not agree with all the different beliefs, but I used my university career as an opportunity to meet people of different ideas and beliefs. I made it my task to get to know the little I know about Islam, about Hare Krishnas, about Hindus. Of course, I knew about Christianity from my own community back home.

The university was also undergoing a transformation during this time. My first year at university was the year (1994) in which South Africa held its first democratic elections. Transformation discourse was ripe in all structures of the society, including at the University of Durban-Westville. The university had a grand policy of recognition of all forms of diversity embedded in its mission statement. But I believe that it is one thing to profess a set of values in a mission statement, it is another thing in terms of how to live out this policy. There is need for an internal evolution of people's thinking about racism, diversity. I experienced this when my friend was not accepted into the Faculty of Education, maybe because the person interviewing him thought that a Rasta couldn't be good for children in schools.


But what I found strange was how females at university reacted to me because I am a Rastafarian. It was like them wanting to taste the forbidden fruit. They found me somehow interesting to get to know. Of course, their intentions for getting to know me were always not very clear to me. I could easily have fooled around with many of them. But my Rasta beliefs tell me that one should be faithful to one sexual partner only. Of course, this is not what many other Rastafarians practice. For example, Bob Marley and Peter Tosh had several sexual partners. This is often why Rastafarianism earns a bad name. Rastafarians are equally responsible for the bad image that the society has of them. They create the image that being a Rasta is all about sex and drugs. This image of Rastas, I need to be very aware of when I am a teacher.

Girls in schools are often very influenced by their teachers. Being adolescents growing up in the school environment, I have known many male teachers who abuse their status in the schools and make sexual advances to the girls. Being young, the girls often submit to the teachers. I think this is very wrong. Teachers are like parents. Parents send their children to you to educate them. A parent should not engage in sexual activities with their children. I know that young girls are attracted to me because I am a Rasta and this concerns me about how will I relate to them when I am a teacher.

The university lectures that I attended were not all that different from my experiences of teaching and learning in secondary schools. Most of the courses that I read for, English I, II and III, or Geography I, II and III were all taught in the traditional lecture method: the lecture would stand in front of the 200 or so students, and lecture at them. Sometimes the lecturers used overhead transparencies, which we copied down in our notes. There was no two-way interaction between students and lecturers in the lecture halls themselves. I used to go to lecturers' offices to discuss issues with them, but most students never did this. I found it quite easy to pass the course with good marks.

Part time teaching: socio-constructivism is not for Africans pupils

During my weekends I became involved in teaching in a voluntary tutor



programme to help African pupils studying for their matriculation examinations. I taught mainly Geography. I used the same methods of teaching that I experienced in my school classrooms. The pupils themselves were very comfortable with this way of "lecturing" to them about the content of Geography and I saw no problem of spending most of my contact session with them telling them the "facts" about Geography. This was after all what I believed they wanted me to do. The supervisors of this programme felt that I was doing a good job delivering the content that pupils needed. I felt that I was explaining the concepts to them in a very organised fashion and that they will be able to learn easily for their examinations.

I had registered for a B.Paed. degree in the Faculty of Education and there I was exposed to the theory of socio-constructivism early in the course. I believed that socio-constructivism was about not giving pupils answers, about allowing students to construct for themselves the answers. Of course this was a very limited understanding of what socio-constructivism entails. I believed then that there were basically two kinds of teaching: socio-constructivism and transmission teaching. To put this in another way, I initially believed that these were options about a learner-centred teaching approach and a teacher-centred approach. Socio-constructivism was good and transmission teaching was bad. I tried to put this socio-constructivism / learner-centred "theory" into practice when I went out on my first experience of school-based teaching practice in my second year at university. It failed dismally.

My lesson was about topic sentences in paragraph construction. I presented pupils with a group of sentences and asked them in groups to formulate a topic sentence based on these sentences. I had omitted to inform the students that they themselves had to construct a topic sentence, which was not necessarily one of the given sentences. I felt that pupils were just not able to provide their own topic sentence. They simply chose one of the given sentences. I was disappointed with my performance. What went wrong I did not know then, but it made me quite disillusioned with all the fancy theories of the Faculty of Education. I also felt that pupils in our African schools are rather lazy and don't like to work in groups. Groupwork is not for African school pupils, I thought. African pupils prefer teacher-centred teaching. Maybe these fancy theories are for different school contexts besides African settings.


The rest of my courses in the B.Paed. degree were mainly in the Arts Faculty. In English I, II and III we only studied literature. We studied literary criticism and learnt how to write a critical essay based on the chosen networks we studied. I was able to do this quite easily. Again however, I found that it was necessary for me to work with a self-study group in preparing for the examinations. The tutorials that I attended in the English Department told me what was expected of us when we were writing essays. It did not teach me how to write essays. In fact, I feel that the entire English course was not teaching us how to develop our language skills. It was merely testing to see how we could write essays on literature. In our study groups at university we discussed what to write in these essays, and this is how I think we learnt how to pass English. I found that most African students were having difficulty passing English. I thought, well this is because they are second language users and their skills in English are not that good.

By the time I reached fourth year I had already passed English III. I already knew how to write English essays, I had already passed the course. This was enough for me to be able to become a teacher of English. So I thought then.

My Final Year in the Teacher Preparation Programme

Final Year: What more can the Faculty of Education teach me?

Then a new dawn arose. I was exposed in my final year to the teacher education programme in the Faculty of Education. Suddenly all my certainties were being challenged. I felt that I knew very little about how to teach the English language. Not how to teach grammar: that I had had several years of primary schooling drummed into me. In the "lectures" in Special Method English, I became aware of the complex and integrated relationship between the different modes of language: reading, writing, speaking and listening. I had taken for granted that the spoken



and written forms of language were the only important modes of language that a teacher needs to concentrate on when teaching English. In fact, I was going to be a secondary school teacher, and I thought that the knowledge of English literature was to be the prime focus of my teaching in the secondary school. I felt that my English I, II and III courses had adequately prepared me for this. What more can the Special English Method course teach me?

The first memorable experience of my English Special Method course was a session in which we had to discuss experiences of our schooling. I was allocated the task by one of my colleagues in the class to narrate an incident out of my schooling. I had to present this story to the whole class. Although I had been at university for three years now there were very few occasions in which I had to address a whole group of students. Most of the students in this Special Method class were first language speakers and I was nervous about how was I, a second language speaker going to cope with addressing this group of about 80 students. But I managed to gain that confidence that I must do this. My other colleagues in this class were also given a task of describing who they were, their backgrounds and I felt more confident when I heard them speaking in this class. We all were not accustomed to participating in the lecture in this way, but I felt that this is what we must do to prepare to gain confidence to speak in front of classes as a teacher.


Listening to the stories of the other students who came from different schools was quite revealing. I did not realise that we were all experiencing similar kinds of problems with how we were taught English in our schools. We were taught English in a fragmented and compartmentalised fashion. I soon realised that we all came from various backgrounds and that all of us had unique experiences to share in the class discussions. Each of us was thereby enriching each other with our own unique learning experiences. To me, this activity served two purposes: firstly, it made me to realise the importance of knowing your pupils on a personal level. This not only assists the teacher, but also the pupils in a sense that they become aware of the personalities, cultures and religions of other pupils. Secondly, in a second language classroom, this activity might be useful because when pupils speak about themselves, they feel more comfortable and excited to such an extent that they may even "forget" that they are speaking in a second language. This is what happened to me when I addressed the class about my schooling experiences. I could manage to speak English in the context of a class of first language speakers. I wondered whether the lecturers in this course were promoting this activity because the theme of the course was "Teaching English in a Multilingual Classroom". I was being exposed to the varieties of contexts within which English is being taught and learnt in South Africa. More especially, I discovered that I as a future teacher would be expected to teach in any one of these different contexts. This made me very scared.

How was I as a second language speaker of English going to be able to teach English to pupils who were first language speakers? These first language English speakers in the class were able to speak so confidently. Would I be able to teach first language pupils in the kinds of school contexts that they were describing? This was the challenge facing me. This was living out the ideals of the new South Africa, but was I going to be cope? Would I be able to teach in a school where English is the dominant language?

The English Method class was typical of what I called a learner-centred classroom. I realised that my colleagues' and my own active involvement would make my learning meaningful. I had to become involved in the various discussions. The lecturers seemed to be guides or motivators to our development as teachers. They were good listeners who responded to our needs. They helped us explore relevant areas related to teaching English in a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. I learnt to be critical of my own views about language teaching and learning.

Re-writing my life

When the lecturers asked us to write an autobiographical account of our experiences of learning English, I realised that I have been unconsciously shaped about my understanding of how English has to be taught. Because the exercise engaged me in a conscious exploration and evaluation of my past experiences in



English language learning and teaching, I managed to identify the flaws in the way I was taught and began to explore the alternative ways of teaching language that we were talking about in the Method class.

I realised also when constructing my collage of visual images about my life experiences that there many other ways of communicating thoughts. In this way I learnt that visual presentation can help in eliciting ideas that may be difficult to be presented in written presentation.

I began to look more critically at how I was approaching my teaching in the weekend community outreach programme with the matriculant pupils. I was now elected to teach English because I had completed English III. I realised it was difficult for me to divorce myself from the ways in which I was taught in school. At times I tried to apply what I learn and observe from the Special Method class, but ultimately found myself resorting to the very approaches that I regarded as not useful for the learners' development in the English language. There might be two possible reasons for this: the pupils and myself. The pupils were from schools that were using the traditional approach to teaching English. A learning-centred approach is strange to them; they became passive. This resulted in my switching to a teacher-centred approach. But maybe the problem was with me, I thought. I had not yet fully grasped the ideas and theories foregrounded in my Method classes. I believed that the extent to which one changes one's teaching approach depends on

the rate at which one grasps the new ideas about teaching and learning, more especially about teaching a second language.

I know the theory, but it does not work in practice


My emerging view about how second language learners developed language skills was being developed through my exposure to the reading material and the "lecture" sessions. I believed now that the preferable way of learning a second language is through experimenting with the language. It needs a learner to attempt to use the language in different contexts, for different purposes and to different audiences. Class activities should involve practical activities to experiment with the language. Debates around current issues in South Africa, using material from newspapers, television programmes might interest the pupils. Pupils should be central to their learning processes. I knew this in theory, but I could not seem to be able to put this into practice.

A teacher's role should be to encourage pupils to have a positive attitude to learning a second language. The teacher should encourage pupils to embark on activities to use the language in settings outside the school as well. The teacher must stimulate the learners with many resourceful teaching aids to help pupils develop in the second language. These were issues that we would debate in the lecture classes.

My lectures on "Language Acquisition" made me to realise that simple exposure of learners to the English language would not necessarily develop their competence in the language. Having pupils continuously and consciously attending to the form of the language, by reading or listening to various explanations about the rules of the English language, will not necessarily develop their language competence. I had believed that watching English television programmes would automatically improve my language skills. The lectures challenged this belief.

Watching a videotape with Stephen Krashen talking about his language acquisition theory really changed my views. I realised that in fact, competence in a second language results from acquisition of a language, rather than from learning. Formal learning of the rules of language, only develops the learners' monitor to edit one's utterance. Speakers initiate utterances with their acquired competence, and refer to conscious rules from their monitor only later. In other words, we use conscious rules to correct output of the acquired system. This was my understanding of this video: we needed to concentrate on developing pupils' acquisition of language through exposure to comprehensible input of language.

This sounded like a wonderful theory, which I regarded as a kind of truth about



how children acquire languages. But I was still confused about one part of that theory: which says that we as teachers should provide input that is slightly above the level of competence of the learners. This, Krashen argued would force learners not to stagnate at their current level of competence in the language, but would encourage them to develop. What was I going to do when I encountered my pupils? Especially pupils in a class where there was a range of abilities?

Was it essential that I had to work out the levels of competence of all the learners in my class? They all would come from very different backgrounds and therefore have different levels of ability. How was I going to pitch my lesson at the right level of comprehensible input in a varied multi-levelled ability class, especially like the classes I would most likely teach?

I realised that watching TV programmes, or reading material that is way above one's level of competence is a waste of time: pupils acquire very little from them if they cannot understand what is being said. Hence, the second language class is the place which is useful for the teacher to make the level understandable to the pupils' present level of competence. I felt I was being exposed to valuable theories about language learning and teaching.

I would not like to teach the way I was taught

I therefore concluded that I would not like to teach the way my English teachers taught me. The various activities in the Special Method course made me to realise the importance of involving my pupils during the learning process. This challenges the way I was taught as a learner, but this seems more in line with my own personal beliefs about respecting individual human beings. I now believed learning and teaching which is textbook-based and teacher-centred inhibits pupils' cognitive development and this was the flaw in the way my teachers taught me.


I engaged in a personal discussion with my lecturer about the fears that I had about teaching first language users of English. Together we explored the possibilities of using the ideas that Krashen was suggesting in his theory on language acquisition. I felt convinced that it was possible that I would be able to teach first language users. Everything was possible if I was prepared to accept the challenge. I felt that I had to develop a positive attitude towards life's challenges.

Matching theory and practice

However, the biggest fear that I had was about how to match the theory and the practice in a classroom context. From my experiences that I had gained thus far in school-based teaching practice in my early part of the degree, and from my experiences of teaching matriculants in the weekend programmes, I was finding the matching of theory and practice very difficult. My experiences thus far had been working with pupils who were from only one race group also. Some of the pupils in these contexts were not coping with my use of learner-centred teaching. In a multicultural class I thought that the problems would be even greater. The notion to "start from where the pupils are", for instance, was difficult to apply in these contexts: pupils came from different backgrounds and levels of language competence. How was I going to manage such a class remained a challenge to me?

Confirming my suspicion of teaching multilingual classes

At the beginning of my final year I also began tutoring first year students in the English I Terminal course. This was a terminal course in the Department of English, in the Faculty of Arts. In the tutorial groups I encountered mainly African students who were second language speakers of English. The others were Indian students who were first language users. There was one White student in my tutorial group. I soon began to realise the difficulty of pitching my lesson at the appropriate level. In most cases I found that I was teaching to the level of the majority of the class, that is the African second language speakers. I began to notice how bored the first language students used to be when I was explaining to the group about writing literature essays. There was this one Indian girl who I could see was totally not participating in the tutorial. It seemed as if she only attended the tutorial because she had to sign attendance to achieve a duly



performed certificate to write the examinations at the end of the year. When I approached her after a tutorial one day, she confirmed my suspicion: she already knew what I was teaching the second language students. There was no point in her coming to the session. This experience made me strongly concerned about how to handle first and second language speakers in the same class. If we separated them into two groups, this would automatically mean that there would be a separation of different race groups. This is what we all wanted to avoid: to have two separate curriculums for different race groups.

I could see that the students were bringing into the university their own prior experiences of apartheid schooling. Each education system based on the different race groups was of a different quality. We all had similar experiences of a fragmented curriculum based primarily on the written skills and the reading of literature networks. But the kinds of experiences of how the English language was taught were different.

It seemed that African students were obsessed with the attention to the form or the "look" of the written essays. When I was trying to prepare them for a written test in the English IT course, they were preoccupied with how they must introduce the essay. They mouthed expressions that an essay must have an introduction, a body and a conclusion. They had learned this in a formulaic kind of way but were not really able to put it into practice.

My job as a tutor began to improve as a consequence of my involvement with the Special Method English class. First of all I began to question why the Department provides the students with the poems they must prepare for in the test. They had been lectured to on these poems and now they were being tested on those poems. What was the purpose of this evaluation? What skills were they assessing in these tests? I decided that I would try to minimise my role as the "provider of the knowledge" for students to write in the test. I wanted to get students to reflect on what they understand about poetry analysis and what did they see as their problems when writing a critical essay. I divided the tutorial group into four buzz groups, each looking at one aspect of poetry analysis: the socio-political and historical context within which the poems were written, the overview of the thematic content of the messages of the poems, the choice of figures of speech and the choice of diction by the poet. I found that students were quite motivated to work in these small groups. They had their lecture notes with them, which I asked them to make use of. Before long they were able to hold a plenary discussion across these four areas of concern when analysing the poems. They themselves were making the presentations.

We then moved on to how to write a critical essay. This is where I used the experience of a first language Indian student to role-play how he would attempt to successfully sell their company's image to a prospective new client. I then got others in the tutorial group to work with each other to discuss how they would "sell their company's status and image". I then drew it all together in a plenary session by drawing an analogy between selling a company's image and selling the image of the poem. I used the ideas that students had presented when feeding back from their earlier buzz group sessions. This was a successful lesson, I thought.


School-based Teaching Practice

School-based teaching practice: choosing the profession with open eyes

It was now time within my final teacher education course for us to go into the schools. These were my thoughts the night before I went into

school; I captured them in a reflective journal which was to be my companion during the whole of teaching practice:

"Today is the 30th July; the night before my preliminary visit to Centenary Senior Secondary School. Various questions are 'cropping up' in my mind as I am thinking about this visit. What type of learners am I about to meet? I know the school I have to do my School-based Teaching Practice (SBTP) is a historically predominant 'Indian school', which now opens its access to 'Black' (African) students. But how do educators deal with a multilingual, multicultural and



multiracial context? What will be their (teachers') attitude towards me (A Rastafarian)? If in case I am asked to do something with learners, what is the first word that I am going to utter? I assume the kind of experiences that I had with my English I T tutorials will work for me to adapt in the context that is multiracial. What about the experiences that I had when I was doing my Teaching Practice during my second year? That would not help me much because the classes I dealt with were predominantly 'Black' in terms of learners. Hopefully, I say to myself, the combination of experiences during Teaching Practice 1, a campus-based course, my experiences during the teaching of the matriculants on Saturdays and my experiences of teaching English IT during my tutorials within the university will assist me in adapting successfully within this context. In fact, it is these experiences that (kind of) relieved anxiety and nervousness in me."

What an experience those six weeks at Centenary turned out to be! I knew that my lecturer, Michael, was going to monitor very closely how I was coping because I was part of his research project. I knew that I wanted to do my best and rise to the challenges that I would have in this school.

First of all I had to decide what to wear. Imagine me wearing a suit and a tie. Will the principal allow me to wear my Rasta badges and bracelets? What about my dreadlocks?

I arrived at the school about the same time as two of my other colleagues. The rest of my colleagues who were to spend their time with me at this school were out on an excursion for Special Method English. They were spending a live-in weekend workshop where they would be looking at "School-based teaching Practice and Curriculum 2005". I could not manage to go mainly because I was contracted by the university to teach the English I T tutorials and I could not make alternative arrangements for someone else to take my tutorial. I was disappointed that I could not go, but here I was in the school standing in the foyer waiting to be introduced to the principal.


My first experience in this school was being witness to two students who were being sent home because they were wearing beards. This really amazed me. What were the reasons why they were not allowed to have beards? Who objected? Why? It reminded me of my own experiences in school when my principal forced me to cut my dreadlocks. I said nothing and just waited to be invited into the principal's office.

"You must not be too friendly with the pupils because you will find it difficult to finish what you have started. You should be aware that you should not become too bossy and authoritative. Be friendly up to a degree and do not try and please them by sacrificing what is right." These mixed messages about how to handle the pupils in this school were the words of introduction by the school principal. My first question was about his interpretation about the challenges associated with second language speakers of English. He replied that the school used a test to screen second language pupils before they were admitted. I did not inquire further into what kind of test this was. "The context of this school is more challenging than the apartheid days. You are not only to be facilitators of pupils' learning, but also moulders and shapers of the new society in a non-racial, non-sexist and united nation. You must be certain that you are choosing this profession of teaching with open eyes: we are building the new society here." I was sure that I had heard this rhetoric somewhere and often before. Was this school going to prove any different?

Teachers: it was as if they knew the pupils exactly

The school was not in full operation on this my first day at the school. This was because several teachers were busy arranging a social activity for the number of teachers that had decided to take a voluntary severance package from the Department of Education. This was the Department's response to rationalising the perceived excess staff at schools. This was their last day in the school and they would now go into retirement or seek new jobs. The school timetable was not really in operation because the teachers were involved in the social arrangements.

My first task that I was asked to do was to serve relief in a class that was writing a



test. One of the teachers hastily introduced me to the class. I was surprised by the lack of seriousness which some of the pupils had towards writing the test. In fact some of them were freely chatting to each other. The teacher walked up to one of these individuals and slapped him across the face for disrupting the test. I was horrified because I thought that corporal punishment was banned in school; also I just don't believe in corporal punishment.

When the teacher left I apologised to the pupil for what the teacher had done. But this seemed to backfire on me. Amazingly this same pupil continued with his disruptions. He stood up and asked me to allow him to borrow a ruler from a person two rows away from him. I decided to fetch a ruler for him because he said that he did not like the ruler that his immediate neighbours had. This was purely attention seeking behaviour. Before long another pupil raised his hand to ask me to throw a piece of paper in the dustbin for him. This was getting too much. Another female pupil started to complain that someone was pulling her hair. Were they simply testing me?

I decided to divert their attention by saying that I had something important to announce at the end of the test. This seemed to work.

The teacher returned to see how I had coped with the class. Immediately, she started questioning about the pupils' behaviour. Before I could really explain what had happened, she just started naming pupils to proceed to the front of the class. These were exactly the pupils who had disrupted the class; it was as if she knew them exactly. She then lashed each of them with a belt. I stood there totally dumbfounded.

Of races and the human race

I was taken to a standard eight class. I decided to engage in a general discussion with them. I was concerned to get the second language pupils in the class to participate so I chose to speak about the cultural practices surrounding marriage, especially the custom of paying "lobola" (dowries). I got the Indian student to tell me about their cultural practices surrounding marriage arrangements. I soon felt that I had pupils interested in my ideas about the difference of "races" (a construct of colonial imperialism) and "the human race" (a construct of the equality of all before a Creator). Believe me, I even forgot for a while that I was a student teacher in this school. I was teaching about something that was very close to my heart and I think pupils respected my sincerity of views.


What a first day of school-based teaching practice!

Everyday thereafter was filled with novel experiences which forced me to sit up and question my beliefs about schooling, the function of education, the role of an English teacher, the principles of working together with my buddies in a team of student teachers, with the resident teacher, the school language policy, how to organise the learning experiences of the pupils in a coherent curriculum programme, the shortage of textbooks, how to design worksheets, how to organise groupwork, how to handle the advances of female pupils who were interested in finding out more about my personal philosophies (or was it just me they wanted to know), how to address the problems with discipline and classroom management. One of my greatest concerns became how to involve second language speakers in the classroom discussions. Why were they so silent? What prevented them from participating freely?

I choose to reflect on just some of these experiences and issues. I recall them to show how I had to adjust my original views about teaching and learning in a multicultural context, how I realised what my shortcomings were.

The action

Getting settled in the school was a long process. The deputy principal who was put in charge of us during our stay at the school was not able to allocate us to any particular teachers straight away. There was a lot of discussions about rearranging the school timetable because of the number of teachers who were leaving the school. It was clear that teachers would be reallocated to "new" classes or that



class groups may be combined to accommodate the reduced number of teachers. A number of the teachers were also not available for us to discuss how we would be allocated to them and which classes we would be working with. Our group leader (one of the student teachers) arranged for all the student teachers to have a meeting to outline the kinds of activities and assignments that we would be expected to conduct according to the university requirements for school-based teaching practice. We were expected to investigate the school language policy in action, that is to examine how the school addressed the issue of language teaching and learning, how, and if it promoted the different language groups of the school. This involved trying to set up interviews with the principal, teachers and parents of the school. We divided the responsibilities of when to set up these interviews. This investigation

was to highlight for us the particular problems of English language teaching and learning within this specific school. This was part of our investigation phase of the action research project for Special Method English.

Who are the employers and the employees?

The teachers in the school seemed to be involved in bigger issues. There was great dissatisfaction about the way in which the reduction in school staff was going to affect them. Many of the teachers were members of the teacher union SADTU (South African Democratic Teachers Union) and it was evident from the discussions in the staff room that the teachers at this school were going to support the union's call for a two-day "chalks-down" in protest against the government's plan to rationalise the teaching force. The issues around redeployment of teachers from governmentally determined "oversupplied school" to under resourced schools was not favourably accepted within this school. Teachers were arguing that their workloads were already overstretched and that the new policy of moving teachers out of their school was not acceptable. A meeting in the staffroom indicated that the teachers would not be attending school on the Wednesday and Thursday of this our first week of practice teaching. What were we to do? Did we support the teachers' calls? What about our action research project? When will we start teaching? Which classes will we teach? We were confused.

The tension in the school became worse. The principal called a meeting of the staff to announce a request by the school's governing body for him to supply to the parents the names of all the teachers who were going on strike. The chairperson of the governing body (a parent) had indicated to the principal that the parent body wanted this information in order to make arrangements to organise the school timetable to continue with those teachers who were not going on strike. The teachers argued that they would not submit their names to the governing body because they felt that the strike issue was an issue between the employers (i.e. the Department of Education), and the employees (i.e. the teachers) and not the governing body. All the teachers then indicated that they would not be attending school during the 48-hour strike. It seemed to me that there were conflict of interests between the parents and the teachers in this school. The parent body was against the strike; the teachers saw it as necessary to ensure their well being at the school. Whose interests do the school governing body serve? Why are the parents the majority of representatives on the school governing body? It seemed to me that teachers were threatened by the governing body.

Amidst all the tension we managed to organise which teachers we would be attached to. They would serve as our mentor teachers. I was placed in a team of three teachers who were allocated to a mentor teacher who taught the standard six English classes. When should we start teaching? What shall we teach? Will the school normalise on Friday when teachers come back to school after the strike? We did not have answers to all of these questions before the teachers' strike.

Our team decided to spend the strike days back on campus to organise ourselves in response to this situation. We had not fully investigated the nature of the school's language policy; we had not yet spent enough time getting to know the pupils in the class; we had not had an extended discussion with the mentor teachers about the English curriculum because they were so involved with the "bigger" issues surrounding staffing. How were we going to design a programme of teaching and learning for our pupils?



Forget those ideal theories: welcome to the real world

At school the mentor teacher communicated through only one of the female members of the team. We hardly spoke to him because he was always so busy. We arranged to observe one of his lessons. This is how he presented his lesson: It was a lesson on "The Red Pony" by John Steinbeck. The teacher distributed the copies of books to the pupils. He then wrote a series of questions on the blackboard, then instructed the pupils to read the 90-page novelette silently and then answer the questions on the board. The pupils were expected to copy down the questions and answer them after reading the text. I began to question the value of all of these strategies. Was this a reasonable exercise? Was this developing pupils' reading skills? Maybe because the pupils are all first language speakers they would easily cope with this task. Will they be able to complete the task within the time allocated? The pupils were not allowed to take the books home and therefore they knew that they had to try and complete the task within the classroom. The class settled down immediately to the task set. At least it gave the teacher some time to talk to us about his expectations for his class while we were teaching them.

"You are free to do anything you want." I was impressed by his flexible attitude. I realised that he was transferring a lot of responsibility on to us to design a creative learning experience for our learners. However, he also indicated that he was aware that the university expected us to implement "all those ideal theories". He told us that they ("theories") don't really fit the reality of the school situation, but that it was necessary to experiment during the teaching practice session. He said that those theories don't apply in the real world. As an experienced teacher now, he claimed that he did not use any of the "university's theories". He also indicated that as a student teacher from the university he used to prefer to be alone in the class without his mentor teacher. He felt that it gave him a chance to relax more without the mentor teacher there. Therefore, he indicated that he would not spend too much time within our classrooms.

I hardly saw him in my class when I was teaching during the whole teaching practice session. I did show him examples of the lesson plans I had designed, but he just said we must continue with the lesson; that there were no problems with the lesson design. He did offer us general advice about the discipline in the school: he felt that we should be harsh and firm with the pupils.

All of this confused me a lot. I was convinced that his opinions were entirely personal, but he was a teacher who had many years of experience of teaching in this school. I felt that I had to respect his opinions, but I was going to try and see for myself whether what we


learnt at university was to be of any value at all. I was also aware that he was not always available to discuss issues because he was busy doing other things in the school. There was a kind of communication breakdown and we always heard second-hand (from our female colleague) what he expected us to do, like when to set a test, where the textbooks were kept etc...

Language policy in action

When we went back to school after the strike, we eventually managed to conduct all the interviews, and observations of pupils to assist us to write a report of the school language policy. These were some of the findings, which we reported:

"Centenary Secondary is an ex-HOD (House of Delegates) school situated in a predominantly Indian community called Asherville. The school's populations consist of Asian, Coloured and African pupils, totalling about 1000. There are 21 teachers in the school. 80% of the pupils are Indian, and the remaining 20% include Coloured and African pupils. 53% of the pupils are males and 47% are females. African males amount to 10%, while African females amount to 12%. The classes are overcrowded. Each class has a carrying capacity of 25 pupils, but classes accommodate 40-45 pupils".

The rest of the report indicated how the school ignored the proposed new language policy of the Department of Education. The proposed policy suggests



that the school choose the languages to be studied in relation to the linguistic composition of its learners. The intention of the proposed policy transfers responsibility to the school's governing body to decide on how it will promote multilingualism within the school community. This has not happened within this school.

In practice, only English and Afrikaans were languages taught in the school. This was despite the growing number of African pupils who spoke isiZulu as their first language and the fact that Afrikaans is not a first or second language of the pupils in the school. This was a legacy of the apartheid era still in operation, because the teachers in the school were only Indians who were not competent in isiZulu, and therefore, could not offer any African languages. The teachers rationalised their continued practice of offering only English and Afrikaans in terms of the lack of available staff and the view that African pupils expressly state that their reason for coming to an "Indian school" was to learn English. The choice of the second language being Afrikaans was explained in terms of it being "practical": a loophole of the proposed Departmental language policy. The school had an adequate supply of Afrikaans second language teachers. The home languages of the Indian pupils are also not taught in this school. The Muslim community of the area nevertheless, promote the study of Arabic as a language in afterschool classes linked to religious instruction in Islam. Teachers within the school itself do not supervise these classes.

Part of the problem arises because the governing body does not reflect the changed demography of the school. African parents are not represented on the governing body. However, it remains to be seen whether Black parents will choose African languages to be taught and learnt at this school.


A typical poster on domestic violence in the school reflected a contrast between two homes: a White home and an African home. The African home was characterised by an abusive drunken father, while the White family was characterised as happy, peaceful and content sitting in the park! Such posters alienate African learners who are being stereotyped as coming from dysfunctional families. I believe that this probably unintended effect tampers with pupils' learning and hinders their development and confidence in their identity. Maybe, this is the reason why African pupils do not participate in classroom discussions.

In the classroom the teachers operate as if the pupils are all first language users of English. The medium of teaching is strictly English. Teachers are aware of strategies to facilitate development of the second language users, using more multilingual groups during class activities, such as using African first language books, using pupils as resources to promote competencies in isiZulu. Other teachers who were able to use a pidgin (mixture of English and other African languages) "Fanagalo" approached its use cautiously; they felt that the pidgin was born out of master-servant relations and this was not appropriate for the school context. An ambivalent attitude towards English second language pupils prevails: teachers realise that African pupils are not coping with the demands of their new school environment; teachers are aware of alternative strategies to address second language learning and teaching; teachers lack competence in African languages; no conscious plan of development of second language pupils is offered in the school.

One of the Afrikaans teachers in the school had some competence in isiZulu and therefore, used it to her advantage in the teaching of her subject Afrikaans. Her class was thus characterised as follows: she starts by translating Afrikaans into English and then switches into isiZulu to clarify difficult concepts for her African learners. She used three languages within her classroom. This case is, however, an exception in the school. Most Afrikaans lessons were characterised by codeswitching between Afrikaans and English to accommodate first language speakers of English. This kind of codeswitching between English and African languages however does not feature in the English classrooms because of the reasons described above.

Designing a curriculum plan: buddy breaches

The first signs of difficulty of working within the team of students teachers surfaced



when we had to reach agreement about how to design a curriculum for a four week plan of action with the learners. It became evident that certain members of the team were not contributing equally. Several excuses were offered. The Indian students of the team were interpreted as having the privileges of living within their parents homes where the responsibility of seeing to day-to-day issues like shopping, cooking meals, washing and ironing were all taken care off. The African students were in residence at the university and did not have these luxuries. Therefore, each of us could not afford to give the same degree of attention to our schoolwork. We could not all agree about what the curriculum plan should look like. I initially interpreted this as simply personality differences: some students were just lazy to make a contribution. Or was it that the African students had to make more adjustments than the Indian students to adapt to this new school environment?

We agreed that each member of the team should design independently the kind of curriculum plan that they considered appropriate; thereafter we would assemble all the plans and decide on an appropriate strategy for our four week plan. The daily meeting with our team was used as the opportunity to exchange ideas about how we would approach the teaching of particular classes and the overall curriculum plan. We managed to keep to this schedule of meetings; however, some members of the team breached the agreements we decided on during these meetings. They would not always be prepared.

Teaching Action

Backfire

During our first lesson where we were totally in charge. We decided as a team to first introduce ourselves formally to the pupils and establish ground rules for the entire duration of our engagement with the pupils. We also designed a writing activity to gauge the pupils' present level of English language competence.

Our approach of creating a relaxed atmosphere with the pupils backfired on us: one of my team members ended up openly scolding the pupils for their rude behaviour. I was disturbed that pupils responded to this kind of harsh authoritarian attitude of my colleague. Perhaps, it was because he was an Indian himself, which meant that he understood these children better than I did. It seemed as if he knew the kind of backgrounds that these pupils came from: he lived in this community. He was able to control the pupils, which I could not do.


I, nevertheless, was quite impressed by the way the pupils responded when they finally settled down. I was impressed that they spoke openly and freely. The written exercise that we got them to do proved that these were competent users of the English language. The pupils wrote far more than I had expected them to do, and they were able to write creative interpretations of the visual picture that we had provided as stimuli, using their own experiences. I was impressed by their abilities, even though there was evidence that the majority of them had problems with punctuation marks and some sentence constructions.

The strains between my peers and I became more pronounced when I insisted that the scripts of the pupils efforts should be marked overnight and that we would provide feedback to the pupils the next morning. We had four different classes of standard sixes, and I chose to mark the group of scripts for the class that I would be seeing the next afternoon.

When discussing our plan of action for the next day, the conflict arose as to whether to start the next lesson with feedback or with a new lesson. My colleagues insisted that we start the next lesson with a poem that we had planned together. I gave in.

Trying team teaching

The lesson was divided into different sections and the different members of the team took responsibility for each section. This was my first experience of team teaching. I was responsible for a detailed analysis of the diction of the poem. I was surprised that these pupils who were so rowdy in our previous encounter were



actively participating in the classroom discussion. This was however, not true for the Black pupils whom I tried desperately and in vain to include in the discussion. Why did they not participate? The poem had to do with a relevant South African experience? They surely knew about the influences of home environments on the schooling experiences of learners: the subject matter of the poem, "Timothy Winters", by Charles Causley. Why were they not participating?

While I was teaching one of my colleagues slipped me a note indicating that the next team member should proceed with his section of the lesson. I was thrown off balance. I had not finished what I had planned to do. When we reflected as a team on this lesson we came to an agreement that the approach of team teaching would be discontinued because each of us had different personalities and that we each had different agendas for how we would work with the class. We decided to split the lessons for the two classes with one person being fully in charge of the lesson, and another team member serving as support or back-up assistant to the "main teacher". This was what our supervisor had also advised us to do when we consulted with him. We were beginning to understand that there were several models of collaborative teaching and that it did not only involve all teachers being present in one lesson.


I became preoccupied with discipline

I was beginning to get very critical of the approaches of my team members, especially in the way in which they related to the pupils. I felt that they often embarrassed the pupils by exposing their work to be put up for analysis and scrutiny. I could see in the eyes of the learners that this was quite intimidating. I clearly did not share their views about disciplining the pupils. One of my team members would be quite insulting and sarcastic about pupils' disruptive behaviour. I was over-conscious of how classroom behaviour and discipline were being handled by my peers. This does not mean that I did not experience discipline problems. I soon came to see that the pupils in the classes we taught would take any opportunity to disrupt the lesson if we gave them half a chance. I became preoccupied with classroom management and discipline.

I also felt that the presence of the team members in the classroom distracted the pupils and the "teacher" who was teaching. The individual student teacher, who was not presenting the lesson at one time, seemed more concerned with what he or she would be doing next with the pupils. On one occasion the "second teacher" started distributing the textbooks for the next section of "her lesson". I knew that we had decided that we would divide the 60-minute sessions with the pupils into two lessons, but I felt very distracted by my colleague's action while I was teaching.

Besides time management of our lessons, in our group discussions reflecting on our lessons we realised that identification of our roles during the teaching process was proving to be a serious stumbling block in our practice as teachers. We all were able to offer each other suggestions about the teacher moving around in the classroom rather than standing rooted to one spot in the room. This was also offered as a suggestion to monitor behaviour of pupils at the back of a class who seemed to be consciously denying the teachers' presence in the class. We offered suggestions about how to write on the board without losing sight or control of the pupils' behaviour. Our issues in these early discussions seemed to revolve around developing better organisation of the classroom: time management, discipline, control. Whilst the comments offered were done in a constructive manner, I felt that some colleagues thought that the team members were "trying to assume the lecturer's position". They felt that the responsibility for offering advice about practice should come from the university supervisor.

We seemed to be able to resolve our different understanding about disciplining pupils when our team decided to address the issue head-on with the "notorious class" that we were teaching. My approach was to appeal to the pupils in terms of recognising the value of education. I drew on my experiences of many pupils in the rural area from which I come, who did not have the privilege of the kind of resources and facilities that these pupils in this school had. I pointed to them that they had lost sight of the value of their education in preparing them to be independent and successful citizens. I emphasised the importance of respecting



teachers who prepare with effort and diligence the kind of work for them to learn. I specifically indicated the number of hours of preparation that we as novice teachers were putting into making our lessons work.

My colleague, who had just lost one of his parents a few weeks prior to teaching practice, spoke of his personal experiences of the responsibility he will need to carry now that he at such a young age inherited the role as head of his family. He suggested that these pupils too might unexpectedly one day also be asked to perform very responsible roles for the betterment of their families. These personal stories seemed to make pupils more aware of us as "human beings with a life and feelings". It seemed as if they could relate to our situation of being student teachers when faced with the kind of behaviour that we were experiencing with them.

An integrated curriculum programme

It was now the third week of our school based teaching experience. We seemed to have been given the full responsibility of teaching the classes we were working with. In our curriculum programme we had identified that we would work with improving the writing skills of our learners. We chose to do this by beginning with an analysis of three poems with a similar focus on schooling experiences. These poems were: "Timothy Winters" by Charles Causley, "Last Lesson of the Afternoon" by D.H. Lawrence and "Failure" by James Curry. All written activities would stem from the issues raised in these poems which we felt raised issues that were close to the social and schooling experiences of these pupils. Using these poems was a useful way of understanding the issues confronting the pupils' daily experiences of schooling. We began lessons by asking pupils to brainstorm the titles of the poems and predict what they thought the poem would be about. They usually were able to talk quite freely about depression, disappointment, anger and the consequences of failure (in schools).


Whilst the first language pupils seemed to be participating freely I still felt the hesitation from the second language speakers, especially the girls. I decided to use the issue of confronting one's failure (raised by the James Curry poem) to ask the following question: "How would you assist someone who is familiar with the content of his/her work, but cannot express it in English?" This was obviously targeted at developing a process of first and second language users working co-operatively. It was an interesting strategy to get pupils to offer suggestions about how they could assist each other, especially across the different ability levels in the English language. By the end of the lesson on the poem "Failure" one of the second language pupils was able to offer a paraphrase of the poem with a little more assertiveness and confidence.

I also began to use my own status as a second language speaker of English to encourage L2 speakers' participation in the class. I would deliberately make "errors" in the use of English, hoping that someone (a first language speaker, usually), would correct me. Then I would offer some advice like: "you see, even myself I still make mistakes - so do not be shy to express yourself- we are all learning- even myself- you have just witnessed it". Pupils also began to make comments when analysing these poems: "we need not live with our past, but we have to use it as a yardstick through which we measure our progress; moreover,

we have to learn from our mistakes". I thought this was very good.

Team members drifting apart

My buddies and I were not getting on very well. I found that the teamwork was sometimes reduced to the buddy simply writing out homework exercises on the board and this sometimes interrupted my lesson. Nevertheless, the exercises were well designed in that they integrated with the lessons I was teaching. After all we had designed in our planning meetings how the lessons would integrate. For example, after analysing a poem, the exercise asked pupils to write a dialogue of direct speech that could have taken place after the action described in the poem. We also linked the lessons by cross-referring to different issues raised in the different poems. In another lesson, the punctuation of an unpunctuated poem was simultaneously teaching pupils about punctuation and poetry. This kind of



integration of lessons was not something that I had been accustomed to in my schooling experiences.

Of course, I had reservations about the finer details of how the lessons should be designed and organised but these were usually argued and debated in the planning meetings. We often decided on a strategy that all of us should try and implement. By now it was noticeable that we were talking more and more about curriculum design issues and whether our lessons were succeeding in developing the pupils' language skills. We were able to get pupils involved in the lessons.

My lecturer came to visit me teaching a lesson on the short story, "The Dictionary" by a South African, White author, who had lived amongst African people, and who was now writing about his understanding of African culture. The short story was about arranged marriages and the customs around selecting a marriage partner. I thought this was an appropriate issue to deal with in the multicultural classes we taught. The short story was part of an anthology of short stories that the school had copies of. Unfortunately there were only 34 copies of the book for the entire school. We had over 35 pupils in each of the two classes of standard sixes that we taught. The first issue was about how to get pupils to read the short story before we engaged with it in the class. We did not want to spend the time reading the whole text in the class simply because of the shortage of books.

We arranged to distribute the texts to one class who would address this part of the curriculum programme. Our second class of standard sixes was engaged in another activity. Our buddies in the second team were also teaching standard sixes. This second team chose to focus on the teaching of the short novel "The Red Pony". This meant that all the standard sixes were dealing with different aspects of the English curriculum programme at any one point in time. This was in order to deal with the issue of a shortage of textbooks. This was to prove quite a problem later.


The resident teacher was not pleased about us distributing textbooks to pupils to take home to read. He was concerned that the textbooks were in short supply and that pupils would not be responsible in returning the books. He chose therefore to keep the texts locked in his cupboard and distributed them only when needed in the class. Our team members felt that the pupils needed to read the text before the lesson and chose to take responsibility for monitoring the loan of the texts to the pupils. We created lists indicating the names of pupils to whom books were loaned.

On the day on which the lecturer/supervisor was in the class I noticed from the expression on the faces of the pupils that many of them had not read the text. Although I had spent several hours designing a lesson plan, which would merely outline the plot of the short story, I now realised that I had to change my strategy. Let me tell about the original plan for the lesson and how it turned out in practice.

The ideal and the reality

During my Special Method English class we had discussed how short stories may be analysed using a genre analysis approach: this involved analysing a short story as consisting of several different "moves" that an author makes when constructing this particular kind of text. I was going to expose the students to the different sections of the short story using the analysis of the different "moves" being made. I had marked off the different paragraphs in my text, which I constantly would refer to, unlike my own schoolteachers who were often unprepared and often spent time in the class looking for different sections to read to us. I referred back to my lecture notes in which my lecturer had plotted a graph depicting the increasing level of action of the story and the sequence of narrative events. I thought that this would be an ideal lesson design to expose pupils to the graph.

When I began teaching the graph, I realised that the pupils were not all that familiar with the story. I chose then to have them read aloud the different sections that I had marked out. Then pupils will be able to see the way in which the five different "moves" of Introduction, Development, Climax, Denouement and Resolution of a short story worked. When I looked back at my teaching of this section of the lesson on a videotape, I realised that I had omitted to explain to the



students what the different axes of the graph represent. The graph therefore made little sense to the pupils in the beginning.

Not all the pupils had brought their texts to class. I had distributed two days previously 28 texts to this class. Was the mentor teacher right about pupils being irresponsible when given texts? Nevertheless, there was at least one book amongst three pupils in the lesson. My lecturer and I discussed alternative approaches to handling the situation when pupils do not prepare adequately for a lesson. One of the suggestions was to get those who had read to share the description of the plot to those who had not. I was still not very confident in abandoning responsibility of this kind to the pupils, because I was aware of how these particular pupils seem to take advantage of being handed over the responsibility to talk to their fellow peers. I had tried this on some occasions with them and this usually resulted in them arguing and spending a lot of time settling down to a "self-directed" activity. How was I to know whether the pupils were actually talking about what I had set them? I did not really trust that they were focused on the issue the teacher set.

I got pupils to read out aloud. It was disappointing. It was if they lacked enthusiasm or confidence to read aloud. I chose then to read aloud. It was also my way of ensuring some kind of discipline to keep them all focused on a very loud reading of the text. This seemed to work. I was always conscious that I had to be in charge of the pupils' rowdiness, not to let them get out of hand. This was always at the back of my mind.

I tried to involve the learners by drawing on their personal experience of taking photographs. This activity was to introduce the section of the lesson about the variety of introduction styles that an artist/film director or novelist may use when composing a beginning to a story. I learnt the value of doing so, as pupils became enthusiastic about the change in focus of the lesson. My previous section outlining the different genre "moves" had lasted a whole hour, and on reflection, I realised that the pupils may have been bored by the routinised and repetitious format of the presentation until the change in talking about camera techniques. It seemed as if I was more concerned about what I as a teacher must do in a classroom than about what my pupils must do. This last comment from my supervisor was a useful critique of my lesson. I needed to become more aware of designing lessons with a variety of pupil activities, as well as adjust my language usage to the appropriate level of standard six pupils. I was aware when I listened to myself on the videotape that I was using language that may be too far above the level of the pupils. I knew all of these ideals about teaching and learning, but I was not able to fully put them into practice.

Individual and Different pupils

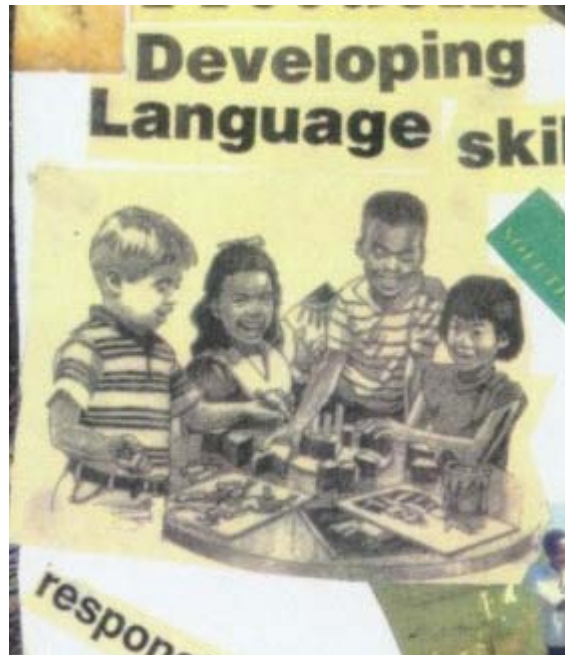
The individual and different pupils in my class began to become more and more obvious to me as time progressed. There was a clear difference between the maturity level of the girls and the boys. This I knew in general, but only truly experienced when I saw how the girls in the class chose to interpret the word "climax" with its sexual connotations. The girls' more developed awareness of sexual issues excluded most of the boys' appreciating the double meaning of the term.

I also became aware of the withdrawn and drowsy boy at the front of the class. I had spoken to him about possible reasons for his drowsiness and lack of attention in class. This was the pupil whom I would choose to follow more closely during my stay at this school as part of a psychology assignment, I thought.

I was aware of the bright pupils in the class: a girl who was insightful in her comments, but who only offered any when provoked for a response; the bubbly boy who chose to leave his circle of troublemakers at the back of the class and reposition himself during my lesson in the front of the class. It seemed as if he was making a conscious effort to exclude himself from the distractions of his peers.

I was most troubled by the second language speakers in the class. I had even resorted to speaking directly in Zulu to them to ask the simplest of questions. I had even tried to provide excuses for the pupils to get them to make them believe that

I understood the difficulties they may be experiencing in using English. I was not successful. They simply refused to participate in class. I don't know where it was coming from, but there was a sort of depression amongst African pupils that I could not explain. When I spoke to them outside of the class asking them why they did not participate, their responses were equally vague to me: they just laughed at my interest in them! I could not connect with them.




#31 Photograph from Collage: (1997) "Emmanuel: Groupwork-an Ideal?"

One of the most interesting characters that I met during the school-based teaching practice was a young Muslim boy: he sat at the back of the class with a large frown on his face everytime I entered the class. I chose to try to get to know him better. I discovered that he was a staunch Muslim who was a strong supporter of the People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) movement in Overport, Durban. Although he did not ever tell me directly, his peers indicated that he saw me as a drug user, a dagga user, and therefore, did not accept me as a teacher. I made a conscious point to try to speak to him in every lesson I taught in his class. I started by simply patting him on the shoulder to indicate I had some respect for him. Then I made sure that I would shake his hand at least once a day. Although he never said anything directly to me during my stay at the school, nor I about my Rastafarianism to him, I was sure that his attitude to me changed. He no more frowned whenever I approached. This was a remarkable achievement for myself!

I was very impressed by the quality of first language English pupils' participation in the classroom. They don't have doubts even if what they are saying is out of context. They seem to be so confident and at times I used to feel that they even help me. But somehow I feel that their school environment is bringing them down. Most of the pupils in this school seem to categorise themselves as belonging to particular gangs. They even call themselves "The Mafia", "The Reds", "Dada Ones". This is part of the influence of gangs in the community. This seems to tamper with their education at school.

I can't handle groupwork

At this stage of the school-based teaching I was most hesitant about using groupwork in the classroom. I was not able to cope with the range of demands from pupils placed into groups. I did not know how to get pupils to settle down quickly to the task set. There were always disruptions and the pupils were constantly picking on each other before they settled down. My lecturer and I talked at length about how to organise and arrange groups. I knew that I valued groupwork but was not convinced I could handle the process of setting them up in my class. I discovered the need for clear, simple and direct instructions (before the commencement of the groupwork) about the task to be done, the way in which the groups are to be formed, the expected outcome of the activity, and the time



allocated to the activity. My lecturer also discussed structuring groups with different focuses. I had experienced groupwork successfully in my Special Method English classes, but I felt that because we were adults we responded more responsibly than these pupils. I knew that I should experiment more with the difficult challenge of making groupwork work. I also needed to develop experience of monitoring groupwork while in progress. These were important challenges for me as a developing teacher.

Different values

My pupils also educated me into a different set of values about how the teachers' role extends beyond the teaching of the lesson in the classroom. I found that pupils would surround me after a lesson was taught to query openly the task set by me. I know that the instructions should have been clearer in the lesson itself, but the pupils seemed to assert their right to question their teachers even after the bell had rung. This was not what I experienced during my school years when teachers simply left the classroom after they taught the lesson. At university I used to go to visit lecturers in their offices to make any queries. There I interacted on a one-on-one basis, and this I know assisted my development. Here in school, I felt like the pupils were mobbing me for attention. I felt privileged that they saw me as an approachable person with whom they could go and interact with freely. It gave me an opportunity to speak freely with the pupils. Our relationship was like a two-way relationship. In my school, my relationships with my schoolteachers was not that great.

I began to question whether my being a Rastafarian was a problem within the teaching profession. I had thought that being a Rastafarian would make things difficult for me. This was not the case. The pupils seemed to be relating to me and I was enjoying the relationship that I had formed with them. I had thought that being a second language speaker of English would be a major problem. I thought that pupils who were first language speakers might have difficulties with this and that they would reject me. In fact, I have a feeling that the pupils were benefiting from my presence, that is why they even followed me after classes and asked personal questions. How do you make your dreadlocks?

Where do you stay? Do you smoke dagga? These were all strange questions to expect from pupils.

My own English I felt was improving and I was adapting to using mainly English most of the time. I was not making so many blunders as I had expected to.


Resident teachers: resource or problem?

The source of problems that I seemed to encounter most were from the teachers. Not all of them, but some of them. Firstly, particular pupils are open about their criticisms of their teachers, and you can't stop the pupils from being honest about how they feel. I think that the teachers feel threatened by the comments that pupils give us about them. Pupils seemed to like us better. The female members of our team were by this stage no longer sitting in the staffroom during their breaks. They were reacting to rumours about how other teachers were gossiping about them.

I also experienced problems about the use of the school facilities such as the copying machine. The teacher in charge of the machine was not pleased when I asked for a particular handout to be redone because it was badly copied. "You know how expensive this machine is and you are constantly coming here. This is wastage." I did not feel that the teachers were very comfortable with our involvement with the pupils.

At this stage we were more involved with trying to get to understand our pupils better. I was trying very hard to develop a relationship with the second language speakers of English. It seemed as if they were not able to interact with the Indian pupils in the school, nor with me. I still did not understand them fully.

We had divided the workload for the production of a workbook of curriculum materials- an assignment for the Special Method English course. Each of the team members was allocated different sections of the workbook to design. All the



worksheets and lesson plans for the particular section of the curriculum programme were to be designed by the individual team members. Two of us dealt with short stories, two with poetry and two with the novel. While our resident teacher was aware of our action research project at school and the curriculum materials development project we had little support from him in the design of this programme. We were left to design whatever we wanted to.

The supervisor/lecturer

It was now the fifth week of my stay at Centenary Secondary School. My lecturer had made several visits to us during this period and we would observe our buddies teach lessons and be part of the discussions about each other's lessons. Since my lessons were being videotaped by the lecturer, I felt that I had to be extra specially prepared because when watching the video I had to provide detailed explanations about why I chose particular actions in the classroom.


My lecturer once commented that he doubted that many of the pupils would complete the homework task I set. I realised that he was correct when on the next day I found that only three of the ten groups had completed the task set. There are three possible reasons for this: the homework task was described in the dying moments of the last lesson of the day: pupils were more interested in going home; the task expected pupils to work in groups: very few pupils have contact with each other outside school hours; the task itself was too difficult for the level of pupils' language abilities: writing a complete essay overnight may be too demanding for a standard six pupil. These reflections I might not have made, had it not been for my lecturer posing this comment to me about his doubt that pupils would not do the homework exercise. I realised that I needed to make my exercises more realistic in terms of the capabilities of my learners, their home contexts and their state of mind at the end of the school day.

At this stage I felt that only 60% of what I learnt in the Special Method English class was of any use in the school situation. I was aware of how my mentor teacher commented that we would apply our university theories only during school-based teaching practice. My main problem was that I was not completely succeeding with the use of groupwork. Each lesson I experimented more with the suggestions offered by my supervisor/lecturer. But I felt that the most important issue to concentrate on was on the pupils themselves: how am I going to make them develop? My basic concerns therefore were on the content of what I should teach them. How does my lesson plan come into play with the pupils' involvement? How do I identify their concerns? How do I deal with the fact that pupils did not do their homework?

My supervisor videotaped another of my lessons, which was a follow up on the short story lesson. The pupils were asked to work in groups on a worksheet designed by one of my colleagues. The worksheet highlighted various cultural conceptions of choosing a marriage partner. Excerpts from magazines were placed alongside each other depicting cultural practices of Indian and African people in South Africa with respect to marriage. The aim of the lesson was for pupils to relate the worksheet extracts with the issues raised in the short story that we had been studying.

When I watched the videotape of me teaching it became evident that I still needed to be guided more about how to organise groups. This time I was able to provide clear instructions about the task set. However, I was so preoccupied with giving clear details for the task, that I spent almost five minutes explaining over and over again the task to be set. I noticed that the pupils became restless. I needed to gain more confidence on letting the pupils get started without too much interference from me. I also needed to learn about how to stimulate the group discussion within the small groups while still managing the entire class. Feeding information into the group by crouching alongside the group as they began their tasks was suggested. Providing stimulating questions to provoke further discussions as one left a small group. Leaving a small group with a direction to focus on and expressing an intention to return to the group. These were all suggested by my supervisor.

I also needed to learn how to use the blackboard to direct the group actions: I was hesitant to use the board at all because I was aware of my poor handwriting. I



knew that my favourite History teacher in school used the blackboard effectively to document the pupils' contributions. This is what I did when my learners were reporting back. However, I forgot to remind them to take down these written responses on the board. I had in my school days found that the history teacher's "notes" on the board (our contributions) were a valuable learning tool.

I had been successful in getting the groups to divide the tasks for each other: a group leader, a scribe, and a person who would report back to the plenary class group. This seemed to be working although pupils seemed to be getting so involved in their discussion in the groups that they often ignored these roles. So I was using quite a lot that I had seen and experienced in my Special Method English and Geography classes.

My own experiences of oral presentations

My oral reading of a section out of the short story was not very successful. I have not ever heard an oral reading of a short-story on the radio and this surprised my lecturer. He was more surprised when I told him that I had never experienced a live performance of a drama in a theatre. My only experience of being inside a theatre was during a performance that the Faculty of Education "Language and Learning" course leaders had arranged. And this was not about actors using oral language; it was about how body movements can be used in order to communicate thoughts, actions and feelings. This was a performance by the Playhouse Company, a group of professional dancers. I have not seen a professional production of a play ever.

I think this has to do more with, my personality. There were opportunities in my community for me to see plays, but I was ambivalent about getting involved with such things. My religion teaches me not to get involved with worldly things and I did not want to associate with these issues of the plays that were brought to my community. I realised at this stage how my Rastafarianism was actually acting against my role as a teacher.

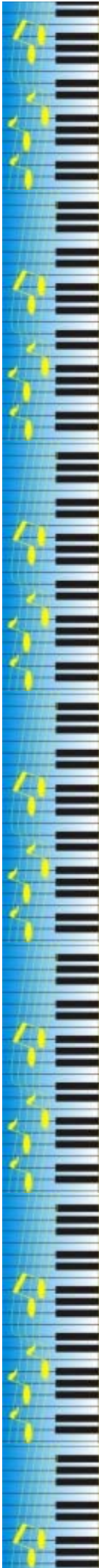
Reflections on Becoming a Teacher

Being in the world, but not of it

During the lesson on cultural views about marriage one of the pupils began talking about Princess Diana. She seemed to know a lot about this individual and commented about her marriage being loveless because it was arranged by the royal family. I must be truthful and say that I did not know much about this person and I could not comment. Pupils were eager to talk about the death of the princess, which had just occurred. I did not realise that this event would be important for me to concentrate on for my role as a teacher. The pupils seemed to be educating me about this world figure. I realised that my philosophy of life expects me not to concern myself with worldly things because anyway we all leave this world one day. I did not bother myself with watching the news, reading the newspapers, but I realised that I would have to shift because while I am a teacher I have to be in touch with the world around me. I am an English teacher and I have to use what is common and interesting to most people to advance my lessons. But I also need to consider my spiritual world. Being concerned with what is happening on earth in my environment cannot tamper with where I stand spiritually. I don't move beyond this. Teaching pupils about current issues will contribute to their development, to make sense of the world. If my philosophy of life dominates my whole being, I will not find myself comfortable in my profession as a teacher. I will need to shift.

These reflections also made me realise the immense wealth of resources that are available for a teacher of languages. By looking at newspapers, by looking at current issues and given the fact that we now don't have so called "syllabuses", it became clearer to me, more meaningful about using everything around me to stimulate lessons. This was when I realised that I have to change my rigid ways. Maybe I have to choose to buy at least one newspaper on a weekly basis and look at how current issues relate to my lessons.

Pupil-teachers



I also realised how the pupils can also teach the teachers. One of the male pupils (in the lesson I described above) commented about the exercise set on the worksheet, "But these questions are designed to be answered by girls." The questions had to deal with cultural practices regarding marriage ceremonies. It was an opportunity to explore the sexist notion, which I unfortunately did not do. I analysed his comment as a personal view not to engage in cultural issues across different race groups. I also went back to examine the worksheet later. I was not aware that it was biased in favour of any one gender.

My experience thus far had shown me that I was constantly making assumptions about the pupils, which were not all that accurate. For example, when I was designing a lesson I would often think that pupils would be bored with a simple exercise that I had originally planned. I would then add to the lesson. When I delivered the lesson I found that the additions were way above the level of the pupils. I think that this was because I believed that the majority of the learners were first language learners and that they therefore, should be able to cope with the "additions" in my lesson designs. I found that there was a huge gap between my level of experience as a university graduate and the level of a Standard six pupil. I was overestimating the ability of the learners simply because they were first language speakers. I seemed to have been overimpressed by their ability to speak so confidently and freely. However, their writing ability was not of the same standard as their speaking. What it made me realise was that I can be a teacher of the English language to first language speakers.

Reassessing first language speakers


The things about their performance that impressed me were not enough. I had to re-check my assumptions about first language speakers: I had assumed that there was little I could teach them simply because English was their mothertongue. Teaching English means that one has to be observant of the pupils' ability levels. I believe it is unlike teaching Geography where the main emphasis is on the content. Teaching English means that one has to concentrate on developing pupils' language skills, for example using their speaking skills to develop their writing skills. It is about being organised: thoroughly preparing lessons, knowing what you want to achieve with your learners, what you are going to do in the class and what activities you wish to use to enhance the teaching and learning, and how you will assess whether your pupils have learnt that or not. I believe that I can do this now for any group of learners, even white pupils.

The resident teacher wants his marks

During this time a major debate arose amongst the student teacher teams. It involved the issue of assessment of the pupils. The mentor teacher requested that he needed an assessment mark for the work done by pupils over the past five weeks that we had been working with them. He wanted us to administer a test that he had designed based on the novel. This would constitute the major percentage of the assessment. He also asked us to design an assignment for a much smaller percentage of the marks. I opposed the idea of administering a test on the novel because my pupils had had only one lesson on the novel. I felt that my pupils be given a test on what they had studied, namely, the short-story. My team members who insisted on using the test as designed by the mentor teacher outvoted me. Some of their classes had had many more lessons on the novel than my class. I reluctantly agreed but requested to set an assignment on the short story.

I then discovered that the mentor teacher had already taught the short story, "The Dictionary", to pupils before our arrival at the school. I could not understand why he had allowed us to "re-teach" this story to the pupils. I had not asked to see the teachers' records (if they existed) about what he had taught previously. I simply trusted that we were doing new work with the pupils. The pupils had not indicated to me that they had studied this story previously. It made me wonder why.

I think that pupils do not regard student teachers very seriously. For example, the problems that we encountered in the classes initially may have something to do with the fact that pupils do not consider the work that we do as serious work. Therefore, they are less likely to follow our instructions and directions in the class.



Maybe this has something to do with the fact that the resident teacher re-teaches the section of the curriculum after the student teachers have left the school. This I think undermines the position of the student teachers and maybe is the cause of the discipline problems we encountered at the beginning. This made me quite angry: with everyone-the pupils, the mentor teacher, my buddies in the team who were going ahead with the sham of an assessment using the test set by the mentor teacher. I could also now not even appreciate the kind of test set by the teacher: it merely tested the pupils' knowledge of the character and the plot of the novel, "The Red Pony". Nevertheless, my pupils had to write this test. The mentor teacher wanted his marks.

I therefore chose to use the flexibility of a class assignment to set an appropriate assessment to gauge the work that I had covered with my learners on the short story.

While marking the test scripts I realised that I was quite inexperienced in how to assess pupils' written work. This is an area of my development I still feel needs a lot more support and guidance. I made records of all the common errors that pupils made in the test and I planned to use these in a feedback lesson on the test.

Working independently

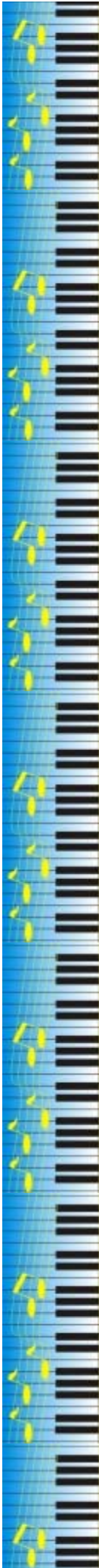
The last week of school-based teaching practice seemed to tumble to a quick end. I found that I was becoming more critical of my buddies' engagement with the class. I felt that I had to work more independently from them because I had my own views about how to handle the classes. We still divided up our lessons and I took more time preparing my sections of the lesson the night before the lesson. My buddies seemed to have resorted to preparing their lessons during the morning of their lessons. I did not regard this as acceptable. During my free periods I decided to observe the second team of student teachers teaching the lesson on the short story. I felt that they were still dealing with discipline problems and had to resort to calling in the mentor teacher to reprimand their classes. I felt that I was drifting further apart from the issues they were dealing with.

The same successful team lesson works/fails in different classes

My buddies and I had a successful lesson using a cartoon from the newspaper on the South African bid to host the Olympic games. We started by talking generally about their understanding and knowledge of the issue then examined the various pictorial images in the cartoon.

We divided the class into groups and got them to brainstorm their interpretation of what the cartoonist was portraying. The group discussion seemed to be quite successful. Pupils focused on writing down their answers to the questions set on the worksheet before a plenary oral discussion. Almost 75% of the class participated in the discussion. I thought that this was because the issue was current and that learners had all the resources in the form of the worksheet and their written answers with which to enter into the discussion. My colleagues and I got the pupils to answer the final question in writing after the oral plenary discussion. The pupils were to write these answers in point form as suggested by our lecturer. All these activities were carefully monitored and I think that this was a very successful lesson especially in the use of the groupwork. Pupils handed in their written work at the end of the lesson. I think that the lesson developed their oral and writing skills.

The same lesson was not as successful in the second class that we taught. I think that this was because my buddy spent too much time discussing the political considerations about why Africa has not hosted the Olympic Games. I felt that we should also look at what would be the implications internally if country if South African won the bid. Pupils were able to raise quite sophisticated arguments about why other African countries were not fully supportive of South Africa hosting the games. We constantly asked pupils to justify their comments and I think this anticipated the essay writing activity we had planned for them in the next lesson. However, I think too much time was spent in this lesson on merely an oral discussion of the issues.



I give in to my buddies again

However, we did not begin the next lesson with the essay writing activity. Again I had to give into my buddies who argued that we should work with a comprehension exercise based on an article entitled, "Beauty Pageants are sexist". I felt that we should be working with the pupils' responses from the previous lesson. I had agreed the day before that we would be focusing on essay writing and I had prepared to do this. Nevertheless, the discussion on the comprehension lesson fizzled out in fifteen minutes and I took over the essay writing lesson. (Our lessons were 60 minutes long.)

In this lesson I introduced pupils to a broad general definition of the purpose of argumentative essay writing. I then proceeded to show pupils how to construct an argument building up from topic sentences into paragraphs. I used the answers from the pupils' written efforts in the last lesson to show why some efforts were more successful than others. I felt that using the pupils' actual work was useful. It encouraged those pupils who had worked well, and it demonstrated to others how to become better involved in the process of writing. I made sure that I was not harsh in my criticisms of the pupils' written efforts.

In my last lesson, with the second class of standard sixes, I was not present in the first fifteen minutes of the lesson because I was working with the mentor teacher and a pupil who had scored zero on a Geography test I had set. When I returned to my English class I found that there was not enough time for me to develop my lesson on essay writing with them. My buddies were already involved with teaching the comprehension lesson and it was quite evident that they were not going to let me interrupt "their lesson" now. I merely left the class with the instruction to handout the worksheet I had designed on essay writing. This was a disappointing end to my working with this class.

Where I am Now

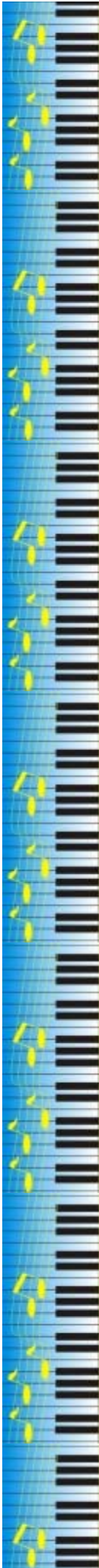
Parting comments

I was impressed by the way in which the pupils in my first standard six class reacted to the announcement that this would be my last day in the school. One pupil voluntarily commented on behalf of the class thanking me for my teaching them. Then one of the "naughty boys" stood up and said, "I would like to apologise about the way I behaved during your classes. I was giving you a hard time." I knew that I would really miss all of these pupils whom I had got to know quite well during my six weeks at this school.

Working with pupils from different race groups was a great learning experience for me. Firstly, it taught me not to undermine myself because of the race group from which I come. I had believed before I began teaching practice that the Indian pupils would be superior to me in their use of English. I was wrong. I realised that all I needed to know was how to be motivated to address the particular problems that the learners were experiencing. Whether they are matriculants or even White pupils, I know that all you need to do is be clear about what you are going to do with the pupils in order to develop their language skills. You have to develop the confidence to say, "I know what to do with these pupils". Then I don't think you would have a problem.

You must also be aware that learners from different cultural groups have different ways of relating to their teachers. I found that the Indian pupils related to me in a way that I felt contradicted my own understanding of how pupils should relate to teachers. It is not that pupils are disrespectful when they do not say, "Excuse me, Sir, but please may you tell me what you mean by this". I found that the Indian pupils simply confront you directly and even sometimes tug on your clothing to ask, "What do you mean?" I realise that they were not being rude but that it is a different culture to the one that I am used to.

You have to learn how not to be ethnocentric, how not to think according to your own culture only, how not to expect everyone to behave according to your own ways. You have to accommodate, to understand other cultures, then only you will benefit.



I think this is part of the explanation for why African pupils don't succeed in this school. I have tried all the things we talked about in our Special Method class to get the African pupils to participate but they don't. I had tried to stall my expectation that second language speakers would speak immediately in the classroom. I had tried to design my lessons such that the language usage was only slightly above their level of language competence. I had even resorted, much to their surprise, to using their mothertongue in the classroom. I brought in issues that were relevant to their everyday experiences. But still they would not participate. It seemed as if they did not want to participate.

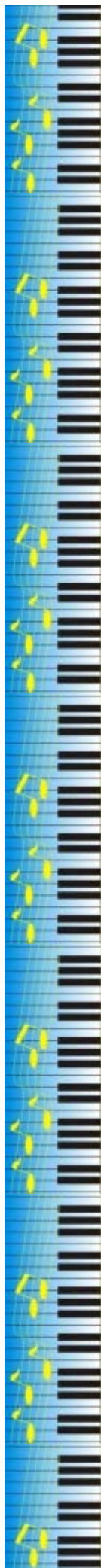
I think it is because their culture has made a deep impact on their thinking about how to relate to teachers. Even if they want to ask me a question, they don't. If they did approach me, it was usually after the class and then too, they would have this "formal" kind of way of relating to me. I saw that this has an impact on their learning, because they would ask questions about something that happened a long time ago in the lesson. By not asking in the lesson they are denying themselves the opportunity to be corrected straight away. I feel that African pupils are holding back themselves in this school because of their cultural views.

We can maybe become trapped in "apartheid discourse" to explain the African pupils' actions. We could say that the culture of submission that Verwoed introduced with the Bantu Education in 1953 is responsible for pupils' passivity. Verwoed, being a psychologist, saw a way to develop in Black people a sense of inferiority and self-doubt. This eventually leads to endless subordination and passivity. I believe that if I had more time with these African pupils in this school I would be able to make a difference. Six weeks is too short a time to make any major impact.

I believe that culture is a social construct and that it is something that is subject to criticism. It is not an absolute. African pupils do not question their teachers immediately and this is part of the cultural concept of relating to teachers as adults. But Africans need to question whether these values are benefiting the learning of the pupils. I think that in the new South Africa, we need to develop a mingling of different cultures. This does not mean that the African people must simply assimilate to the cultural values of the other race groups. We should take things from each other's culture that are valuable so that we are able to live together as one nation. I see that other cultures besides the African cultures are doing this. For example, I found that most of the Indian children in this school were aware of some of the cultural practices of African people, but African pupils knew very little about other cultures. Yes, the Indian pupils did not know the finer details of the cultural practices of different cultures but there was a willingness to learn. I did not find this willingness to learn amongst the African pupils. They tended to despise the other cultural practices. I think the role of the English language teacher is to expose pupils to see that there are different cultural practices and that learners should learn not to stereotype individuals from different cultural groups. There is something valuable in all cultures.

I feel that the cultural practice of not participating directly in the lesson is not benefiting the African pupils. I benefited a lot from being actively involved in participating in my learning process, I believe that the more you interact in the class the more you learn. It is not about thinking that you need to show respect to the older person in the class to take responsibility for teaching you. This does not mean that you show disrespect to the teacher, but at the same time we have to treat them as our parents. The relationship between parents and children should not be tense. We should respect our parents but not be afraid of them. Teachers need to develop these values amongst the African pupils.

In a multicultural school I therefore, think it is necessary to address these cultural issues directly and openly with the pupils. This might even help the teachers who believe that African pupils are ignorant or passive learners. Teachers need to be taught these cultural values that pupils bring with them to the school. There are several different cultural values about teaching and learning, and teachers and learners need to be exposed to them. This might impact on their learning and teaching in the school.



I felt that the male African pupils were expecting me to be more lenient with them because we shared a common background. They initially regarded me from a distance, and I seemed to pick up that they felt, "He thinks he knows", that I was above them because of my higher education. I began to pick up some hostility when I chose not to be influenced by their expectation that I would expect less from them.

The Indian male pupils by comparison I found to be childish, if not immature. I appreciated that they were willing to engage with me in debates, but later I realised that they seemed to take advantage of my kindness and sensitivities to their views. I had to choose to be more harsh with them to discipline them constructively.

The female Indian pupils were my most successful learners. They were always actively involved in the discussions in the class; they were willing to go along with my experimental style of teaching. They became quite close to me. However, the African females were really intimidated by me. I really do not understand the reason for this. I tried addressing issues that I thought were appropriate to their lives but they simply shut me out. I still don't understand why.

My school-based teaching practice experience has taught me that all learners (first and second language speakers) have problems when it comes to language skills. All of us did not have very positive experiences of learning English. We all were taught English in a very fragmented way. I became aware that the university curriculum does not fully address the kinds of problems that students bring with them from their secondary schools. There is very little connection between the university curriculum and the school curriculum and I think this is an issue I would like to address in my post graduate studies.

I also feel that it is too late to address the issue of English language teaching and learning only in one's final year at university. The Faculty of Education should be working closely with the English Department in the Faculty of Arts. At the moment the English Department is looking at redesigning modules for its course to address the different kinds of course for different students. For example, English for lawyers, or teachers, or for commerce people. I think we should have an English Education course like the one we have in the Faculty of Education for the preparation of teachers of Science. Then we can learn in more detail how to become teachers of English. The present English 1, 11 and 111 course teaches us how to become "literature people". This helps very little in our development as language teachers.

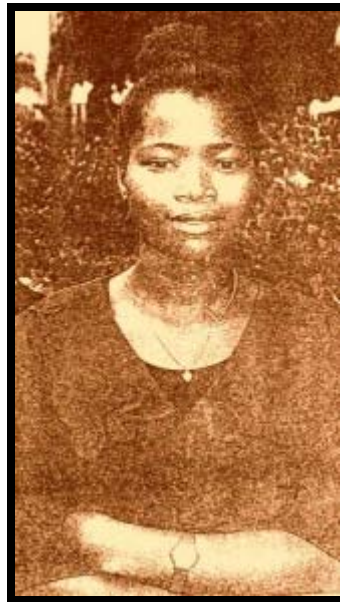
I also feel that becoming involved in the research project, of my lecturer forced me to become more critical and reflective of my teaching in the school. If the university had the resources for supervisors to allow students and lecturers to engage in-depth the way we did during the watching of the videotapes of our lessons, I think that we would be able to make excellent teachers.

There have been a lot of adjustments and reinterpretations of my religion. My teaching of English has made me realise that my religious beliefs are tampering with my profession. I realise that for effective teaching of English one needs to be aware of current issues surrounding us. I realise that being in this world one has to be actively involved in it. This should not interfere with my state of spirituality because I know who I am spiritually.

The most important thing that happened to me during school-based teaching practice was the way in which pupils showed appreciation of my presence around them. I was pleased to realise that being a Rastafarian is not perceived by everyone as something bad. They made me realise that the more I interact with people, talk about myself, the more they accept and understand me and my culture. Rastafarianism teaches me that everyone has to take full responsibility for one's life. I hope that this is the gift I can pass on to my learners.

Unfortunately, I will not go back into the rural area to teach in my home village. I believe that my life will be wasted there, like my former principal who was fatally shot. I think I will wait for things to settle down in my home area when there is not so much conflict and violence. In the meantime I think I would like to teach in a

multilingual school like Centenary Secondary. I think I can make a contribution there.



#32 Photograph from Collage: (1997) "Sanelesiwe".

Text Two

Cherries, Misses and Ma'ams

Sanelesiwe

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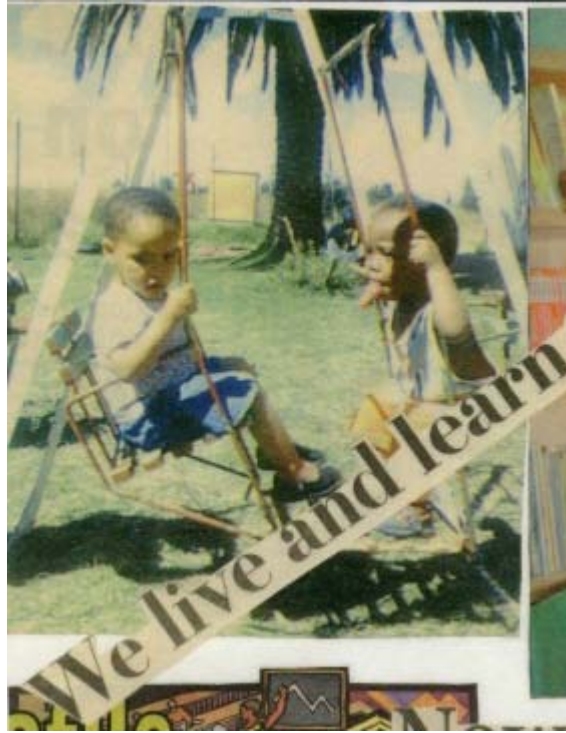
Cherries, Misses and Ma'ams

My Home, My Family, My Community

My Schooling Years and I

Imagined English

The imagination in children's games usually wanders beyond the boundaries of convention: walking up forbidden paths; tracking down ferocious monsters; emulating nurturing and heroic characters; fighting off at times the good guys, at times the bad guys; creating and living in spaces and places that do not exist. My childhood games I vividly recall.




#33 *Photograph from Collage:* (1997) "**Sanelesiwe at Home**".

"We used to play speaking English like Whites did."

I grew up in the rural countryside of Hammarsdale in KwaZulu-Natal. My parents were typical of its working class community that lived within the means of the poorly paid. The memories of my childhood are nevertheless rich and happy ones: of friends and neighbours. My friends and I would usually play "house-house". I recall now, with the lens of being a future teacher of the English language, how often these girlish and boyish games were conducted in the English language. It could not realistically have been English as I know it to be now, but in our childlike imagination we interpreted the senseless sounds as being closest to what we believed was English. Our only exposure to English was when we went to the town where we heard the Whites talking this language. Even though we had not ever been to school or were ever spoken to in English by our parents, our childhood games wandered into this world reflecting how deeply the desire to speak English filtered even into our rural world. Being able to speak English was our imagination's marker of a superior person and we played out games with imitations of the power of White people.

Ladders and boundaries

The community in which I lived had clearly demarcated the kind of ascribed roles that different individuals inherited in an almost feudal hierarchy: roles of patriarchy and patronage. Fathers and brothers were afforded a privileged status; mothers and daughters were expected to support their kin. The teaching profession also had its own system of hierarchies which I came to understand only much later in the process of my development towards becoming a teacher. Firstly teachers from universities were seen as on the upper rungs of the ladder. University graduates were clearly outnumbered amongst the many teachers who had graduated from a college of education. Therefore, the college teachers drew imagined boundaries between themselves and the university teachers. These boundaries I was to discover during my first school-based teaching practice which I served in the same school at which I attended as a pupil. The community tended to have a love-hate



relationship with me, simultaneously being proud that they had produced a university going student, and also resentful that I would one day have a degree which most of them did not possess.

Courtship and Love

The hierarchies also extended in terms of how married and unmarried members of the staff were regarded by the pupils. A married member of staff was immediately more highly respected than an unmarried teacher. I remember that I too had been responsible for affording this kind of status to the married female teachers whom we called "Ma'ams" while an unmarried female teacher was called "Miss". This often resulted in the unmarried teacher being given a tougher time when trying to maintain discipline in the classroom. Female pupils often disregarded the warnings or advice of the unmarried female teacher. I have often heard it said, by female pupil colleagues, that the unmarried female teacher was a threat to them especially regarding the issue of courtship and love. Surprising as it may seem, this was due to the fact that many of the female pupils of the school were involved in love relationships with the male members of staff. Romancing a female pupil was common practice amongst the male teachers I knew in my school. Female pupils therefore interpreted the unmarried female teacher as competition in their relationships with the male members of staff. I am aware even now that the position of an unmarried female teacher is also threatened by the attitude the African male pupil has towards her. Male pupils seem to take us as their "cherries". They believe that they can even propose love to us because we are not married.

A hierarchy of age also existed within the schools. Unmarried male teachers (being younger) were not given the same degree of respect as the older married men. However their eligibility for courtships aroused the attention of many female pupils. Various ladders of superiority and inferiority existed in the schools I attended.


Primary Schooling: the Past, the Present and the Future ...Tense

At the lower primary level most of my teachers were those who had dropped out of school. They were unqualified teachers. My first encounter with being taught English was exposure to books with pictures describing nouns. Our teachers would shout out the word and we were made to repeat the word several times over. The teachers were concerned with merely testing to see if we had "learnt the words". This meant that all we had to do was repeat it back to them. In the later years the teacher would ask us to copy down the sentences she had written on the blackboard. These teachers believed that a second language is acquired through acquainting us with its vocabulary.

English became the medium of instruction in the higher primary school years. Here I was exposed to grammar, comprehension, poetry and composition writing lessons. For the entire Standard Three year all we seemed to be doing was learning about three tenses: the past tense, the present tense and the future tense. We learnt how to manipulate sentences in a formulaic way, very often not understanding the meaning of the sentences we wrote. The "comprehension lessons" were characterised by the teacher reading the text out aloud; then the pupils would be pounced on to read aloud; then the teacher would explain the meaning of the text in Zulu, our home language. Pupils were not involved in the meaning-making process. Worse still, were the oral recitals of poems which I think the teacher thought would develop our speaking skills. I dreaded the punishment that accompanied any failure to recite the poem accurately. It's no wonder that poetry is met with such resistance, even by students at university level. The stick was synonymous with teachers of the higher primary school. We learnt the hard way!

Secondary Schooling: The day I will never forget"- again and again

In the secondary schools there were no Heads of Department to administer and control what the teachers were teaching their classes. What I found was that every year seemed to be a repetition of what was taught to us in the previous year. The teachers did not seem to consult each other about what was taught to the pupils in the previous years. We followed the usual pattern of pupils being regarded as



passive recipients of the teachers' wisdom. The teachers played the "starring" role and the pupils were relegated to a passive audience. We seemed to continue with the business of learning abstract grammatical structures: the past tense, the present tense and the future tense followed us into the secondary school. I was initially impressed with the secondary school teachers introducing us to new topics for creative writing. However, I soon became disillusioned with the repetition of the same topics year in and year out. Whereas the primary school was characterised by repeated topics like "My Dog", "My School", the secondary school became associated with that eternal topic "The day I will never forget". I don't think the teachers ever marked our creative writing compositions and we usually repeated this rehearsed essay on the numerous occasions we were asked to write it, even in the examinations.

Aloud and unclear

I think that teachers thought that their role in teaching literature to us in the secondary school involved them having to decode all the written words in the text for us. Pupils were often asked to read the text out aloud in the class. This supposedly was a means of developing our reading skills. However when it came to my turn to read, I could read out the words but I did not know how to make sense of what I was reading. I was over anxious and concerned about how I was pronouncing what I was reading. The teacher would then explain in Zulu what the text meant, perhaps in the belief that the use of Zulu would act as a springboard into the second language of English. I felt that it stagnated us.

Developing Confidence to speak English: silenced

Ironically the school had an official policy that we communicate only in English when we were in school. This policy was aimed at developing our confidence in communicating in English. The school had a system of catching out the culprits who ignored this policy and they were severely punished. This policy did not work simply because the teachers themselves used our mother tongue, Zulu, both inside and outside the classroom.

Another technique used to promote the use of English was the hosting of debates. It usually involved only a few "good" pupils. The rest of us were spectators. The teachers did not give guidance to the pupils as to how to structure the debates, nor were there any constructive comments about the presentations of the speakers. They seemed to believe that the hosting of debates would miraculously develop the pupils' skills in the English language. As in most language-related activities in the school, we were merely being tested to see what our competence in English was; we were not being taught how to develop that competence.

Allergic to poetry

In the primary school we were expected to buy our own textbooks. As my family could not afford to buy books for me, I relied on borrowing the texts from some of my friends whose families could afford to. By the time I reached my secondary school, the Department of Education supplied textbooks to us. There was still a shortage of textbooks and we often shared books amongst three or more pupils. I remember my matric English teacher very sadly asking us to buy an additional textbook: an anthology of short-stories. He explained to us that we would not be using the textbook of poetry that the Department had supplied us. In the matric literature examination it was possible for us to exclude answering the question on poetry and opt for answering the question on the short-stories. Our teacher explained that he thought that poetry was too difficult for second language learners. He admitted that he himself could not teach poetry. I think that many of our Black teachers are allergic to poetry; they have a negative attitude towards poetry. This attitude spreads to their pupils too. I could not afford to buy the extra poetry book. There and then I silently vowed that I would like to become a teacher of English and try my level best to fight his negative attitude towards poetry. I now believe I know what to do when teaching poetry. I have determined not to teach in the old-fashioned inefficient way that my former teachers taught me. I believe I have the strength, determination and confidence to become a teacher of English.



#34 *Photograph from Collage:* (1997) "Sanelesiwe and University Life. University Life Inspired me. **I ran out of words and confidence**

My family was very shocked that I wanted to go to university and not to college to become a teacher. They had very little finance to support my study at university, but I was determined to study at a university. I enrolled for the B.Paed. degree with the assistance of financial aid from the university. I was proud of my "D" symbol in English in my matric year, but soon realised how little value it was. I wanted to become a teacher of English, but there I was at the Faculty of Education interview, and I could hardly put together a few sentences in the English language. I simply ran out of words and maybe confidence too. What had I learnt in school? I was determined to interrogate my learning of English.

My University Experiences

Where are the grammar lessons?

University life was an eye-opener to me. There were no grammar lessons in the English course. I had thought that choosing to become an English teacher was a relatively simple career choice: all I needed was to learn the grammatical rules of the English language, which I expected the course to teach me. Where were these lessons? All we did was attend lectures on literature. I was expected to write an academic essay, but I did not know how to construct one. I was expected to talk in English amongst the many non-Zulu speakers on the campus. My school education had not prepared me for all of this.


I could construct perfectly compartmentalised grammatical sentences, but I could not communicate effectively in the English language. After spending twelve years being taught English at school, why was I struggling to use English?

It was now a matter of sink or swim. I resorted to all kinds of strategies to develop my confidence in the language. I enrolled for a voluntary course at the Division of Language Usage on the campus where I learnt how to write an academic essay. I consciously attempted to exercise my English language skills with the non-Zulu speakers with whom I interacted on campus. The tutorials in the Education Faculty helped me to understand how to deal with the content of the courses being lectured. I still could not understand why my English language competence was so poor when I came to university.

Meeting some inspiration:

During my first experience of teaching practice as a second-year university student teacher I returned to my home school. I confess that I used the very same approaches to teaching English that my former teachers had used. I simply did not know any other way of approaching the teaching of English.

In my third year of university I met a teacher who had completed her degree at UDW in 1993. I was very impressed by her teaching ability. She seemed to have a



good understanding of how to organise the learning and teaching processes in her English class. I realised from discussions with her that I was very random in my organisation of the learning activities of my lessons. She spoke to me about designing a curriculum, which spanned over a number of lessons. She spoke of linking one lesson activity to the next, each lesson acting as a springboard for the development of particular skills in the English language. She spoke to me about the complexity of the reading skill: I had thought that reading only entailed reading aloud. She spoke to me about the variety of kinds of writing genres: narratives, descriptive, argumentative, creative writings... I realised from her that I had many misconceptions of English language teaching and learning. I was most grateful to her and I really looked forward to the Special Method English course which like her, I would take in my final year at university.

The Final Year in the Teacher Preparation Programme

I found an explanation:

My experience with the Special Method English course (SMEC) marked a turning point in my understanding of English language teaching and learning. At last I found explanations for why I had not developed into a more competent user of the English language during my school years. The course was valuable in that it provided us with a clearer understanding of the various language skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. It also provided us with sound theories about English language teaching and learning. It developed my ideas about the teaching of first and second languages. I think that this course had a powerful impact on my development because it challenged several conventions of a university course. The course challenged the role of the students, the role of the lecturers and above all the various teaching and learning activities, which we engaged in as we developed as teachers of the English language. There was no room for mistakes in the teaching of English for me now. I thought that I knew how to teach.


Expected recipes

My first experience in the SMEC was novel. We were asked to write down our expectations of this course. Immediately I realised that this course was going in a different direction. No other lecturers on campus had bothered to ask us what we wanted or expected from a course. This exercise allowed the lecturers to be able to gauge our prior conceptions of teaching and learning English. It was not surprising that many of us believed that the course would simply be about learning recipes for how to teach English. By this, most of us meant the strategies for understanding the grammar of the English language. We believed that the undergraduate English 1, 11 and 111 courses had taught us how to study literature and this SMEC would teach us about the English language (read grammar). I fortunately knew that we would be learning more about how to organise the teaching and learning processes because of the forewarning I received from my teacher friend.

This exercise also signalled the way in which we would engage as students and lecturers during the SMEC programme. The lecturers were not simply going to force down our throats their versions of English language teaching and learning. Together we were to negotiate what and how we learnt. The lecturers responded to our expectations by exposing to us the various underlying assumptions that our comments revealed about how languages are learnt.

I already have a theory of teaching English

I realised from this activity that I had already (although previously unexpressed) a theory of language teaching and learning. These were based on my prior beliefs about how teachers should teach the English language. I believed that teaching a language was a simple matter: it required no specialised knowledge about how children learn a language. I believed that the responsibility was on the teacher to teach (in a didactic way) the pupils about the language. The course provided me with a set of theoretical constructs with which to challenge my prior views about teaching the English language. I could readily appreciate the value of these new theoretical constructs. I believe that the theoretical constructs which my own teachers used did not sufficiently develop our language competence. Of course



most of my teachers would not have consciously articulated their own beliefs of language acquisition as deriving from a "theory" of ELTL. I learnt during our lecture module on Language Acquisition how to evaluate my own teachers' theories of ELTL: my teachers seemed preoccupied with teaching us about the language, rather than on how to use the language. All these theories about a naturalistic approach to language acquisition, about communicative language teaching, about audio-lingualism and structuralist approaches to language teaching were not remote to me. I could read about them through the lens of my practical experiences as a learner.

Learning about myself: the autobiographical assignment

These experiences of being a learner in the school system were highlighted in another important exercise that was set for us in the SMEC. We were asked to write up an autobiographical account of our experiences of language teaching and learning. I had never before been asked to write so closely about myself. The experience of writing up this autobiographical account was a useful way to get me to reflect critically on the kinds of experiences that I had gained during my school years. I was writing this assignment at the same time that I was studying about language acquisition. The two worlds of practical experiences and theoretical understandings of second language acquisition constantly interacted during my writing. I began to find in the theories an explanation for why my school years had failed me as far as developing my English language competence.

The autobiographical assignment also made me aware that the lecturers were interested in us as individuals. I felt that by exposing myself personally to the lecturers I was giving them details about my life that I usually did not share. The lecturers also responded positively by seeing us as individuals and I felt that they could draw on our experiences when discussing any issue about English language teaching and learning in the variety of contexts within our country. Students in the SMEC came from various linguistic, religious, geographical and cultural backgrounds.

I also felt that the exercise helped me to get to know these other students in the class. In most other university courses, we hardly knew the colleagues who sat in the same class. In the SMEC we had to interview our colleagues who were most unlike us, and this helped to foster mutual respect among lecturers and students alike. I felt comfortable in this class because we were all (first and second language speakers) treated equally. This was going to be the model of how I would relate to my pupils as a teacher.

I felt that I was experiencing a real example of being fully involved in the meaning-making process during my SMEC. This was a good counter-example to the years of "jug-mug" delivery that I had received in my schooling.

The English prison house

The theme of the SMEC was "Teaching English in a Multilingual Classroom". I was aware that none of my own teachers had been exposed to the debates about the power relations embedded in the teaching of English. Nor were they exposed to debates about how to establish a relationship between first and second languages within one's classrooms. I came to see that my schooling experiences were characterised by several competing and conflicting messages regarding the development of second language competence in English.

Teachers tended to overtly reject code-switching (the mixing of first and second languages within single utterances) as a strategy simply because they believed that it was (or were made to believe it to be) a corrupting influence on the acquisition of the target English language. However, they secretly used code-switching without a clear understanding of how its overuse might "fossilise" pupils' linguistic development. They enforced the use of English at all times within the school premises, resulting in more pupils developing negative attitudes towards the English language. They promoted the view that as second language learners we should be overconscious of the form and structure of the English language. Our communicative competence was not their priority, it seemed. The SMEC allowed me to understand that my teachers had created English to be a prison house out



of which pupils were not allowed to escape to make any meaning of the language.

Engagement in skills development

During the SMEC I also learnt that the development of reading and writing is not an accidental or subconscious skill which relied totally on the intelligence of the pupil. I realised that in my schooling I was not taught how to develop these skills, but I was expected to demonstrate them in the various tests and examinations that were set for us.

I learnt what I considered to be the Golden Rule of the course: "When you say it, you forget it; when you read it, you remember it; but when you do it, you understand it!" This philosophy extended into all the modules that were presented in the course. I learnt about the skill of reading through engaging in the number of exercises designed for us in the course. I learnt to write by engaging in the process of writing. We developed the theories about developing language skills via engaging in the practice of developing our own skills. The lessons in the SMEC provided good examples of how to develop my own language skills as well as those of my future pupils.

Hibberdene Live-in Weekend Curriculum Development Course

Learning by the sea


A few days before we went out on school-based teaching practice, the lecturers organised a live-in workshop experience for us in which we discussed the new Curriculum 2005. We focused on organising and designing curriculum programmes according to the principles of outcomes-based education. The course was held at a seaside holiday home. It proved to be a most enriching experience both personally and professionally. I found that we were discussing in a very relaxed atmosphere, the complex issues of the "Language, Literacy and Communication Learning Area" of the new curriculum. There was no pressure of time constraints as we have in scheduled lectures. The Special Method English students who attended were fully involved in the preparation of this entire three-day weekend and all of us were committed to making it a worthwhile experience. We engaged in numerous games, design activities and presentations about curriculum development. The lecturer was able to demonstrate how learning can be both entertaining and educational. The weekend focussed on developing learners' experiences with the English language in a holistic way, integrating all the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We rummaged through several exemplars of curriculum projects of past-year students who had designed materials to support teaching and learning within specific school environments. We spoke about what were our fears about the school-based teaching practice programme, which we were about to embark on. Students offered each other advice and support about the issues they saw as problematic about school.

I found the experience enriching because it dealt with the specific issues that were close to my heart at that time. Since we ate, slept, partied and worked together for three full days, I felt that I got to know more personally the people with whom I would work as a team in the school. I also learnt further how to deal with people with different personalities. One of the major results of the weekend was that I was able to reconcile with one of my colleagues with whom I had a longstanding disagreement.

School-based Teaching Practice

I wanted to see how multicultural schools operate

Before I went out to school-based teaching practice I felt that I was fairly confident about what was expected of me as a teacher of the English language. Nevertheless, there was still a degree of fear, anxiety and unpreparedness because I did not know what A.D. Lazarus Secondary School was like and whether the student teachers would be welcomed at the school. I felt however, that the greatest challenge would be to work with teachers who have become fixed in their ways about how children develop competence in language.



I had chosen to do my school-based teaching practice at this school, which is in an Indian residential area. I specifically wanted the opportunity to see how these "multicultural schools" operated. The school consisted predominantly of English first language Indian speakers and a much smaller percentage of English second language African speakers. I was surprised to find that the teachers were all Indian.

On our first day of SBTP, we arrived a little earlier than all the other teachers did. We hung around the foyer not knowing what to do or whom to speak to. It seemed that everyone was in a terrible rush. We picked up that there were a lot of disorganisation and discussions between staff members about the revised school timetable. Suddenly a loud buzzer rang. Everyone in the staffroom immediately disappeared. We realised that it was the school assembly, but were not sure about whether we were invited or not. No one had yet welcomed us to the school.

As the day progressed we chose to walk around the school to familiarise ourselves with the institution. The management knew we were in the school, but they were so involved in timetable rearrangements that no one formally approached us. Staff members were not in their timetable classes; teachers were absent. How were we to make our way through all of this? Who were the teachers who would serve as our mentors?

Patterns and possibilities

On the next day I chose to visit two English classes. I was impressed with the group of Standard Sixes (Grade Eight) who had organised the writing and performing of their own plays. They had chosen themes such as racial prejudice and crime. The Standard Eight (Grade Ten) class was not that inspiring. It seemed that the pupils were following a pattern of reading literature that I was familiar with: the pupils read out aloud chunks of the text, whilst the teacher corrected their pronunciation; then she asked them for their interpretations of specific sentences and phrases in the text. It seemed that pupils were fairly competent in the interpretations of the text. I was surprised that pupils looked forward to being asked to read aloud. Nevertheless, I was conscious of how disruptive the class next door was, and how this distracted from the success of the lesson. I noted this as a concern I would pay attention to when it was my opportunity to teach.

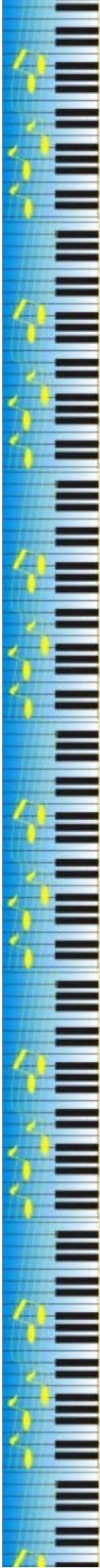
Strikes, festivals: what about the children?

The next three days of schooling were lost during that week. Firstly the teachers who belonged to the teachers' union, SADTU agreed to go on strike. This, I think was emanating from a dispute with the government over salaries. I felt sorry for the pupils. I think that the union is jeopardising the children's future. We did not go to school during the strike action that lasted two days. Instead our student teacher team at A.D. Lazarus decided to meet on campus. However there was also a mass meeting of some sort on campus and we were not able to meet. I did not know what to do and waited to get back on track the next day.

However the next day after the strike, at about ten o' clock the school academic activities terminated. The pupils had planned a festival in celebration of National Women's Day. I was very impressed with how the entire event, which included outside guest speakers, speeches and entertainment, was co-ordinated and hosted by the pupils who were very confident in chairing, introducing and thanking the important speakers who attended. I think that these public speaking skills will serve pupils a long way in life.

We need help

When the school got back to normal in the remainder of the week we spent more time observing the resident teachers. I did not like the way in which our mentor teacher had carved up the English curriculum and timetable for the students in her Grade Ten class. It seemed that she had classified each day of the timetable and allocated it for a specific set aspect of language. For example, the class knew that on Mondays they would be involved in a Literature lesson; on Tuesdays, a Language lesson, etc... I felt that this was very restricting especially if we were to organise a curriculum programme, which attempted to integrate the four language



skills and work with linking one lesson into the next. The organisation of the timetable into the separate and compartmentalised units seemed to negate the idea of an integration of different language skills in the curriculum. Where was Michael, our university supervisor? How were we going to design a curriculum programme under these constraints? How do we start designing a curriculum programme? We needed some "external help" to speak to our resident teacher about the organisation of her timetable.

Strikes, festivals...now fundraising

50 % of another day was dedicated to a non-academic activity! The Standard Nine pupils were fundraising for some charitable cause. I was beginning to see that the pupils in this school were quite involved in wider social and community activities. I was beginning to see the value of this form of education, but it meant that the school academic programme was being disrupted yet again. During the latter part of that same day the staff were engaged in a lengthy meeting. We were not invited. The student teachers were asked to conduct the registration of students in various classes. I was quite embarrassed when I tried to read out the names of the pupils on the register. It was clear that I was unable to pronounce the Indian pupils' names and they were laughing at my pronunciation.

I decided to use this opportunity to get to make notes about the distribution of first and second language pupils in this school. I found that the African pupils were distributed across the different grades of the school as well as across the different divisions within each grade. So there was quite a lot of mixing of the different race groups in the classrooms, with some classes having more English second language African pupils than other classes.

The hijacker


The next day another disruption occurred. It began with our resident teacher declaring that she was psychologically and emotionally unprepared to go into one of her classes. I only heard about the reasons several days later, but again the staff assembled a meeting to discuss the problem, which they regarded as a school matter. Our resident teacher had been hijacked in her car a few weeks previously. She knew exactly who the person involved in the hijacking was. It was one of the pupils in her class. Since the hijacking incident the pupil had been absent from school. It was on this day that the pupil re-entered the teacher's classroom. She felt that she did not know how to handle this particular male pupil. The female teachers felt that this incident was characteristic of a general problem about relationships between male pupils and female teachers. They felt that this warranted a special meeting to address the issue.

Unfortunately, the student teachers were kept out of the discussions at this meeting. It seemed like the teachers wanted to hush up the problem from the student teachers. It reminded me of the kind of harassment that female teachers (especially unmarried teachers) experienced during my own schooling. Here it seemed as if the male pupils were harassing both married and unmarried female teachers!

I began to feel that I could identify more with the female teachers on the staff. This was mostly due to the fact that my mentor teacher for my second method subject (Economics) was a male teacher. He seemed to communicate only with my male colleague. I felt that the mentor teacher and my male student buddy would not hesitate to openly counteract the points of view that I would raise in the classroom.

School language policy

As part of the SMEC we were expected to conduct an investigation into the school language policy as first steps into an action research process. We were expected to collect data from several sources: the teachers, the pupils, the parents and the management of the school. The aim was to get a clear insight into the actual processes by which the different languages of the school were being developed. This meant that the first week of school-based teaching practice was to be dedicated to collecting data in order to understand what were some of the problem areas regarding specifically the teaching of English in this school. The relationship




between the teaching of English and the other languages was also to be investigated. It was already the second week of SBTP and we had not yet fully collected all the necessary information about the School language policy. We knew that the school did not have an official document declaring its views about language teaching and learning. We would have to rely on interviews with the management to establish the official position. These were difficult to secure.

Researching and planning: no linear process

In the meantime we decided to work with the pupils in trying to establish what they would like to have included as part of their curriculum topics/ themes in an English language curriculum. This we thought would be a useful exercise. The pupils responded quite favourably to this task since we indicated to them that the most popular responses would be chosen as themes around which we would design our four-week intervention with them. We used this opportunity also to indicate to the pupils (Grade Nine) what our approach to English language teaching would entail. We explained to them that the student teachers would be working together in a collaborative team. We promised them that we would attempt to make the lessons as interesting as possible, dealing with issues that were close to their daily experiences. The pupils chose two themes: "Love" and "Gangsterism". We then set out organising the development of a series of lessons around these two themes.

The highlight of the next day was being able to secure an interview with the vice-principal of the school. We had by this stage interviewed a few teachers about the school language policy. We had shadowed two pupils (one, a first language pupil, and the other, a second language pupil) for a whole day to observe what languages they use both inside and outside the classroom. We also interviewed some parents about the language policy and we had observed several lessons being taught. Using all the data collected, we wrote up a synthesis of what we believed to be the official and actual lived language policy operating at this school. These were some of the conclusions we made:

1. English should be used at all times, otherwise it was believed that its status would be lowered. It was expected (officially) that English should be used especially inside the classrooms. In reality a more relaxed attitude prevailed for out-of-class language usage. Non-English speakers freely used their mother-tongue, isiZulu on the playgrounds, and during the breaks between lessons;
2. the current staff was not competent in African languages therefore, the school could not offer an African language in the curriculum. Afrikaans was taught as the second language because teachers were competent in teaching this language;
3. first language English pupils declared that they were hesitant about an African language being used in the classroom. They felt that the use of isiZulu would exclude them. Like their teachers, they felt that only English should be used. However most African pupils frequently used their mother-tongue inside the classroom especially outside the focus of plenary class activities;
4. English was the official medium of instruction in the school. In the Afrikaans classes, the teachers often used English as a means of accessing difficult concepts and terms. The use of code-switching between English and isiZulu was not regarded favourably by teachers and first language English (Indian) pupils who could not exercise this skill. English second language (African) pupils said that they would welcome the use of code-switching between English and isiZulu to help them clarify concepts when learning.
5. Interaction between English first and second language speakers was conducted in English, both inside and outside the classroom.
6. The school did not have the physical, human and financial resources with which to promote different languages. The school saw the necessity to employ teachers with African language skills since African pupils needed assistance to improve their language skills. However, this was something that they saw as a future policy.
7. The school did not administer any admission tests based on English language proficiency to regulate the flow of African pupils into the school.



However, some teachers felt that the pupils' report cards were often used as a criteria to include or exclude African pupils. The official position was that African pupils were admitted on a "first-come, first-served basis";

8. English was the only language used at Parents' Meetings. There were no plans to include the use of other languages because the school felt it could not afford the financial means of providing translators at these meetings. Besides, they felt the use of more than one language at parents' meetings would be too time consuming.
9. All assessment procedures were conducted in English only (besides the Afrikaans course).
10. There are no specific support/ development programmes for second language speakers of English on initial entry into this English first language medium school. A model of subtractive bilingualism operates at this school where pupils are made to replace the use of their mother-tongue with the official medium of English. This was justified in terms of the request from the African parent to develop their children's competence in English which was seen as a passport to economic prosperity.

Civvies Day and the Fun Fair

Although we had not formally begun teaching lessons, we felt that we had learnt quite a lot in just two weeks. I was beginning to understand the rhythm of this school, even though I was not too pleased about yet another disruption to the academic school curriculum. As part of the fund raising activities, the last day of the week was declared "civvies day": pupils were allowed (at a nominal fee) to wear everyday clothing instead of the usual school uniform. It was really hard to get students to calm down with all this excitement of wearing casuals to school. It was even more difficult to get them inside the classrooms! On that weekend the school was having a fundraising Fair on its premises. Pupils were all excited about the fun they were going to have during the weekend activities at the fair.

Teaching Action

Buddy building

The student-teacher team spent part of the weekend getting ready for that "real" teaching. Our teaching began in the third week of the practice session.

Our lesson design began with a "buddy building" exercise. We got pupils to assume different roles depicting various types of love. Pupils then interviewed each other. The interviewers had to write down what they had learnt from the interviewees about their concept of love.


I was really very nervous. My buddy, who attended the lesson with me, told me that she could hardly hear me speaking. At the end of the lesson, I collected the pupil's written responses for marking. I was encouraged by their responses. They seemed to have enjoyed the exercise.

A national stayaway

Just when we got started with our teaching programme, the teachers informed us that SADTU was calling for a national stayaway of all those unions affiliated with COSATU. The teachers indicated that there would be another strike on the next day. I agree that SADTU should be linked with COSATU but I think that COSATU should not have called for their support at this time, especially since schools had been recently disrupted.

Direct and indirect speech

In our second lesson, we presented pupils with different types of texts (magazines, poems, an extract from a short story) all of which used direct and indirect speech. We looked at how these two modes of representing dialogues and conversations were used in these different texts. We then asked pupils to create their own dialogues by filling in the speech bubbles of a cartoon. It seemed that most first language pupils already knew how to manipulate direct and indirect speech. I saw the second language pupils gathered together to attempt this exercise.



When I taught the same lesson to another class, I noticed that the four Black pupils did not rely only on each other for support. They were spread across the class amongst the first language pupils. In the previous class it seemed that the larger number of Black pupils kept together in one group.

Buddies, form classes and resident teachers

In most English lessons the resident teacher and my female buddy accompanied me to the class. My buddies and I were sharing the teaching load of the resident teacher. We had decided that each of us would teach one division/class of the Grade Nines, which would become our "form class" for English. As a team we designed the lessons for the whole grade, but the actual teaching of the lessons was the specific responsibility of the student "form teacher". There were three student teachers in our team (including myself). My female colleague, Sello was a Geography teacher and my male buddy; Nathi was an Economics teacher. My female buddy was Indian and she had attended a secondary school similar to this one. My male buddy and I who were Africans found that there was a lot to learn from being in this "Indian school".

Sello was able to relate very quickly to this school. I think it was because of her outgoing personality. Pupils attached themselves to her quite easily. But she was quite firm and succeeded in calming them down quite quickly when they tried to get out of hand. I am a lot more passive in nature.

Thuthula and arranged marriages

Our next lesson with the pupils was based on the technique of Choral verse. We chose an extract from a poem "Thuthula" by James Ranisi Jolobe. It was about a Zulu girl who is forced into an arranged marriage with a chief she does not love. We spent one period discussing the story of the poem. Pupils seemed to have enjoyed the discussion about arranged marriages and they related their personal views about this concept. At the end of this lesson we asked pupils to organise into self-selected groups. I was pleased to see that there was a mixture of both boys and girls in each group. They were instructed to prepare for an oral reading of the poem using all the members of the group. During our live-in weekend course we had used the choral reading technique which I enjoyed very much. This was our first attempt at getting pupils to come up with a dramatised interpretation of the poem.


Performing poetry

In the next lesson Sello and I arranged to have the pupils perform these poems in an open space on the school grounds. We brought make-up to the class to help pupils get into the roles of the characters they would be depicting. We also used mats to define the performance space. Pupils assisted us to take a few chairs and desks that they would use as props for the performance.

When we got to the class the pupils were very excited about this performance. It was also the time when my lecturer/ supervisor was coming to see me teach and he had brought a video camera to film my lesson. First of all I had to calm the pupils not to be conscious of the camera. As we walked to the playgrounds several pupils chatted to my buddy and I saying that they wanted about fifteen minutes to rehearse their performances. We thought that this was enough time to allow them to organise themselves.

When we first introduced the idea of presenting a choral rendition of the poem, the pupils were interested in writing their own poems, which they wanted to present. My buddy and I felt that if they stayed with our original plan of dramatising the poem they had studied in class this would be an opportunity to demonstrate their interpretation and understanding of this poem. The choral verse aimed at poetry interpretation, rather than dramatic performance. Therefore we agreed that the pupils should be given time to rehearse their presentations thus giving them more opportunity to interrogate the meaning of the poem.

When we got to the performance space I was encouraged by the enthusiasm of the pupils. They were in groups of about six and each group found themselves a



space on the playground within earshot. My buddy and I went around the different groups assisting them as they chose how to distribute the lines of the poem. Many of the groups had to reorganise the distribution of lines, which they had temporarily made in the previous lesson. Several pupils were absent today (perhaps too much fun at the fair over the weekend!)

Zulu names and words

I found that the pupils were focussing on the task that they had to do. In this poem there are several Zulu names and words. Since most of the pupils present in the class were non-Zulu speakers, they were not able to pronounce the words accurately. They were not hesitant, to ask me to teach them how to pronounce the Zulu words. I was very encouraged by their attitude towards me and towards learning how to say these Zulu words.

Groupwork

It was also interesting to note how the pupils distributed the words of the poem to the different members of the group. The activity was set so that all pupils had to participate. I found that the natural group leaders spent time encouraging the shyer members during rehearsals. Since they all had to work together for the performance of the poem they were very supportive of each other.

Another thing that interested me was the fact that the pupils were not concerned with gender appropriate roles casting. The poem could be divided into different sections with the voice of a narrator, the villagers, the chief, the girl, and her lover. The different groups of the class chose to divide the poem in different ways showing their interpretation of the dialogues between these various roles. Since the gender roles were being reversed in some groups they were interested in using make-up to depict their role in the dramatisation. A lot of rehearsal time went into pupils experimenting with the make-up we had brought: putting on lipstick, painting on moustaches. Some groups even undid their ties to serve as symbols of headbands to depict warriors in the poem.

The groups even introduced other characters into their oral presentation: like animals- cows to depict the rural setting of the poem. I was really encouraged by their creativity.

However, all the way through the rehearsal I was concerned about whether each group would have sufficient time to present their interpretation. Fifteen minutes had already expired and the pupils were insisting that we give them more time for preparation.


Looking back at groupwork

When I looked at the videotape of this lesson with my supervisor I became conscious of how anxious I was to get the pupils to come together for the performance. I felt that a lot of time was spent trying to control them on the grounds. This was the very first time I have ever worked with a lesson outside of the classroom. I realised that working with groupwork is a very demanding exercise. Even though I had my buddy helping me here on the playground I felt that the pupils were dictating the lesson and we were not much in charge.

When it came to the actual presentation of the choral verse I found that it was difficult to get the pupils to concentrate on the performing group's presentation. The other groups were more interested in what they were going to present. I tried to appeal to the pupils to concentrate on the performance being presented but I was not strong enough. My supervisor suggested that I could have intervened more strongly, but

that is not my personality. He also suggested that I should have made direct comments about the performance in order to raise the level of the next performing group. Maybe that would have got the pupils to concentrate more on the performance.

By the time the last group performed their presentation I think that the pupils were far too exhausted to concentrate. By now they had been standing outside in the



sun for over an hour. Looking back I now realise that they were very tired and we should have shortened the lesson and returned to the classroom for the performances as my supervisor suggested when we were reviewing the lesson.

My buddy and I made a major mistake of continuing with the "second" part of the lesson, that is the interpretation of the poem. When watching the video I agreed that the pupils were not really concentrating. They were too tired and their comments were "flippant" (to use my supervisor's words). Nevertheless, at the end of the period the pupils thanked us politely and said that they had enjoyed our lesson.

All in all, I felt that this was a very tough lesson. I felt that I had learnt quite a lot from this experience, especially about how to organise groupwork, how to conduct lessons outside the classroom, about pupils' interest levels, how to read the class environment. I realised that teaching is not an easy job.

When our team began in-depth discussions more about choral verse with my supervisor I realised that there was a lot I did not understand about how to organise and prepare the pupils for choral work. I had relied on the pupils' own creativity but did not really direct and coach them either on how to "dissect" a poem into a script, or on the variety of oral delivery modes to be used in choral work. I was glad to learn more about this from my supervisor.

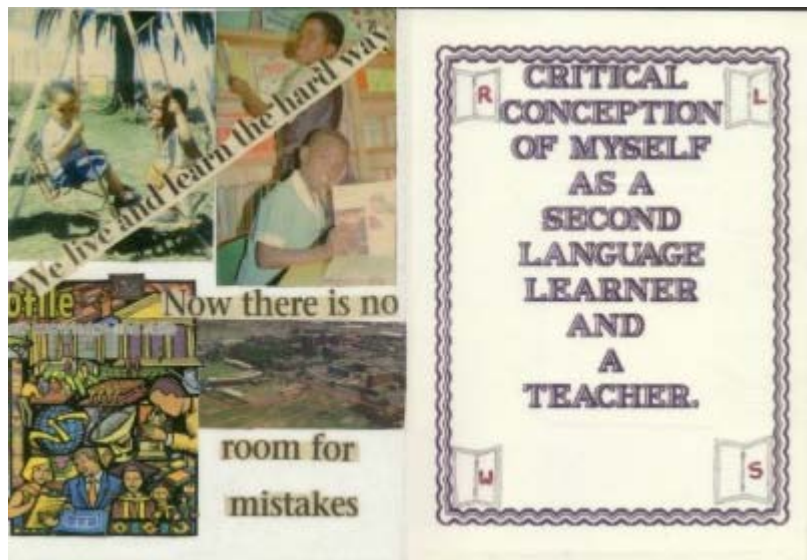
Buddy drift

I was still a little reserved about the poem that my buddy Sello chose for this lesson. I felt that we could have used another popular Shakespearean poem, but she had already begun introducing the poem to her "form class" and the rest of the team had to go along. It seemed as if my buddy was taking over the responsibility for choosing the material. Somehow she seemed to interpret that she was in charge of the "Love" theme and began designing the activities as well. We needed to clarify how we worked collaboratively.

In the classroom it was useful to have my buddy supporting me when I needed help. During this lesson we often stopped to listen to what instructions each of us were giving to the class. We wanted the class to see that we were working as a team.

However, it is a difficult thing to work with another teacher because both of you do not necessarily interpret the class activities in the same way. I often found myself giving in to Sello's interpretation; maybe because I am a passive person, and I don't like to cause conflict.

I was very embarrassed, for example, when my buddy decided the next day to scold the pupils about their behaviour during our lesson on the playground. She threatened to telephone the parents of two pupils who chose to leave the ground during one of the presentations. I knew why they were leaving: they wanted to go and wash the make-up off their faces before the play break. I tried to tell them not to leave the performance space, but they ignored me. I did not think it was a serious offence, but my buddy was quite upset with them. I was angry with her when she said to the pupils, "It was even my 'crit' lesson!" I felt that it was not only her lesson, it was our lesson.



[Click on image for enlarged version](#)

#35 Collage: (1997) **"Sanelesiwe: Critical Conception of Myself as a Second Language Learner".**

Michael's version of teaching the poem

We decided to engage with the same poem in the next lesson especially after the comments that Michael made about Nathi's delivery of this lesson in his "form class". In Nathi's lesson Michael had to intervene because it was clear that the pupils were not interpreting the poem carefully. Nathi was not able to capture the meaning of the poem and Michael took over teaching the lesson. The team felt that we should imitate how the supervisor had taught the lesson. I disagreed. I felt that we should be creative and independent. I was overruled. Nevertheless when we taught the poem Michael's way, the pupils responded very well. I realised that the meaning of the poem became clearer to the pupils.

Pupils writing diaries and reflections

The next lesson followed on from the issues raised in the poem. The task involved pupils getting into the character of Thuthula, the girl in the poem. They were then to write a diary entry of this person or a letter to a friend telling the audience about their life one year after they had been married to the Chief Ndlambe whom she was forced to marry. I noticed that pupils wrote much more than they usually wrote for compositions. When I talked to one pupil he told me that he found writing compositions difficult. I realised that we should spend some time with the pupils about writing compositions. It was clear that they had a mental block against writing compositions because with the written exercise that we gave them they were writing fairly easily. When the pupils had finished writing their letters or diary entries, we got them to read them aloud. The rest of the class then could question them about the views that their texts presented. All of this showed me how well the pupils had interpreted the poem. I was quite pleased.

"You know we can't say these click words"


The next day I was witness to an interesting argument between an African boy and two Indian boys. The "argument" started because the Indian boys saw the African pupil reading a Zulu novel. The African pupil challenged the Indian pupils to read aloud the Zulu text.

They replied laughingly, "You know, we can't say these click words." The African pupil asked them why they did not want to learn how to speak or read Zulu. The argument developed further. ...

"Why do you want to learn English?" asked one of the Indian boys.

"Because we want to find better job positions."

The argument continued about whether the Indian pupils should be learning Indian languages.



It was clear to me that the issue of what languages should be taught within the school was being debated, even amongst the pupils.

What must I teach today?

When I arrived at school the next day I was quite disappointed with my team members. We usually met on a daily basis during a team group meeting to discuss what we would be teaching the next day. Unfortunately, I was not able to meet with the team the previous day because I was asked to serve relief. I was now very angry because I had not discussed with my team members what we were to teach on this day. At our group meeting early that morning I made it known that I did not want to be regarded as a passive recipient of the plans of the rest of the members. I wanted to be involved in making the decisions too. I was glad that I asserted myself, and this helped matters somewhat.

I then chose to review the written work of the pupils with them. I had marked their efforts and commented on the common errors that they had made during their writing. I put up the common errors on the board and together we corrected them. This was an unplanned lesson, but I thought it was better to go to the lesson unprepared than not go at all.

The ideals of collaborative work were beginning to fade for me. Sello wanted to do something in her "form class" which I did not want to do with my class. We should have been designing our lesson 'preps' so that we would do the same thing with our different form classes. It was not working out. During our team meeting, we agreed to allow each member the freedom to choose what he or she would do in his/her class as long as we consulted each other. Nathi and I decided to start with the next theme of "Gangsterism" with our classes. Sello completed the theme of "Love" with her classes writing and performing mini-plays.

Discipline


I began to notice that the issue of disciplining the pupils took more time than I expected it to do. I had thought when I first visited this school that this was a very highly disciplined school. As I got to work with the classes I realised that the pupils would easily misbehave in your class if you did not give them clear instructions. Especially when working with groups I found that they would walk around the class, even sit on the desks. I was wondering whether they behaved like this simply because we were student teachers. I questioned whether my instructions were not very clear.

However, it seemed that all teachers were dealing with the issue of discipline in this school. Many of the teachers were talking about developing a set of strict disciplinary measures. For example, a staff meeting was called to discuss the issue of a few girls smoking in the toilets. The staff decided that all the girls would be asked to remain behind at the school assembly and they would try and find out who exactly who the culprits were. I found this to be very sexist because I believe that no-one should be allowed to smoke on the school premises, not only girls.

I also discovered that the problem of discipline is the same as it is in our African schools. Children are all the same. In my school when corporal punishment was banned, the pupils had a meeting and decided to tell the teachers that they wanted corporal punishment. They felt that they would not progress without it, so they were willing to be punished. So even though corporal punishment is banned officially, it still goes on in my school. I was wondering whether pupils in this school would vote for corporal punishment. I do not personally believe in corporal punishment, but then we seem to be experiencing many "troubles" in this school.

African and Indian pupils, Resident and student teachers, Male pupils and female pupils, And I.

I noticed that there was a difference in the way African pupils were relating to me as opposed to Indian pupils. Firstly, I believed that all pupils draw a line between us as student teachers and their resident teachers. They don't really accept us as teachers. But I think there is this respect that Indian pupils show us African members of staff. All Indian pupils called me "ma'am" which is the title used to



refer to married female staff. However I still feel there is a kind of distance as if they can't really believe that I, an African am their teacher.

I found that African female pupils tended to totally disregard me in this school. They would keep their distance from me and would act as if I was not talking to them. When I approached them to ask, for example, for a reason why they did not do their homework, it was as if I was not there. With the Indian pupils, they would try and make some kind of excuse why they did not do their homework. With the African female pupils, I felt that they did not accept that I was their teacher. I believe that this has something to do with how these African pupils are socialised in the township school. The female pupils do not show respect for female unmarried teachers.

As far as the African male pupils in this school, I think they were confused as to whether I am married or not. They would often try to find out my marital status. It was interesting to note that different ways in which Indian male pupils would attract my attention in the class compared to African male pupils. Indian male pupils were quite polite, putting up their hands when asking your help. African male pupils would just shout out and beckon you with hand gestures.

In the classes where there were more African pupils, I found that they were keen to acknowledge my presence. In most cases they wanted to find out more about my personal life than about schoolwork. I was clear that I was interested in the tasks that I had set them and tried to avoid divulging any of my personal information. In fact, I am married, but most of my lecturers and the teachers think that I am unmarried. I chose to tell the pupils that I am married, and I showed them the ring that I wear.

In the classes where there are fewer African pupils I found that they did not seem to communicate at all. I think that the teachers in this school treat all the pupils the same, that is Indian and African pupils are treated the same, but I think that the African pupils, especially the girls, do not seem to participate. I think this has got to do with a gender issue. I found also that the African pupils do not seem to relate to Sello at all. It is as if only the Indian pupils react to her in the class. We have never spoken about this issue. Generally, I find that I experience more discrimination in this school because I am a woman than because I am an African.

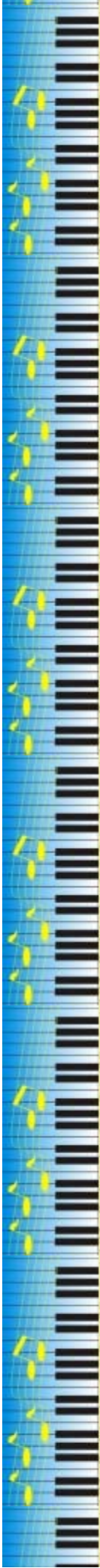
Theory and Practice

The interview about my lesson with my supervisor made me realise the difficult relationship between theory and practice. I knew, in theory, that our language lessons should try to develop our pupils from their present level of competence to a new level. But when it came down to the practicality of doing this, I was not able to effect this in the classroom. I also had read about the dramatisation of poetry, had seen it in practice during our live-in workshop, but when it came to doing it myself in the classroom, I found that I did not fully understand the concept of choral verse very clearly. I just knew that if you got pupils to dramatise the poem, they would understand it better. I did not fully understand why. I think that there is a relationship between theory and practice. Theory is important because it informs your practice and vice versa. I was not impressed by my previous lesson because I only had the theories in my mind, but I was not developing my pupils to a new level of competence in practice.

"You mustn't be nervous. You know they are like that"

My lecturer visited me again when I was introducing the theme "Gangsterism". My mentor teacher was accompanying me to the class, but when she realised that my lecturer was present in the lesson, she excused herself from the lesson saying to me, "You mustn't be nervous. You know they are like that ... You must be free; you must say what you want to in the classroom." She was concerned that I should have told her that I was going to "have a crit", then she could have informed the pupils to be on their best behaviour. I do not agree with this because I think this confines pupils' behaviour. They do not react realistically then.

I find that I disagree with my buddy about this. We do not share the same ideas about disciplining pupils. There are also other issues that began to surface in our



relationships in the team. I feel that even when we planned lessons collaboratively, I do not put myself in a dominant position because I do not like to argue very much. I am a passive person and I can't do anything about that. Therefore, I felt that I was lower than my buddies were. Of course, there are advantages to working with my buddies. Sometimes their ideas are sharper than mine. Their ideas seemed to work in the classroom. One of my buddies also has access to a computer at home, and therefore, she did all the typing of worksheets for our lessons. This was very useful.

Gangsterism, TUPAC and pupil knowledge

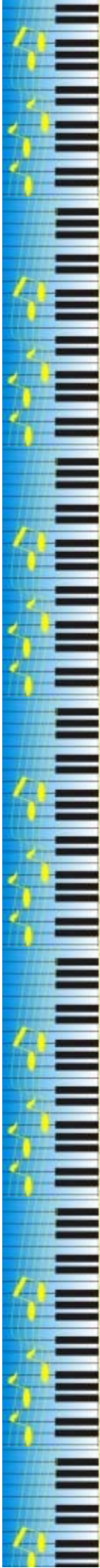
Although I was going to use groupwork for this lesson on gangsterism, I did not rearrange the furniture in the classroom. I felt that moving the furniture would take too much time, and would make a lot of noise. The mentor teacher normally arranged the desks in the traditional way, and I just left them like that. During the lesson I could see that it was uncomfortable for the pupils to talk to each other, especially across the different groups. I decided to read the pupils' extracts out of a recent newspaper article in which a gang entered the school premises and shot a pupil in the classroom. I thought that this article would be a relevant article to read to the class.

When reflecting on this lesson I realised that I should have rewritten a shorter version of the story. During the lesson I just read out chunks of the newspaper article. I do not think that there was a smooth flow of the argument of the article in this oral reading. When listening to the tape of my reading I also realised that I needed to read a lot more loudly especially since pupils did not have copies of the text in front of them.

I had started the lesson showing the pupils the gruesome picture of the slain pupil in the classroom. This was the photograph that had accompanied the article. I realised that my question was vague when I asked pupils, "What do you think about this picture?" I walked around the class showing the picture without any written text. The pupils just didn't respond. I asked another set of questions: "What are your feelings? What do you think about gangsterism?" My supervisor was able to show me that I had not given the pupils enough cues with which to enter the lesson. The picture was not large enough for pupils to read it. The questions I asked did not help them to engage in the process of making meaning of the visual text.

The lesson aimed at teaching pupils the skill of writing an argument, i.e. how to explain a point of view in a persuasive way. It was a writing lesson, but we had decided to start with dealing with an issue that was close to the pupils' lives, that is, gangsterism in schools.

The lesson was just not proceeding very well. Then one of the pupils told me that he had read the newspaper article. He then proceeded to tell the class about what had happened in the incident reported. When I read the text out aloud the pupils began to talk about what they knew about gangsterism from their everyday experiences. My lecturer intervened by asking a question about the graffiti that he had seen in the school about the rap musician, TUPAC. It was clear that some of the pupils knew a lot about this character who was alleged to have faked his death in order to raise some publicity. The pupils came alive as we began talking about the lyrics of this rap artist. They began talking about the "explicit lyrics" which accompany the compact discs of this artist. Some pupils then tried to explain what "explicit lyrics" were. My lecturer encouraged pupils to talk amongst themselves first, before getting them to talk aloud to the whole class. It was clear from the strategies that my lecturer was using with the class that he was drawing on what the pupils already knew about gangsterism. I did not know the musician and therefore was learning from the pupils about this individual who obviously promotes a particular view about gangster life in America. The lyrics of his songs were, as one pupil described it, "vulgar". They were now talking about things that were not so abstract, as I was trying to get them to do at the beginning. There was a lot of information that they were formulating in the process of discussing the views about gangsterism, since this is what I learnt, the rap artist TUPAC writes about. There seemed to be several TUPAC fans in the class.



I could have used the opportunity to discuss the social appropriacy of language especially when one of the girls in the class remarked, "I am not using that language", referring to the lyrics of TUPAC. The rest of the pupils laughed at her because they know that youngsters use vulgar language, but that she was trying to exclude herself. I know the theoretical debates about language usage in different contexts, but I did not respond to these comments in the classroom. I agreed with my supervisor that this was a lost opportunity to discuss issues around the social appropriacy of language in relation to context, audience and purpose.

My lecturer was really urging the students to participate in this lesson with the kind of questions he was asking about what pupils thought of the messages of this rap artist. I think this is good for pupils to see the lecturer involved in the lessons. They were able to see that the lecturer is there not only for me, as a student teacher, but also there as part of the team to develop them as pupils.

I was pleased to see the pupils getting involved in the lesson, something that does not usually happen even at university lectures. Usually only some people participate and draw on their experiences in the lecture. I also contributed my reading about a group of female gangster rappers in the discussion. I think it is important that pupils see that are not only male gangster rappers in the music industry.

The lesson then focussed on writing a good argument. The task set was to write a response in the form of a letter to the editor expressing their views about the article regarding the killing of the pupil by gangsters. I handed out brief notes on hints about writing a good argument. I had seen this technique of developing writing skills taught to us in a module in our Special Method English class. We followed the same principles about raising awareness about the content or topic to be written, providing exemplars of good texts (for example, the newspaper article), providing guidelines for structuring the writing process) and getting pupils to begin the process of writing within the class. All of these were very useful strategies I used in my classroom.


In my own schooling, we were not taught how to write like this. We were given no guidelines or skills on how to write. The teachers usually just gave us a topic and said, for example, this is a descriptive essay, so you must describe the incident, or person. They did not tell us how to write a descriptive essay, or an argumentative essay. I really learnt about the skill of writing these different essays in the Special Method class. I also remember one of my lecturers in English 111 who taught us how to structure an academic argument. It seemed to him that we did not know how to write essays, so he taught us this in one of his lectures. In the Division of Language Usage on campus I also attended a course on how to write good sentences, paragraphs and essays. Using all of these views about writing, I was able to design this lesson for my pupils. I think that we should include a language development section in our method class. We should be taught how to use the language. The tutorial programmes I attended on campus did not focus on language development and I think that this is important. We should not study theories only!

From this lesson, I learnt particularly that pupils could be resources for their own development. Their knowledge should be gathered for the classroom activities. Most often, teachers also do not share their own knowledge in the classroom. Pupils may also know more than the teacher about some issues.

The interview session with my lecturer made me sensitive to many issues of a general nature. I was perhaps not so conscious of the issues of race, gender and language, but as I spoke about it, I realised that I needed to be observant about these issues.

Project Newspaper

Our next project with the pupils was to get them to produce a newspaper. Our next few lessons were devoted to getting them to review the articles that they had written, which, could be included in a "class newspaper". During the lessons we facilitated in planning, designing, drawing cartoons and articles to include in the publication. We also got pupils during this stage to write reflective diaries exploring



their experiences during the process of the lessons we taught them. We used the time in the lessons to read and respond to their reflective diaries and written submissions for their newspaper.

Strikes, Festivals, Fundraising, Civvies Day, Fun Fair, National Stayaways... and now Cultural Day

The end of the week was marked with a special event in the school. It was called Cultural Day. Pupils and teachers seemed to have waited for this day. They wore their traditional attire with great pride. Our Indian buddies were also excited. I was not excited because I wish I were like them, being able to wear traditional attire. But I don't have traditional attire, and I can't explain why.

Again the pupils seem to be at the forefront of the organisation: making speeches, presenting short plays, dances, songs. The gathering happened in a large tent that was erected in the school grounds. Everyone was inside the tent except us African student teachers. Why? We were not invited and nobody had told us where or what to do on this day, not even our Indian buddies. The principal of the school noticed that we were still in the staffroom, and he approached us asking us why we had isolated ourselves from the activities. We explained that we did not know what the arrangements were for this day. He then personally escorted us into the function saying that we should be a part of the gathering. However, when we went there we noticed that no African pupils presented their Culture at this function!

And now, Awards Day

Monday morning of the next week, our last week at the school, the pupils arranged a forty-five minutes Awards ceremony for all the participants at the Cultural Day. This reinforcement of pupils' performance is very good, since it promotes pupils' competence and active participation in school activities and in the wider community. This school seems to be producing competent pupils.

Burst tyres, doctor's surgeries and upset mentor teachers


My own attention on this day was limited. On my way to school today I was involved in a car accident. Although I was not injured externally, I was still shaken up. The taxi in which was travelling had a burst tyre and the vehicle went out of control. I had to leave school early. I could not attend school the next day too because I was really feeling unwell. My head ached and my body was still sore after being knocked around in the taxi. Things were not so great when I got back to school the following day. It began with a misunderstanding between the mentor teacher and I. In my absence she had set a piece of work for the pupils to do. She now expected me to mark this work. I tried to explain that it would be difficult for me to mark this work since I had not taught the lesson. Also I explained that it would be unfair on the pupils for me to mark their work about something I had not taught. I did not know what criteria she used when marking this assignment.

Instead of clarifying to me what the exercise was and how she would assess it, she responded negatively saying that, unlike my buddies, I was the only reluctant one to do this marking. I found this situation very difficult. For the sake of harmony, I then marked the scripts during my free periods and gave them to her. The following day I could not attend school again. I went to the doctor to report the excruciating pains I was experiencing.

Reflection on Becoming a Teacher

Africans student teachers on one side, Indian student teachers on the other, And farewell lunches.

On my last day of school-based teaching practice, I was sensitive to the racial divisions that seemed to have grown between the Indian and African student teachers. I think this sensitivity arose over time. Maybe it was because in the third week of teaching practice two other African student teachers joined us at the school. This resulted in two groups being formed: with Africans on one side, and Indians on another. I assume that it was because there was now a larger number of African student teachers at the school and this resulted in one group dominating



over the smaller group. Even if minor personal problems arose between two individuals, it seemed to be interpreted along racial lines.

Although we never really interacted with all the members of the staff, it was pleasing that they gave us a farewell party when we left. They apologised to us African student teachers that they were unable to arrange to have "phutu" cooked for us. We had interacted mainly with our resident teachers and we hardly knew the rest of the staff. The others were less concerned about our presence at the school.

Working with the resident teachers

However, I feel that the ideals of the resident teacher, university lecturer and the student teacher team working together does not work in practice. There was simply not enough time for the three groups to meet with each other. Often the resident teacher did not engage with the university lecturer when he came to the school. The university needs to develop a system of working a lot more closely with the resident teachers. I think that there is resistance from the resident teachers as to what we have to do during school-based teaching practice. They did not say anything to us directly but I think there is generally a reluctance to change their practices. Resident teachers believe that we are "the OBE generation of teachers". They have a mindset against transformations of teaching and they simply say that it is all too theoretical and that it is unimplementable. Although we have worked with creative ways of teaching English, I think that these approaches will not in any way alter the practices of the resident teachers because they are set in their methods of teaching.

I also think that resident teachers are correct when they comment that collaborative teaching cannot work because the future teachers would be expected to teach alone in a classroom. They will not get the support of another teacher. I found collaborative teaching very stressful because judging what goes on in one's classroom is a subjective action. Too much conflict arose because of this.

Action research and reflective practice

Our action research project was also very difficult to conduct. We found ourselves designing a programme for teaching without having first identified the common problem that pupils were experiencing. This had to do mainly with the limited time we had at the school. There were so many disruptions, and we had to start teaching before time slipped away. It was disappointing for us. Also, to be able to design a programme collaboratively is difficult especially when there are big gaps between the group members.


I found that we used some of the techniques from reflective practice in our classroom. For example, we got our pupils to write reflective diaries. We got to hear pupils' feelings about our lessons and this was very important to us. It allowed us a basis for interacting with the pupils. I think we should engage in the process of speaking to the pupils one-on-one and this might help us to understand them better. Pupils particularly enjoyed the fact that they had chosen the themes to study.

Being involved in a research project with my supervisor, I think I had a lot of time to sit and discuss what was going on in my teaching practice. This was very useful for me as an individual.

I taught at a multicultural, multilingual school

Initially, I thought that being a second language speaker in a predominately English first language environment would be problematic. Nevertheless, I enjoy challenges and adventures and I wanted to experience this form of multilingual, multicultural school. It was part of trying to build my self-esteem. I realised that my ability to communicate in English would assist me in this school. I realised also that my role would be to teach the skills of the English language, irrespective of the pupils being first or second language speakers.

Taking a leaf out of this school



At the end of the day, I think that the African pupils in this school did not bear a remarkable difference from the other races. They did identify more with fellow Africans, but to me they seemed to communicate fairly well with their pupil from other race groups. I was very pleased to see how well they coped with the classroom activities. They were as involved and as good as any other pupil. Their command of English was not that bad. This aroused a number of questions in my mind. Why are these pupils doing so well as compared to African pupils in the townships? The methods being used in this school to teach English are different to the methods used in the townships. Pupils seem to like the English language. They seemed to regard it not just as a language of instruction, but as a means of communication. Surely the teachers from township schools need to pick a leaf from A.D.Lazarus teachers and stop wailing about the pupils being not willing to learn. The absence of a learning culture should not be used as a scapegoat for the inefficiency of teachers.

Where I am Now

Overall I feel that my experience of teaching in this school has taught me a lot about myself, my capabilities and about other people. Looking at people from a distance one cannot detect how nice they are or can be. I do, however, feel that my experience involved having to prove to the pupils that Africans do have the capabilities that other races have. I was confident about what I knew about English language teaching and learning.

I do not think I would like to go back to the rural area in which I went to school. It will be too difficult for me to work there as a lonely individual. I think one needs the support of several individuals to be able to change the system in those schools. Besides the attitude of the staff members towards university graduates is not very encouraging. I would like to have the opportunity to be able to teach in a multilingual, multicultural school. I think I will be more successful as a teacher of English in such a school.

Section Two: Discourse Analysis: **Listening Attentively**

A detailed description of the rationale for this kind of data analysis is presented in Chapter Three: Section Three: "Analysing the Data". Discourse analysis is a form of data analysis which aims to address the problematic issue around language data which attempts to access teachers' thinking.

The suggestion to address this problem is to regard the data produced as language first, and as data later. The data yielded in this research study is a product of the social discourses established during the data collection processes. The language produced in such contexts will be analysed in relation to the context, audience and purposes of the discourse.

In this section of the data analysis, two levels of analysis will be conducted:

- the first level analyses what the student teacher had to say to represent their thoughts (Representational Analysis);
- the second level analyses how the student teachers choose to present particular forms of the language to communicate their thoughts (Presentational analysis).

The following texts produced during the data collection process will be subjected to both these above two forms of analysis:

1. an extract from the STs's written autobiography produced at the beginning of the academic year
2. an extract from the Stimulated-recall interview focussing on the STs' views about their classroom lesson
3. an extract from the STs' reflective journals written at the end of the course.

Table 13 below summarises the texts that that will be analysed in this section.

The discourse analysis of each text will be captured as follows:

- the original text is placed within the left-hand column of the tables, and
- the analysis is placed on the right hand side.

These two forms of analysis together with the narrative analysis will be synthesised in Section Three of this chapter.

***Click here for details of discourse analysis:
Data Analysis***

[Click here to view Table 13: Discourse Analysis Texts](#)

- [Text Three](#)
- [Text Four](#)
- [Text Five](#)
- [Text Six](#)
- [Text Seven](#)
- [Text Eight](#)

Section Two focused on a discourse analysis of the language. The data revealed a rich insight into the ways in which student teachers make sense of their experiences of English language teaching / learning. A more explicit summation of these various texts is presented in the Section Three, which follows. This synthesis attempts to join together both the narrative and discourse strategies of Sections One and Two.

Section Three: Synthesis of Emerging Issues from the Two Main Case Studies

In this section I present a synthesis of the key issues that have emerged out of the two forms of data analysis (Narrative and Discourse Analysis). I compare the analyses of the two students, foregrounding the process of their learning to become teachers of the English language in the transitional context of post apartheid South Africa. The following key issues emerge:

1.

The students drew on the experiences of schooling in a rural African township. The English language continued to play a dominant role in the lives of school children even in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal. Since English is regarded as the economic passport to better life opportunities, teachers in these schools interpret their role as fostering the development of pupils' language skills. Parents did not oppose the marginalisation of the children's mothertongue languages such as isiZulu.

2.


Whilst the above intention was officially pronounced by the school, in reality the experience of learning this language of currency was not a pleasant or successful one.

2.1

The early years of primary schooling was characterised by a series of ritualised audio-lingual practices where repetition and imitation was regarded as evidence of pupils' developing competence in the English language. The two student teachers indicated that these experiences had little meaning for them. They associated these early experiences with English language learning being monotonous and repetitious.

2.2

Their higher primary schooling experiences emphasised a strongly structuralist approach to the learning of English. The lack of co-ordination between the English teachers handling the different grades resulted in repeated topics. Teachers associated the learning of the English as synonymous with learning the grammar of the



language. Pupils were therefore, taught more about the language than about language usage.

2.3

Whilst the medium of teaching and learning was officially declared by school policies to be English, the classroom was characterised by a frequent use of the mothertongue. The teachers resorted to codeswitching between the mothertongue (isiZulu) and the target language (English) as a strategy for developing pupils' conceptual understanding of subject matter. This usually resulted in codeswitching becoming a norm of language usage rather than as strategy for transition into the target second language. In the English language classroom there was still a dominant emphasis on the phonological dimensions of the English language: pronunciation and aloud reading featured prominently. The two students recalled this phase as characterised by many drills of English rules, oral renditions of texts with little emphasis on the meaning-making function, or the interpretation of the language.

2.4

The students noted that corporal punishment was common in the primary school. Incorrect pronunciation of words or failure to recite a rote memorised poem was usually accompanied with being beaten by the teacher. Students consequently developed a negative attitude towards learning English.

2.5

The secondary school was characterised by stricter monitoring of the languages spoken at school. The official policy of the school was that English should be used at all times in the school premises. Whilst this policy might improve the pupils' daily contact with the English language, and promote the communicative functions of the target language, the two student teachers reported that the opposite effect was usually the case. Teachers themselves did not adhere to this policy; pupils found ways of avoiding being caught violating the English only policy. Consequently negative attitudes towards English developed.

2.6

The majority of the pupils were treated as receptacles of the knowledge passed on by the teachers. Only the brighter pupils were given the chance to teach the class as "pupil teachers".

2.7

The two students indicated that the teachers in their secondary school English classes usually tested to see if they had acquired the skills of reading, writing, speaking or listening. Seldom were they taught how to develop these skills.

2.8

Literature lessons in the secondary school were characterised by the teacher explaining the content of the text in the mothertongue. Poetry was avoided for study.

2.9

Pupils became involved in organising their own study groups outside the formal lessons of school. This was a strategy to deal with the syllabus requirements and prepare for the examinations which the formal schooling did not cope with successfully either because of incompetent teachers or the numerous disruptions to the academic

calendar in the violence-torn area.

2.10

Clear hierarchies existed between university-graduated teachers and college graduates. Sanelesiwe noted a clear gendered hierarchy in African rural school contexts. Unmarried female teachers were perceived to be placed on a clearly lower rung of the hierarchies in the school. Sexual relations between male teachers, and both female pupils and staff, were common in this rural schooling context. This resulted in female pupils and unmarried female teachers being in competition with each other over sexual partners. Male chauvinism was rife in these contexts, even among male pupils. Older teachers were also placed higher on the hierarchy of schooling.

2.11

Both students suggested that the teachers in their school were involved in patterns and routines of teaching English that they did not reflect on. Teachers simply believed that the failure of pupils to acquire competence in the English language was not as a consequence of poor language teaching strategies. Sanelesiwe was particularly damning of teachers who abandon the responsibility for developing pupils' language competence.

2.12

Both students noted that after twelve years of schooling and approximately ten years of learning English, their communicative English language competence was still very poor. This they discovered at the early stages of their university careers. They felt that schooling had not prepared them to be competent users of the English language.


2.13

Emmanuel suggested that he chose to become a teacher because of the status that the community afforded to teachers. From an early age he was impressed also by teachers' dress sense. Sanelesiwe vowed to become a teacher of English when her teachers failed to offer the teaching of poetry at secondary school level. The teacher's lack of competence to teach poetry inspired her to become a teacher of English.

3.

Generally, speaking the STs' experiences of learning the English language were not very positive or successful. They felt that these very negative experiences of learning English made them want to become teachers of the language in order to resolve some of the problems. The data gathered for this research occurred during the process of the STs studying to become teachers. It is clear that the vocabulary of critique of their teachers' actions comes from having the theoretical tools with which to analyse the actions of their teachers. It is unlikely, that they would have been able to critique their teachers' actions without the experiences of the course programme. They regarded the influence of the teacher preparation programme on their thinking as a powerful means of understanding their own learning of English in their school years. The exercise of reflecting on their schooling through the writing up of an autobiographical account forced them to examine their own schooling experiences. Both concluded that they would like to distance themselves from the kind of teaching that they themselves experienced. They do not want to teach English as they were taught.

4.



Both STs concurred that the study of English at university did not meet with their expectations:

4.1

arising out of their experience with studying English at school level they felt that the study of English would involve the study of the grammar of English. This did not feature in their university curriculum.

4.2

they felt that their own language skills, especially in writing English, were not sufficiently developed. Therefore, they had to resort to additional tutorials at the Division of Language Usage, on the campus, in order to meet with the standards required of them.

4.3

the interaction with non-mothertongue isiZulu speakers developed their communicative competence in speaking English, the lingua franca of the university.

4.4

the study of English Literature was perceived to be over-emphasised in their first three years of studying English in the Faculty of Arts. This comment was made with the hindsight of experiences of the teaching practice session, and the SMEC undertaken in their final year at university.

4.5

both student teachers indicated that they would have preferred an undergraduate course looking specifically at the development of skills in the English language. They felt that this would have also developed their own under-developed English language skills.

4.6

the placement of the SMEC at the end of the teacher preparation programme was seen as "too much, too late".

5.

The Special Method English curriculum was acknowledged as marking a significant turning point in their understanding about English teaching and learning.

5.1

The emphasis on the theme of the programme "Teaching English in a Multilingual classroom" was reported as being relevant to the post apartheid South African context.


5.2

The strategy of engaging students in developing their own language skills in writing and reading, and then reflecting on the methodologies used was seen as valuable in dealing with practical demonstrations and reflections on ELTL.

5.3

The module on Language Acquisition was noted as particularly useful since it offered theoretical understandings of the nature, processes and approaches to developing learners' English language competence.

5.4



The course drew on the practical experiences of the student teachers themselves and promoted continual reflection on their experiences of schooling and learning English in the form of a reflective journal. Both student teachers saw this process as a valuable means of developing their personal understanding of their roles as future teachers of the English language.

5.5

Sanelesiwe commented on the value of the pre-school-based teaching practice live-in weekend: it provided a relaxed atmosphere for learning, allowed opportunities to examine exemplars of past STs' curriculum projects, promoted exemplars of learning activities that were both fun and educational, provided opportunities to work and live closely with one's school team buddies.

6.

An important feature of the teacher preparation programme was the placement at a school in which teaching practice was conducted.

6.1

The initial placement at a school site was during the second year of the university programme. Sanelesiwe felt that because of a lack of alternative models of teaching at this stage in the teacher preparation curriculum, she simply imitated the way she was taught. Emmanuel by contrast attempted to implement his understanding of a learner-centered approach to English language teaching. His lack of clear understanding of the theoretical understandings of socio-constructivism left him wondering whether this "approach" was relevant or applicable to African school contexts.

6.2

Sanelesiwe records the positive influence of a mentor teacher who had graduated from the university. Discussions with her created in Sanelesiwe's mind the possibility for alternative ways of organising the English language curriculum for her learners. This mentor teacher she met during her third year of university.

6.3

During the final year of the teacher preparation programme, Emmanuel and Sanelesiwe were placed in school contexts, which were similar and dissimilar in many ways. Both schools were former Indians only schools and were now admitting African pupils. Despite the linguistic change in pupil-intake the school language policy remained unaltered. Investigating this language policy as a team of student teachers from different race, gender and linguistic backgrounds was a useful exercise in securing a clearer understanding of some of the difficulties facing learners with different linguistic heritages in these schools. Sanelesiwe records the importance she attached to having to interview one of the managers of her school. The importance of asking questions about the language policy (official and lived-out policy) provided the students with a kind of reflective lens to examine the difficulties, especially second language learners, were experiencing in the so-called integrated school.

Both teams in the schools conclude that the overall language policy was one of subtractive bilingualism. The continuation of Afrikaans as a language taught in these schools was more a matter of retaining the present teaching staff than about securing the development of the pupils' linguistic potential or repertoire.

The two schools were different in that Emmanuel's school was



characterised by extreme forms of pupils' disruption (gang cultures; violence between staff and pupils; lack of discipline) and non-participation of the second language English learners in classroom activities. Sanelesiwe's school was relatively more stable despite the numerous interruptions of the academic programme due to various "extra-curricular activities": fundraising, cultural days, festivals, etc. Initially, Sanelesiwe was negative about the disruptions but later values their contribution to setting the tone for pupils to develop public responsibility. The hidden curriculum of this school was successful in allowing pupils to take initiative for the tone of the school. Sanelesiwe concludes from her experiences at this school, that ESL pupils were relatively competent users of English and generally accepted the learning of English.

The opportunity to conduct this form of research into the school's lived-out language policy provided the students with a set of "antennae" to receive signals concerning the problems regarding ELTL.

6.4

The student teachers did not however regard the research exercise as unproblematic. As part of the action research assignment it was suggested that the first week be used for the investigation into the school language policy. On the basis of the findings and the investigation into a problem of ELTL, the student teachers were expected to design a four-week curriculum intervention. Both schools experienced disruptions due to a nation-wide teachers' strike. Securing meetings with the mentor teachers and pupils of the school to investigate a particular language-related problem proved virtually impossible. Mentor teachers were also expecting teachers to begin teaching straight away and the pressure was brought to bear on them to design lessons to take over the mentor teachers' classes. The student teachers learnt the process of action research is never a linear and neat trajectory from conception to execution of plans. Being a teacher in a vibrant schooling and educational context involved making contingency plans and responding to the specific contexts within the school.

6.5

The ideals of a mentor partnership varied in both the student teachers' experiences. Sanelesiwe was attached to a mentor teacher who supported the student teacher team by accompanying them to their lessons. This allowed her to give feedback to the Sanelesiwe. Emmanuel's mentor teacher left the responsibility of organising and teaching language lessons to the STs themselves. Little direct feedback was therefore given. Both mentor teachers nevertheless, promoted the view that teaching practice was a farce that was aimed at pleasing the university lecturers. Emmanuel's mentor teacher suggested that university-based theories of language teaching/learning were idealistic and do not work in the school context. Sanelesiwe's mentor teacher interpreted the university lecturer's role as being to offer crits of lesson performance. Little direct interaction between the university lecturer and mentor teacher occurred. This resulted in STs feeling that they were engaging in window dressing rather than on real curriculum intervention with the pupils. Emmanuel realises this quite late in his teaching practice session and is upset that he was allowed to teach sections of English literature that the mentor teacher had already covered in his class. The mentor teachers seemed preoccupied with the STs presenting assessments of their pupils' activities. The content and form of the lessons themselves were not featured as important as long as an assessment mark could be provided. Thus both STs call for a much closer working relationship between the university supervisor and the mentor teachers.

This last comment was also noted in the problems that arose around curriculum planning. Sanelesiwe's mentor teacher had developed a pattern of compartmentalising the English curriculum into specific pre-planned foci for each day of the timetable. This contradicted Sanelesiwe's view of designing a curriculum where each lesson evolved from the previous one in an integration of all the English language skills. Emmanuel also noted that pupils were accustomed to the mentor teachers' routines and that their (STs') teaching resulted in a "disruption" to this norm.

The STs learnt through this focus on curriculum planning and design that particular routines and patterns for handling the teaching/learning of English exist, which have become normalised by the teachers and pupils. To offer other strategies meant that one was disrupting the pattern and this might have caused pupils to feel unsettled if not unco-operative. This extended into Sanelesiwe's hesitance to alter the traditional layout of the furniture that the mentor teacher had set up.

7.

In the actual delivery of lessons both STs learnt the following:

7.1

initially, the working together with a buddy in the same class was a supportive experience. As time progressed both STs noted a drifting away from the value system of their buddies. Firstly, conflicts begin to arise about curriculum content choices (Sanelesiwe); then about what forms of disciplining of pupils should be made, then about lesson plans. Eventually both STs noted that a form of independent work would allow each teacher in the team to exert his or her creative distance from each other. In Emmanuel's case the team chose to divide the responsibilities in terms of lesson planning for different genres of the English language curriculum: poetry, short stories, etc. In Sanelesiwe's case the team decided to establish separate "form classes" for each ST.

7.2

both ST teams nevertheless, continued having their buddies observe their lessons and provide feedback, and both chose to continue with daily curriculum planning meetings to discuss the lessons they were going to teach. These separate, yet joint activities, allowed each student to support each other, and allowed for relative freedom to assert their individuality.

From this parting of ways STs learnt what made them unique in their teaching/ learning strategies of English. The fact that they could reflect their dissatisfactions with their buddies in their daily reflective journal entries also allowed some means of venting and cooling off the potential friction.

The above discussion shows the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative work, confirmed by both Emmanuel and Sanelesiwe. Emmanuel was strong in his criticisms of the kind of lesson planning that his peers do. Both of them were strong in their criticisms of the tactics used for disciplining pupils in the classroom. Sanelesiwe commented that reading the classroom context is an individual, subjective act of interpretation. This is a powerful learning about the nature of the teaching process. Both STs learnt to define their own personal set of values of ELTL in relation to the values, beliefs and actions of first, their mentor teachers; then, their buddies.

8.



A sophisticated set of reasoning developed between the two STs to attempt to understand the way in which African pupils were engaging (or not) in their classroom lessons.

8.1

Emmanuel posited several explanations for the lack of participation of African pupils in his class. He suggested that it may have to do with the culture of the classroom which has been promoted by the mentor teachers and the first language English pupils which created a hostile environment for English second language (ESL) learners. ESL African pupils who did not have the same English language competence as their Indian colleagues may have been embarrassed by their lack of competence to use the medium of teaching and learning. They therefore switched off, perhaps because of past experiences of humiliation. Emmanuel identified personally with the silencing of non-competent ESL learners. In an English L1 dominant environment, he was more likely to be withdrawn. In later reflections during the course of teaching practice he was less sympathetic towards African pupils since he felt that they were equally responsible in choosing their non-participatory stance. He suggested that this stance may be culturally appropriate in traditional, non-middle class African homes. Nevertheless, in the context of his particular practicum school, the ESL pupils were holding themselves back since different cultural systems were in operation here. His opinion was that African pupils, by holding onto their "traditional" view of a "passive, respectful child" in relation to an adult teacher, was impeding their own development in English language competence.

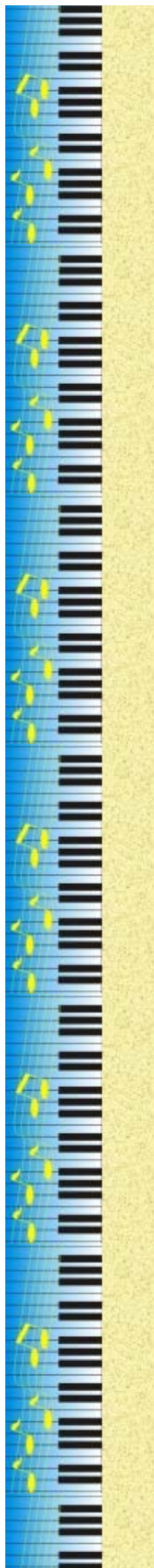
The several layers of analysis and exploration of alternative strategies to handling ESL learners in his class, is indicative of the developing teacher who moved beyond simple theoretical idealised constructs about language teaching/learning. He sought a contextually appropriate understanding of the dynamics of the particular classroom and pupils he worked with.

In his initial analysis of ESL teaching and learning (at the beginning of the year) Emmanuel simply related to theory as a form of explanation/grand theory of how language learning occurs. It was almost an acceptance of the theoretical constructs as if they were truths. He registered then, his dissatisfaction at not being able to use these truths in the real context of the classroom. Towards the end of the teaching practice he used the theoretical constructs to enable him to formulate his own understanding of the problems he encountered as a teacher.

8.2

Sanelesiwe offered a different analysis of the problems facing ESL learners. She presented an analysis which acknowledged a gender-related dimension of teaching and learning. By reflecting on her own successes with some ESL African pupils and her failure to reach others, Sanelesiwe noted that it was the African female pupils who most resisted her. This she ascribed to the perceived hostility and competitions that seemed to exist between unmarried female teachers and African female pupils. (See discussion in 2.10). Sanelesiwe suggested that African female pupils erroneously bring their township-socialised presumptions about unmarried female teachers into a non-township school. She suggested that the practice of sexual relations between male Indian staff members and the pupils does not exist to the same extent as in African schools. Therefore, the African girls' rejection of her was unnecessary.

The African male pupils she felt also bring their township male chauvinism into the non-township school. She indicated their interest in her, arose from their perception that she was unmarried.



An interesting scenario was provided by Sanelesiwe regarding the distribution of ESL African pupils amongst the different class units in the school. She noted that in classes where African pupils were in a larger number, they tended to group together and did not integrate with their Indian colleagues. In smaller groups of African pupils there was a tendency for better co-operation between Indian and African pupils. However, in the smaller groupings pupils tended to be more withdrawn. The larger groupings, especially where there were larger number of male African pupils, tended to be more chauvinistic.

The fact that Sanelesiwe was able to provide commentary on the African pupils' actions indicated her growing critical reflective skills. She began to show broad levels of analysis of classroom behaviour beyond issues regarding discipline and classroom management. Nevertheless, even towards the end of teaching practice, she still did not seem to reveal any acknowledgement of pupils as individuals. She treated them as holistic groupings (perhaps labelling them as male/female/African /Indian) rather than as individual personalities. This might have to do with her choice of remaining "distanced", preventing her from getting too close to pupils for "fear of crossing the boundaries between professional teacher and pupil".

Emmanuel, by contrast, got to know many of his pupils on a one-to-one basis, knowing their names, their personal backgrounds. He made a conscious effort to see each child as an individual creation, in line with his religious views.

9.


Sanelesiwe's incorporation of the pupils into the design and curriculum development processes was more pronounced than Emmanuel's. Together with her team members, she engaged in the process of negotiating what pupils thought was relevant to their lives and interesting to study. They then designed lesson plans around these elected themes. It is interesting to note that although the two teams were in separate schools, both teams ended up dealing with very similar topics related to the themes of arranged marriages (Love) and school violence (Gangsterism). Both teams were conscious of planning curriculum activities that dealt with themes that were relevant to the everyday lives of their pupils.

10.

Whereas Sanelesiwe interpreted the school context largely within the framework of a gender analysis, Emmanuel chose to interpret the school as a site of political struggles between the staff and the parent body, as a struggle between different cultural assumptions about teaching/learning. This is reflected in his analysis of the conflicts that arose over school governing bodies and the management of the school, and the different views about Indian and African pupils' engagement with the teacher in the classroom. He also interpreted the school in terms of the influence of the culture of gangsterism within the wider community. Both STs nevertheless, were able to contextualise the patterns of pupils' (especially the African pupils') actions and behaviours in term of the socialisation process that apartheid education has brought to bear on the pupils' thinking. This broadening of the understanding is a sign of maturing professionals.

11.

Both Sanelesiwe and Emmanuel concluded their year of teacher preparation with the comment that they would not choose to go back to teach in the rural area from which they originated. Sanelesiwe cited her reasons as being, the lack of support she would receive from teachers resistant to a university graduate, and the fact that she was unlikely to get support from fellow teachers to change the routinised patterns of teaching /learning of English. She suggested that teachers in these contexts have become comfortable with externalising the source of the poor performance of their



pupils. She suggested that the root causes were teachers' inefficiency, and their reluctance to reflect on their perpetuation of the problem.

Emmanuel cited his reason for not wanting to return to his rural hometown, as being the fear of intimidation, violence and even death, if he used innovative approaches to ELTL. He hinted that it was the teachers who had killed the young principal who had been an inspiration in his home school. He chooses to wait until teachers' attitudes about their teaching changes venturing into teaching in a rural area.

The above synthesis of the narrative and discourse analysis of the two principal case studies reveal a rich insight into how STs experience English language teaching and learning over different periods of their lives. The transferability of this research analysis to the seven auxiliary case study STs needs to be explored. This is the subject of the next section.

Section Four: Cross Case Analysis: Harmonies and Counter-harmonies

In Sections One, Two and Three, I presented an analysis of the data yielded primarily from two student teachers: Emmanuel and Sanelesiwe. Their data revealed the experiences of learning to become a teacher of English in relation to their backgrounds of learning English as a second language within the context of a rural African school.

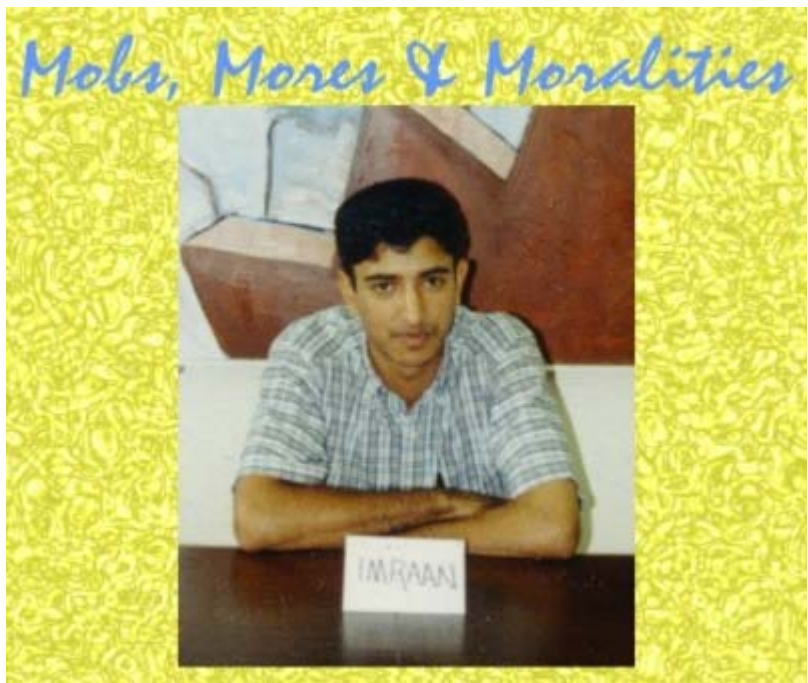
In this section, I briefly signal the kind of convergences and divergences between these two STs' experiences of becoming teachers and the auxiliary seven case study students. These remaining case studies reflect a wider range of biographical heritages and contexts within which they experienced their formative years of ELTL.

Each of the separate case studies deserve a full narrative and discourse analysis. Unfortunately, I shall for the sake of brevity and space, only highlight a few critical issues pertaining to each of the auxiliary case studies. In the "snapshots" of these case studies I use a similar organising format as that of the principal case studies. I have chosen to use the following formative hallmarks to trace the STs' developmental experiences of :

1. language learning in primary and secondary school, focussing on a significant critical school teaching/learning incident;
2. language learning at university, especially in reference to the Special Method English Course;
3. language teaching (and learning about it) during school-based teaching practice.

The experiences of the seven other case study students may be described as the harmonic and/or counter-harmonic strains alongside the main melody of the first two students' data. (See Table 8: Case Study Student Teachers' Heritages in Chapter Three for a biographical description of the seven student teachers.)

On the left-hand pages of this section, I have placed the autobiographical collages that were designed by these STs. These collages were designed to depict their experiences of ELTL, and were used during the data collection process to stimulate discussion about these early life experiences before entry into the SMEC.



4.1 Imraan

Primary and Secondary Schooling Experiences

Imraan's formative years were in the context of a small rural farm community in which close and positive experiences of schooling, teaching/learning were fostered. Teachers and pupils were seen as part of an extended family network especially in primary school. He was recognised by his teachers as being an outspoken public speaker and was sometimes compared to the politicians of the day. His strong religious inspiration as a Muslim came from his family where he learnt the foundation of debates around social equity and justice. He remembers his primary school experiences of English language learning as characterised by the use of play-acting and public speaking.

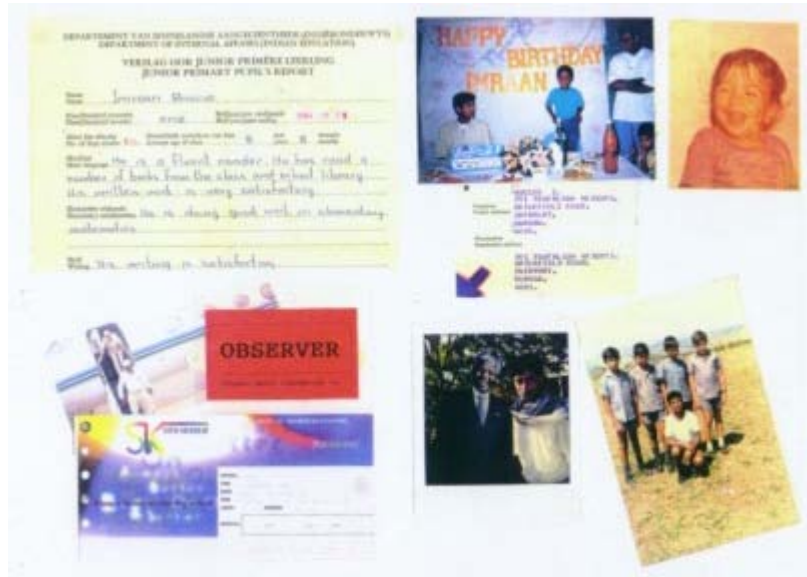
Although his outside school childhood experiences are characterised by multilingual experiences of playing with children of different language and cultural groups, his schooling experiences were limited to Indian children only. Growing up on the farm allowed him to interact with the Portuguese speaking farmer's son, the African workers' isiZulu-speaking children. His knowledge of isiZulu is therefore fairly developed.

He acknowledges the injustice of his Zulu-speaking out-of-school playmates having to walk several kilometres away to an African school, even though his own school was within walking distance from their homes.

Imraan went to an "Indians only" secondary school in Umzinto, a small town, on the South coast of KwaZulu-Natal. He recollects his secondary schooling as being part of the experiences of becoming more and more politically aware. This was partly due to his own involvement in the social, religious and political groupings within the town. Debates around racial inequities became foregrounded in his later secondary school years. Part of this transformation arose from the inspiration of a particular teacher of English.

This secondary school English teacher (a UDW graduate) who used the English language classroom as a forum to raise the pupils' political awareness through the discussions of current issues arising from newspapers, posters and pamphlets. These additional materials were always presented in the context of analysing both language and social awareness. Besides this English teacher, Imraan recalls that many of his teachers were painfully comfortable with the old educational dispensation. The only break from the routine of repetitious and boring lessons were the Friday afternoon oral periods in which pupils were engaged in debates, show-and-tell, speeches and other interactive sessions.

His strong political awakening is also partly due to the fact that his family had adopted an African child, orphaned through political violence. This child, who was initially an isiZulu speaker, became closely attached to Imraan's father, and was raised as a Muslim. The child eventually developed competence in Urdu, the home language of Imraan's household, English and Arabic (the language of the Islamic Koran). Being himself an only child, a close sibling bond exists between Imraan and his adopted sister.



[Click here for enlarged version of image](#)

#29 Collage: (1997) "Imraan".

University Experiences

His interpretation of university life was about becoming involved in the campaigns for social and religious justice. As a Muslim he was affiliated to national students' youth movements and became involved in the number of debates about the relationship of Islam to politics. His role of being a journalist for this movement is foregrounded as part of his experiences of working with language and communication.

His understanding of becoming a teacher of the English language is to be able to contribute to working within a trade union movement in the field of "democracy education". He interprets the university education as preparing him for careers beyond just becoming a teacher of the English language.

Imraan comments that the experience of the SMEC provided him with a broader conception of the teaching of language beyond the traditional categorisation that he experiences in his schooling career. In school there were clearly demarcated timetabled slots for different sections of language teaching: Grammar, Comprehension, Composition, Literature. They were usually taught in a fragmented and unrelated way. He appreciated the debates raised in the SMEC about the design of a language curriculum, which focussed on the development of language skills incorporating reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. Especially important was the focus on the development of language skills of both first and second language learners in the context of multilingual classes. These debates allowed him to develop a critical perspective about his own sister's linguistic development within their own home and within primary school.

School-based Teaching Practice Experiences

Imraan and Emmanuel (Case Study Student Number 1) were in the same ST team during school-based teaching practice. The advantage that Imraan, a first language speaker of English, brought to bear on this student teacher team was that he lived within the community of the school and understood the kind of cultural background of the pupils and the community.

His experiences of school-based teaching practice are described as a battle


between the different student teachers' interpretations of how to deal with undisciplined students. Imraan criticises his colleagues for being too "politically correct" in their handling of disruptive, unruly and ungrateful pupils. He believes in a firm disciplining of the pupils, in the superior ability of a strong male oriented use of physical control to handle the gang culture of the particular school. His colleagues did not necessarily accept this view, and he was interpreted as being chauvinistic. He recalls the incident in the early days of the SBTP when a female colleague attempted to grow close to the pupils and develop a warm relationship with them. This backfired on her when one of the pupils openly started to flirt and pass sexual comments to her in front of the whole class. Imraan condemns this kind of behaviour from the pupils but believes that the ST was equally responsible for "courting" such remarks because of the relaxed atmosphere she created in her class. Imraan chose consciously not to allow this kind of atmosphere to develop in his classes.

The death of his father just prior to school-based teaching practice and the responsibility of assuming the headship of his family were all competing concerns during the process of him learning to become a teacher of English. His "father role" of supervising the transition of his "African sister" into a largely "Indian" primary school was also brought to bear on his understanding of what teaching/learning the English language entailed. His analysis of the process of developing to become a teacher of the English language is thus mediated by all of the above personal, political and contextual school-environmental forces.

He chose to remain relatively aloof and critical of the disrespect the school pupils have for the value of their education. He interprets his role as taking charge of the situation by being a strong disciplinarian. However, by the end of SBTP, he softens in his control over the pupils. This results from him beginning to understand the complex lives that his pupils lead. He begins to review their disregard for schooling in the context of the rapid influence of "urban gang culture" on their lives. Imraan's strong religious beliefs in moral behaviour originally condemn these pupils, but he realises that they are in need of positive role models. This role he believes he will possibly be able to provide.

His conclusions about teaching at secondary school level is that it a process of making strongly contextually relevant decisions. He believes (at the end of SBTP) that teachers should try to work individually with each pupil, understand their particular background and develop appropriate strategies to assist that individual. Despite Imraan's characterisation of this school as being generally hostile to learning and education, he believes that he would like to teach at such a school in the future.





4.2 Zakiyya

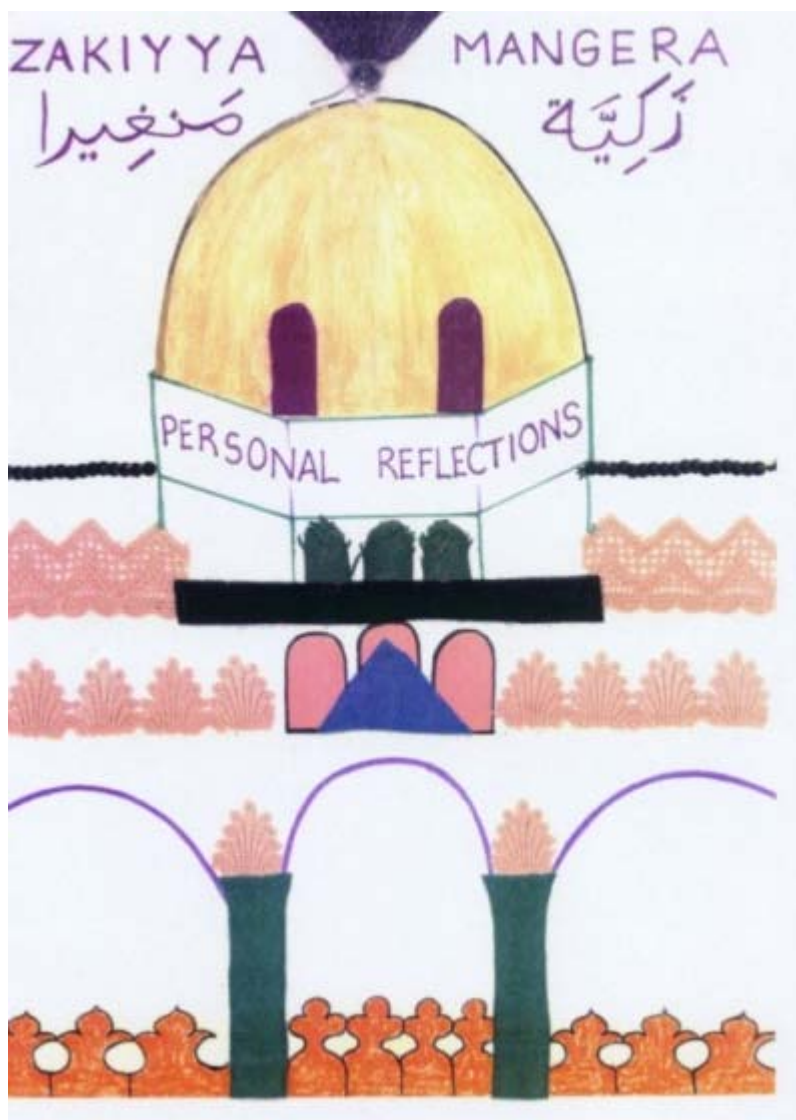
Primary and Secondary School Experiences:

Zakiyya, like Imraan, is also Muslim. Her own experiences of learning English in the context of primary and secondary schooling were interpreted as being fairly rigid and compartmentalised. It was in her family home where she developed a love for reading. All her family members were avid readers and she became a member of the local Stanger library at an early age.

Her first vivid experiences of language learning go back to an inspirational teacher who taught her Arabic in the primary school. This developed her interest and love for the Arabic language. She studied Arabic throughout her schooling career. Language teachers in her primary school were in sharp contrast to the other teachers in the school. They frequently engaged pupils in activities, which she enjoyed, especially participating in speech contests and debates. Other teachers Zakiyya describes as "terrors" who instilled fear into her. This is why she claims that she now dislikes Mathematics. Mathematics teachers (in both her primary and secondary schools) tended to favour only the "good" pupils and neglected all others.

Moving away from the small town school in Stanger to a Durban school for Muslim pupils was sad for Zakiyya. She gave up her interest in public speaking because she was no longer confident in the new urban school environment. In secondary school, another Arabic teacher, continued to develop Zakiyya's interest in the Arabic language. Her teacher's dedication extended to her conducting extra lessons outside school hours to develop the learners' competence in Arabic. With hindsight, Zakiyya comments that this was restricted to developing grammatical competence rather than communicative competence. However, as a pupil, she believed that good language teaching entailed teaching structuralist grammar.

Her secondary school English language learning experiences were characterised by following patterns and routines of segmented and isolated different aspects of the English language:



[Click here for enlarged version of image](#)

#37 Collage: (1997) "Zakiyya: Personal Reflections".


Comprehension, Language, Literature, Writing, Oral activities. These experiences were largely focused on what she, with the hindsight of the Special method course, describes as testing rather than teaching pupils how to acquire the skills of using the English language.

University Experiences/ Work Experiences

Her family moved to Lenasia (Gauteng) when she was about to enter university. Rather than enter university she chose to take up the position as a part time teacher of Arabic in a primary school. She thoroughly enjoyed the experience of teaching structuralist grammar of the Arabic language in the fashion of her mentor teachers.

She continued her studies through the University of South Africa (UNISA), a correspondence university, majoring in Arabic and English. She married at the end of her first degree and relocated to Durban, where she attempted to study for a teachers' diploma through correspondence. This proved too burdensome in the light of her daytime job with the Islamic Educational Organisation of South Africa. She was eventually promoted to the Head of Department of the Arabic Department of this institution. This involved conducting research, lecturing and supervising teachers in the teaching and learning of Arabic in the Durban area. This was an adult education programme assisting public and private school teachers of Arabic. Her competence in Arabic linguistics earned her respect and confidence.

Eventually, the Department of Education and Culture asked her to write up the syllabus for the Arabic language teaching and learning in South African schools. She authored the textbooks, which accompany this syllabus.



She recalls being accepted to study for the HDE at UDW as an important milestone in her life. She believes that she has led a very sheltered academic life because most of her studies were conducted through correspondence. Few of her prior experiences included working face-to-face with lecturers and students of different linguistic, cultural, and racial backgrounds.

Her views of ELTL developed during the Special Method English course, which constantly interrogated her previous experiences. Whilst she valued the inspiration of her English and Arabic language teachers, she was able to develop through the SMEC the tools for critiquing the kind of curriculum they offered. She is now particularly critical of the fact that the Arabic syllabus which she designed, does not promote communicative competence in the language. She is also critical of her English language teachers for not fully teaching her to develop all her language skills. Her English language teachers were content to work with those pupils who had already developed sufficiently good language skills: a category which included her.

She is determined to develop the arguments learnt within the SMEC into her spheres of influence in the Arabic language teaching circles. She originally expected the English method course to provide her with the tools for implementing a structuralist approach to teaching language. The course with its focus on multilingualism changed her perceptions significantly about an alternative conception of language teaching and learning. She interprets the course focussing on developing critical reflective practice as an innovative strategy for interrogating her prior conceptions of language teaching and learning.

School-based Teaching Practice Experiences

Being paired off with an African second language student to teach in a private Muslim school proved an onerous task on her. This school consists dominantly of Indians only and includes both secular and religious studies. She felt that she received little support or critique from her "buddy" whom she understands was quite at sea with the nuances of teaching in a completely different cultural context to the one that he as an African second language learner had experienced. She therefore suggests that student teachers should be allowed to choose individuals with whom they would prefer to work with during school-based teaching practice. Her "buddy" offered little assistance in the design of the curriculum programme.

In organising the curriculum experiences for her learners in the school she approached the task experimentally. Her past experiences had been largely working with primary school pupils in the teaching of Arabic. The transition to teach in a secondary school proved a major learning experience.

The private Muslim school at which she taught adopted the philosophy that boys and girls should be taught in separate classes. The strongly gendered responses of the pupils in their

interactions with her are foregrounded in her reflections on becoming a teacher. She notes that there seemed to be a power game between the female pupils and herself: with them never truly accepting her stance as not being "their friend". She feels that the role of a teacher is to remain distanced from the pupils in order to be able to maintain a clear focus on the intentions of teaching/learning. This strategy was particularly useful in the context of teaching in a boys-only class. She felt that male pupils always made her aware that she was a young female. She is nevertheless, surprised that the girls of the school presented her with a bouquet of flowers at the end of the school-based teaching practice.

She also foregrounded the ability of male teachers to maintain discipline amongst the pupils. She acceded that strong female personalities, like the Afrikaans speaking "Mevrou" at the school, are able to maintain discipline. She notes her own concerns that secondary school pupils are highly gender conscious and sexually aware. Her focus on teaching the English language is thus preoccupied with concerns over the process of interacting with pupils who have different conceptions about what schooling and education is for. Her own experiences of schooling she records as having been characterised by more clearer focus on the pursuit of academic education. Her pupils did not seem to have the same degree of value and

this became her priority in her interactions with her pupils. She concludes that it is her desire to teach English and Arabic (with a new conception of developing communicative competence in the language) at primary school level.



4.3 Romola

Primary and Secondary School Experiences

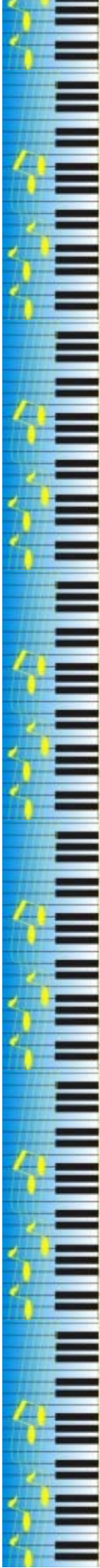
Romola attended schools in several different places. She began schooling in a rural primary school in Empangeni. She recalls that her interaction with the many isiZulu-speaking children in the area did not develop her competence in their language. This was because they tended to prefer talking to her in English. Her experiences of living in Chatsworth, an urban Indian township, lacked the freedom and vitality that she enjoyed on the farm. She found the pupils there held a narrow view of other race groups. In another primary school in the Stanger area (a small town), she recalls the friendships she developed amongst pupils and teachers. In Verulam (another small town) she felt her primary schooling experiences were characterised by many academic and social activities, none of which she recalls in depth. Her primary schooling life is recalled as a time of having fun with friends.



[Click here for enlarged version of image](#)

#38 Collage: (1997) "Romola".

She describes Mountview Secondary (Verulam) as a "spiritual home". It was here that she grew as a confident and assertive individual. Her teachers were strong motivators for the pupils "to strive": the school motto. In recalling her experiences of



language learning in this school, she foregrounds the influence of an Afrikaans language teacher who went beyond merely providing labels and terminology about the language. She was aware that many of the pupils had developed negative attitudes towards learning Afrikaans. Pupils, like Romola, believed that they should not be learning the "language of the oppressors". However, this teacher managed to change pupils' attitudes by convincing them to "manipulate the language to serve one's own interests". The teacher introduced curriculum topics, which sparked pupils' interests. She organised pupils to write and perform plays in Afrikaans. Romola recalls encouraging her English language teachers to follow in this teacher's example. This was however not usually what happened.

Romola does not recall any English teacher impacting significantly on her. Teachers, she feels were wrapped up in their own world of teaching, and little focus was given to the learners. Her schooling days are filled with the memories of her friends. Therefore, she attempts consciously to adopt a more friendly approach towards her pupils, and thereby exerts an influence on their lives. Romola developed, early in her teenage years, the habit of keeping a diary. This allowed her to continually reflect on her growing understanding of the world, her peers and herself. These diaries she believes she will one day write up in the form of a novel. This experience of written reflection she regards as a powerful form of self-development.

University Experiences

In accordance with university rules, Romola had to enrol for two language courses at university. She tried to steer away from the English and Afrikaans options that most students resorted to because these were languages that they were familiar with in school. However her foray into both the French and isiZulu classes on campus proved far too complex for her. The way in which these courses were being taught did not fully allow a second language user to develop a communicative competence. Their over-emphasis on grammatical competence also dissuaded her. Her interest in learning both these languages was to communicate with people: in the case of isiZulu with people in the South African context, in the case of French to fulfil her ambition to travel across the globe with a language other than English. She recalls that pure expediency to qualify with a degree resulted in her registering for courses in Afrikaans and English.

She recalls that the SMEC was another "comfortable home" she found in her university career. The course allowed her to be herself, say what was on her mind, no matter how controversial. Her colleagues recognised her for raising issues about gender equality in the many of her arguments in the SMEC. She admired the particular lecturers in the course who seemed to provide her with role models of language teachers. She felt that the lecturers travelled widely and brought their varied experiences of language teaching/learning from other parts of the world into the SMEC. Her ambition is to use her English language teaching qualifications to travel the world.

School-based Teaching Practice Experiences

Romola differs from her colleagues in the interpretation of her role as a female teacher. She records that the timidity that many female teachers adopt is partly responsible for the way in which they are treated by the pupils. She agrees that female teachers are "harassed" by the male pupils but that female teachers should respond more assertively to stamp out such behaviour. Her approach was to translate the flirtation of male pupils with humorous responses. This she believes is possible because she is confident about her own sexuality.

She notes that her strategy of engaging pupils in the focus on the learning of English is to get to know the pupils intimately. She feels that her approach worked very successfully because her "buddies" and her consciously set out to challenge the negative stereotypes that resident teachers had made of certain pupils. Her teaching/learning philosophy was influenced by her firm belief in the value and respect of all human beings. These are values learnt from her few positive role models. Her training as a school guidance teacher as a parallel to the SMEC taught her to regard and respect her pupils.

Her student teacher team, which consisted of Guidance and Counselling method students, chose to work with the all male "drop-out" class. The strategy they initially adopted was to get to know the pupils in a very informal exchange of their views of teaching and learning.

This process of adopting a close relationship with the pupils was not favourably regarded by the mentor teachers and school management. She was chastised by the management that her "too friendly" approach was not "professional". This caused her much anxiety because it contradicted her philosophy of teaching/learning.

In the sphere of language teaching/learning she had been engaging in exercises in getting pupils to express themselves creatively in various forms: drama, writing poetry, drawing visuals and posters, constructing collages depicting their lives. The novelty of the approaches like using drama as a technique to critique poetry or writing poetic responses to literary texts was seen as refreshing to the pupils. The writing of personal reflections on lessons taught by the STs allowed pupils more voice and space for critique in the English classroom. The pupils enjoyed making posters, which depicted their linguistic skills as opposed to the routines of writing essays and letters, which was usually the characteristic mode of operation with the mentor teacher.

The pupils were enjoying her interventions and she feels that the mentor teachers disliked intensely that she was successful in getting the "outcast" pupils to be seen as capable of quality classroom work. This set off conflict between the mentor teachers and her.

As a coping strategy she decided to become less obvious in her interactions with the pupils, something she felt was counter to her views. Nevertheless her classrooms were avenues to "operate behind closed doors".

Her future plans are to develop experiences of teaching in a variety of contexts in the international world.

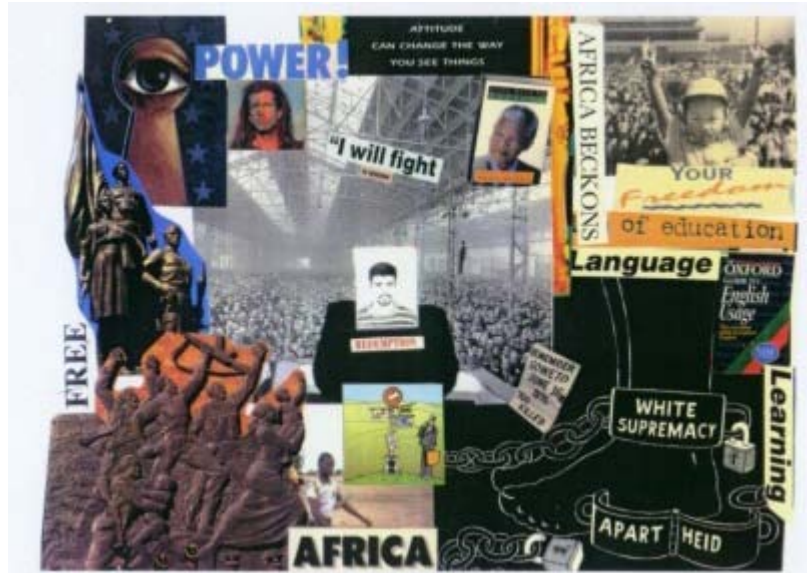


4.4 Kamalan

Primary and Secondary Schooling Experiences

Kamalan also adopted the philosophy of deeply valuing the pupils in the school. He, himself had been a withdrawn pupil who did not identify with the culture of schooling. He saw and interpreted himself as "the average pupil" and therefore did not set himself any high goals within his own schooling experience. He felt that most of the teachers did not truly know him except as the pupil who was a good

athlete. This urged him to be a different kind of teacher.



#38 Collage: (1997) "Kamalan".

Kamalan describes the day in which he achieved his "freedom" at school. The secondary school pupils and teachers had been on strike in solidarity with the caretakers of the school. These caretakers were requesting for a living wage from the Department of Education. A whole week of schooling had been disrupted. During a school assembly which was convened to debate pupils' support in the caretaker strike action, the principal requested a pupil to register his or her views on the issue. It was at this point that Kamalan chose "to come out" of his shell. He gained immense respect from the teachers and fellow pupils for the kinds of comments he made when he took the podium. This event transformed how he performed academically and socially within the school. This experience liberated him. He sees his role as a teacher as assisting introverted pupils to find their voices.

University Experiences

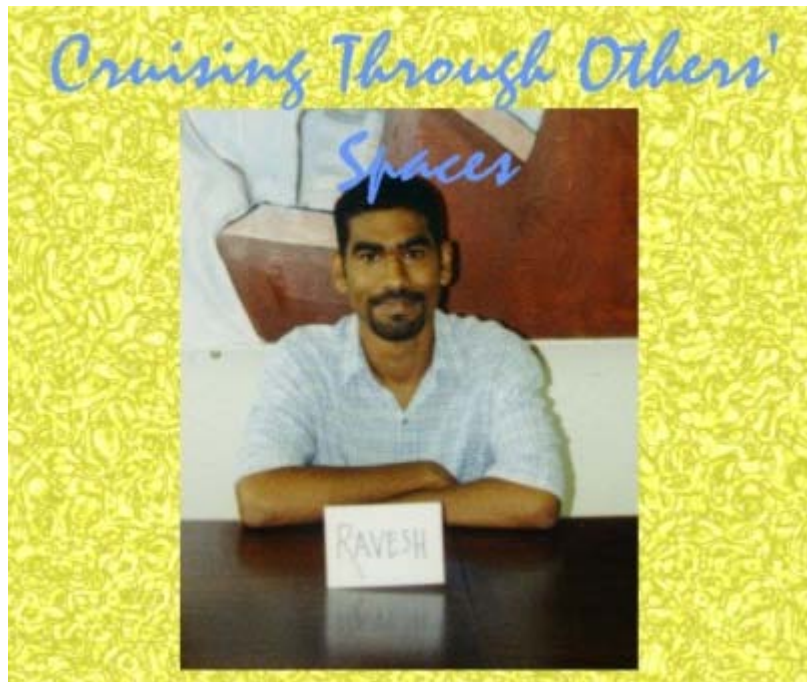
After exposure to the SMEC he feels he would like to address the concerns of second language pupils in a dominantly English first language environment. He acknowledges that he had a very distant relationship with non-first English language learners at school and university. They were in his environment but not within his sphere of concern. The SMEC made him realise his need to address his role as an educator in a multilingual and multiracial South Africa. He comments on the value of being co-erced into working across different language and race groups in the SMEC. Other undergraduate course did not make this kind of "demand".

School-based Teaching Practice Experiences

Kamalan's experiences as a student teacher during SBTP reveal his concern to get to know his pupils deeply. He used the strategy of getting pupils to write daily reflective journals in which he commented. Through this mechanism he was able to realise the problems and concerns of secondary school pupils, both on a personal emotional level and later in terms of their appreciation and understanding of the language teaching interventions he was making with them. The pupils felt particularly drawn to him, and felt that they were able to dialogue with him.

The exercise of working together with a team of student teachers at his school was a positive experience. The team spirit and shared responsibility of all their endeavours were realised in the activities that the student teachers organised including contributions to an event held in the community around environmental awareness. The team had their pupils compose poems, deliver speeches and act out plays that they wrote. This event attracted even the national television reporters. The development of the pupils' language abilities and confidence were regarded as positive learning experiences by both Kamalan and his team mates. A particularly organised team of STs had evolved in this school, despite personality, race, language and gender differences. Student teachers, including Kamalan were offered teaching posts at this school.

An unfortunate downside accompanies Kamalan's involvement in ELTL during teaching practice. Since he was so overly committed to English language teaching and learning, he neglected Special Method Geography, his second major. Eventually, his supervisors for Geography were not prepared to "certify him as a Geography teacher". Kamalan has therefore not "qualified completely" as a teacher.



4.5 Ravesh

Primary and Secondary Schooling Experiences

Ravesh and Kamalan were in the same student teacher team at a secondary school in the Phoenix area. His recollections of his own schooling experiences are so negative that he himself wonders why he chooses to go anywhere near a school again. He feels that his schooling years were the most boring years of his life. He learnt how to bypass the system by simply giving in to the uninspiring demands of his teachers. His secondary school teachers, in particular, never tapped his personal creativity and enthusiasm. His recollections are therefore, of the many school friends that he made.



Above all he "hated school" because of the clearly demarcated status afforded to "The Pupil". Pupils were not regarded as individuals, but were treated as monolithic blocks subject to the expectations of the teachers rather than their own personal goals, ambitions or interests. As a pupil he felt that he was simply being moulded to fit into a patterned stereotype of a "good pupil". He complied but was most dissatisfied with schooling.

Ravesh recalls that being part of the Speech and Drama group at a secondary school had its drawbacks. Speech and Drama pupils were labelled "deviant", the "troublemakers", and the "noisemakers" by virtue of them being more extrovert. Ravesh interprets this as resulting in them being marginalised and located at the far end of the school premises in a small prefabricated building, despite the availability of more conducive facilities in the school for drama work. Teachers always levelled complaints against the "Speech and Drama" pupils.

His decision to become a teacher emanates from a desire to make school a more interesting and challenging experience for the learners. Pupils, he believes learn to switch off once they have sussed out the patterns and routines of their language teachers. (In fact he notes also that this kind of routine is also a characteristic of his university undergraduate years.) He learnt how to bypass the system, providing the teachers/lecturers with what they wanted.

He believes that the SMEC developed in him the confidence to become a teacher of English. The reflective exercises throughout the course are strongly applauded by him as exemplars of novel methodologies of delivering university courses. These methodologies initially made him extremely uncomfortable, especially since he had learnt to "cruise through" his schooling and university life without much direct personal involvement. The SMEC challenged this assumption of "remote control" learning.

He experienced the SMEC as being deliberately designed to foster interaction between different individuals from different linguistic, educational and cultural

backgrounds. Ravesh comments that the many activities of interactive work forced him to become "comfortable with experimenting" with issues that he was not always familiar. Ravesh became quite an articulate member of the SMEC willing to pose and offer challenges..

He also recalls the live-in weekend experience of the SMEC as a valuable learning experience. He was one of the main organisers of this event. What appealed to him most about this weekend was the relaxed approach to learning and teaching that was adopted. Student teachers were engaging with each other on a personal level, something that is often neglected in other university courses. It was also an opportunity to intensively deal with personal misconceptions, concerns and worries about ELTL, outcomes-based education, and school-based teaching practice.

School-based Teaching Practice Experiences

This desire for a more challenging experience of schooling is reflected in the kind of creative activities that the ST team was able to design for their learners. Ravesh was able to work collectively in the team drawing on resources that he was able to gather from his sister who works with an educational NGO. His preference nevertheless, is to work more independently and perhaps only with a few individuals who share his own style of language teaching.

Ravesh also used the reflective approaches with his pupils. For example, the pupils were asked to design collages about their own lives. A class lesson involved the pupils talking about their collages, which he notes, was enthusiastically accepted.

Ravesh is particularly grateful to the mentor teacher for allowing them to experiment with innovative language teaching and learning methods. However, Ravesh defines clearly his ST status in the school during school-based teaching practice. For example, he is fully aware of the potential for alternative arrangements of the furniture to promote different kinds of interaction between pupils; he knows the value of displaying pupils' written work on the class noticeboards; he bemoans the drab physical appearance of the classrooms. Nevertheless, he felt that the classroom space belonged to the mentor teacher and that this was sacred territory, not to be interfered with by student teachers.

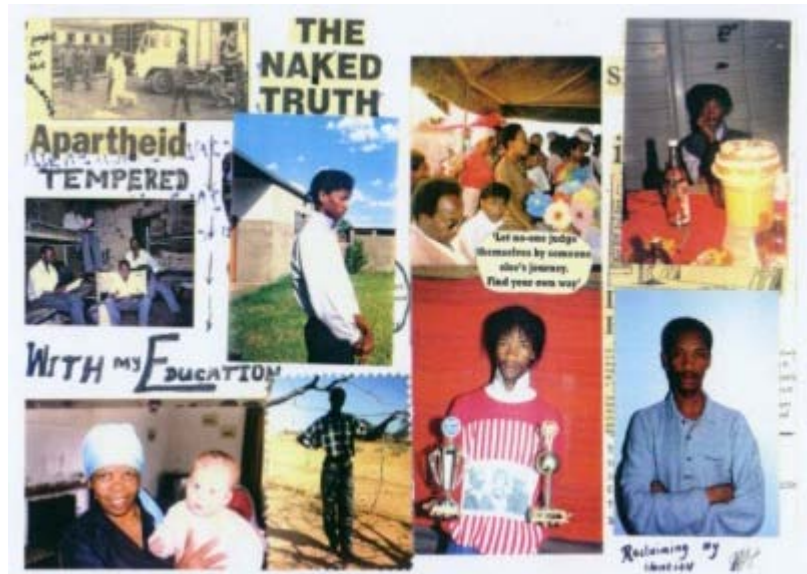
As a qualified teacher he feels he would organise his classroom and be more innovative than he felt he was able to do during school-based teaching practice.



4.6 William

Primary and Secondary Schooling Experiences/ Work Experiences

William surprisingly is hesitant to make it known that he is able to speak seven languages. His own experience of learning English was developed in a rural farming community school in Pietersburg. Tswana and Afrikaans speaking individuals dominate this community and these were the initial languages he mastered. His schooling introduced him to English as the supposed medium of teaching and learning. In reality the teachers often switched between different languages, sometimes Tswana, sometimes Afrikaans in order to develop conceptual understanding. The secondary school classroom was characterised by the following mixture of languages: the textbooks were in English, the teacher used Afrikaans and Tswana to communicate and explain concepts and the assessments were conducted in English. This situation William believes developed his competence in the Afrikaans language. His spoken competence in English was not fully developed.



[Click here for enlarged version of image](#)


#40 Collage: (1997) "William".

He recalls his schooling career as being punctuated with several disruptions especially since he had completed his schooling during the late 1970's and was part of the strong resistance culture that characterised the school environment in the wake of the Soweto Uprising of 1976. Schooling was synonymous with police raids, marches, stone throwing, tear gas and fire.

His own career in school was erratic because of the financial crisis confronting his one-parent family. He values particularly the influence of his mother on his life. He believes that his mother could have been a lot more than the domestic worker she became. Her schoolteachers respected her intelligence, but her family forced her to leave school because of the interest that the male teachers were showing her. Since she was away working he only saw her once a month during his secondary schooling career. In her absence, as the eldest member of the family, his responsibility was to care for the family's survival. This meant that he often had to be absent from school. Schooling was something he looked forward to because it was an opportunity to receive a free school meal. Both his mother and his teachers beat the value of education into him. Corporal punishment was seen as the norm in his schooling days.

He recalls his experiences of schooling as a search for his own identity (perhaps in the absence of a father figure in his life). This is reflected in his changing dress sense, which he

comments as revealing his unsettled identity. He records that learning English was not a problematic experience, although he notes the kind of interference his other languages (Afrikaans and Tswana) had on this process. He became recognised for his skill in being able to narrate stories in different languages. This recognition he notes was best represented in the fact that his schoolteachers requested him to be a master of ceremonies at an important school function. In recalling this incident, William describes how he went against the expectations of the organisers by asking the audience which language they wanted him to speak in. William argues that his



linguistic competence in different languages is "domain specific": he tells jokes best in Pedi, he is able to explain heartfelt concepts and ideas in Tswana, the English language is used to please those who regard it as the voice of the educated, and his Afrikaans is used to communicate amongst the community when there are many speakers of different languages in the audience. He expresses surprise that people regard his English speaking skills as fairly well developed.

He records that his spoken skills were not as developed as his written skills in the English language. Nevertheless, he eventually reached the status of being asked by his teachers to be a pupil teacher: helping deliver lessons to his classmates. He still associates competence in English as largely related to oracy, which he believes he has not fully mastered. Even in being a pupil teacher he was more preoccupied with how he would speak in the class rather than what he would teach his classmates.

After school he worked for several years in a lowly position on the mines. It was here that he developed his repertoire of language usage. He was formally taught Fanagalo as the pidginised means of communication between workers and bosses of different language groups. Whilst he disagrees that Fanagalo should be promoted as a tool for developing multilingualism, he agrees that it was this pidgin which allowed him access into understanding the other different languages of isiZulu and isiXhosa, Northern and Southern Sotho. He reasons that the demarcations between these language groups are less wide than most speakers would admit.

It is most surprising that with his wide linguistic repertoire, William still underestimates his competence at being a future language teacher. He feels that his knowledge and skill in using English is "not that good". He learnt English in a formal structuralist way during his school years, in comparison to learning his other languages more through the interaction with other speakers of the language during his working days on the mines. His use of Afrikaans he posits, is better than his English usage because he learnt it in daily interaction in the Pietersburg community.

University experiences

He recalls that his university life was preoccupied with issues concerning how he would finance his education. His family could not offer much assistance. His first years were financed from the money he had saved from working on the mines, but this soon ran out. Eventually, he was able to secure financial aid from the university. He always foregrounds the fact that he is not a first language speaker of the English language and therefore is dubious of his ability to be a teacher of the English language, especially in the context of pupils who would be first language speakers of English.

His colleagues at university were critical of the version of languages that he spoke. Since he was able to command several languages, he was able to switch between them quite fluently. This meant that his speech was usually characterised by borrowings from different languages. He recalls that his isiZulu-speaking colleagues were particularly dismissive of the "Gauteng

version" of isiZulu that he spoke. Nevertheless, he used his linguistic repertoire to communicate with a wide range of different African language speakers on campus.

His colleagues perhaps provided negative impressions of his "unpure versions" of languages. William has not (even at the end of the course) been able to shrug off this negative appraisal of his linguistic competence.

William believes that speakers of second languages tend to be hesitant to experiment with the process of speaking the target language for fear of being ridiculed by first language speakers. He draws from his own experiences of language acquisition when he suggests that a good language learner should develop a keen listening skill, which is accompanied by the willingness to experiment with producing the language. The environment within which such experimentation occurs is particularly important. The teacher of languages should create the necessary climate in his/her classroom within which the pupils feel confident to experiment with using the target language even if it is spoken with a strong mothertongue dialectal accent. These are the important lessons that William

records he has learnt from the SMEC.

He praises the lecturers for allowing him to develop the confidence to share his life experiences with the rest of the class in an oral "who am I? " interview panel. This created some degree of confidence about his own life experiences. He felt that this exercise showed that the lecturers regarded him as a valuable person. His personal confessed low self-esteem is a major obstacle to his development as a teacher, and this exercise provided some assistance.

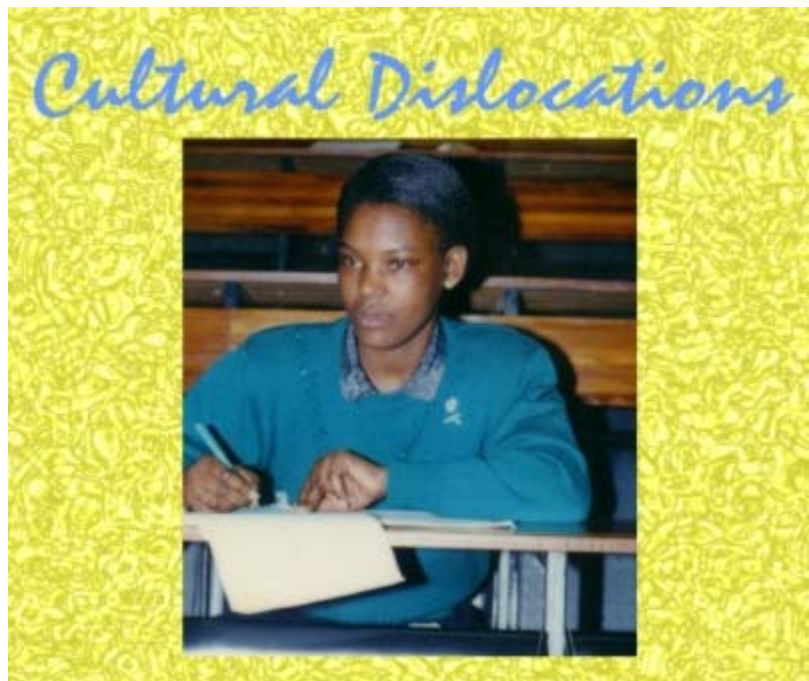
His own prior expectations of the SMEC was that it was going to provide him with detailed grammatical competence in English. He was surprised but strengthened by the debates around the differences between "Language Acquisition" (sub-conscious language development) and "Language Learning" (overt conscious teaching of language structures). This is his interpretation of the value of the module on second language teaching and learning.

School-based Teaching Practice Experiences

His school-based teaching experiences are not positive. He was placed in the context of a multi-racial school for children with physical disabilities. This placement was to accommodate his second Method subject, Biblical Studies, which is fast disappearing off the curriculum offerings at most schools.

William recalls the strong control over the kind of work that his White mentor teacher exerted. She felt that his lesson designs over-estimated the ability level of the pupils. Without the support of a buddy student team at this school, William felt incapacitated to challenge her authority and control over the management of his classes. He often found that he had to redesign lessons for his English classes at school on the morning of the lesson. This was because the mentor teacher disapproved of the original designs. Eventually, he resorted to merely following the pattern that the mentor teacher prescribed to him.

His future plans is to work with adults in industry (to assist them develop English language competence). This he sees as being in addition to a full time teaching post at a school.

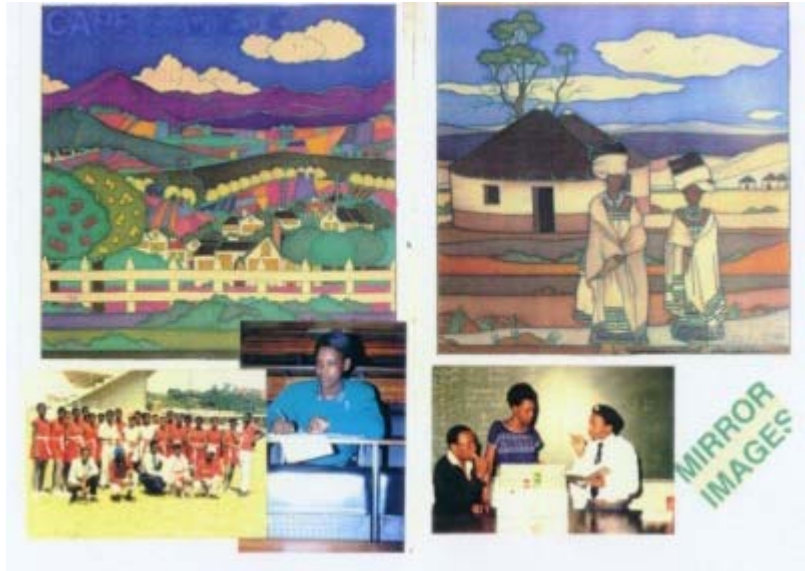


4.7 Thembi

Primary and Secondary Schooling Experiences

Thembi is a first language speaker of English. Her father is Mozambican Portuguese-speaking and her mother is a South African isiZulu speaker. Her family adopted English as the language of their home and they chose to live as

"Coloureds" in a Coloured residential area in Durban. When she tried to gain admission to the Coloured primary school in the area, the school authorities turned down their application for admission because she was officially classified as an "African" person. Her family then sent her off to her rural maternal grandmother in Richmond. This is where she began school not knowing how to speak isiZulu at all. IsiZulu was the lingua franca of the area and Thembi was immediately alienated by her peers for her inability to communicate with them. She recalls those early years of primary schooling as being extremely traumatic: her ailing grandmother expected her to perform the duties of a rural African girl, like fetching water from the river, collecting firewood- all of which were alien experiences to the six year old child who had grown up in an urban area. Her peers were extremely taunting in the kinds of pejorative nicknames used to label her. These nicknames related specifically to her parentage and her inability to speak isiZulu.



[Click here for enlarged version of image](#)

#40 Collage: (1997) "Thembi".


In school, on the other hand, the teachers valued her because of her superior command of the English language in comparison to the other isiZulu first language speakers. She was immediately placed in Grade Two on entry, something she as a child did not understand, but which became part of the negative image that her schoolmates had about her privileged status. Her school experiences became characterised by her withdrawing from her peers who did not accept her. Her own skills in using isiZulu improved over time, but her peers always regarded her as an outsider.

When her maternal grandmother died, she was sent to an urban township school. Coming from a rural area, she now felt alienated by her urban school peers. Nevertheless she befriended a group of pupils who had escaped the political turmoil in Soweto schools in the Transvaal. Their collective alienation from the Umlazi community was their common experience.

Thembi succeeded as a pupil because she believes that her withdrawal allowed her to focus on her studies. She eventually gained some respect being a drum majorette leader of the school squad. Her tall stature and poise was what became valued.

University Experiences

She describes her growing up experiences as being characterised by "cultural dislocation": constantly being "the other" in relation to each of the contexts she found herself. This she believes continued into her university experiences where she was unable to secure long term friendships with any of the students. The Indian students would not accept her because she believes that they regarded her as African; the African students felt that she set herself apart from them because she thought that she was not African.



For her the ability to speak English competently was a major obstacle in her development as an individual.

To this day she believes in working independently. She describes the pain she has learnt to live with in not being able to secure close friends in many contexts because of the way in which individuals react to her. The strategy she has resorted to is to rely strongly on her own individual personal resources. She finds that working in groups highly stressful because she is always herself aware of the difficulties she is likely to experience in being able "to fit into the group". Her personal identity is usually exposed in the context of working in small groups. The group members soon realise that she does not necessarily share the kind of value systems, language expertise or cultural capital usually assumed from a person who "looks like the way she does".

Her critique of the SMEC takes on an unusually academic tone, providing detailed and pertinent commentary on the merits of the language teaching and learning approaches, techniques and methodologies being debated in the lecture room. Her analysis of the course reads like a traditional theoretical academic debate, quite unlike any of the other more personalised reflections on the value of the course yielded by the other student teachers. This is an example of the kind of world that Thembi retreats into to escape dealing with the personal interactive relationship with colleagues. It is a strategy that she herself openly admits to as her escape world from the "Cultural dislocation" she experiences.

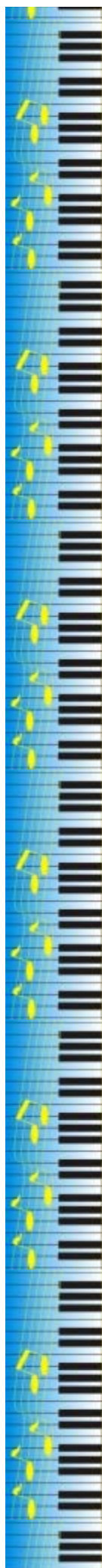
School-based Teaching Practice Experiences

Thembi, therefore, found the experience of working together in a student team during SBTP as being frustrating. She believes that her team mates, especially the females, did not share her cultural assumptions, values and goals about SBTP generally, and about English language teaching and learning specifically. She notes the lack of commitment of her "buddies" to the tasks of developing pupils' competences in the English language. She comments that the female student teacher "buddies" were content to unproblematically finding the easiest way out: designing lessons that involved the least amount of preparation, designing lessons which flagrantly countered the debates about developing pupils' second language competence. Her buddies were content simply to imitate the structuralist grammar approaches to teaching English. She is negative about especially her female colleagues' posturing attitudes adopted during teaching practice. To her it seemed as if the female student teachers teaching in the African township school were more interested in displaying their physical appearance than on the quality of teaching they were developing for their pupils. Thembi's own interest in developing pupils' communicative competence in English, she believes, was interpreted by her buddies, as her "showing off" to the university lecturers.

These above critiques of her "buddies" are partly an expression of the kind of "cultural dislocation" she feels from the African township school culture of the particular school at which she conducted her teaching practicum. Her own township school experiences as a school pupil had been forged in another school context with a lot more commitment and dedication to teaching and learning.

Both her female colleagues were members of the same community of KwaMashu and understood the kind of culture at this particular teaching practicum school and they therefore were not prepared to alter it. However, Thembi chooses to read their failure to engage as a lack of commitment.

She is also extremely critical of the teachers generally in this township school. She is appalled by their lack of commitment to their careers. She notes this in her reflection of their flippant attitude towards punctuality, not reporting to their classrooms during scheduled lessons, their disregard for the management of the school, their absenteeism, their willingness to terminate the school timetable on the flimsiest of excuses. She is particularly damning of the lack of interest of the mentor teacher to whom she was attached. The mentor teacher simply saw the arrival of the STs as the start of "another form of paid holiday". This was particularly uninspiring for Thembi especially when she directly requested assistance and was not given any.



Thembi was also surprised that teachers exerted dictatorial powers over the pupils. This was revealed when she had to come to the defence of the dismissal of a male pupil who was guilty of physically slapping a fellow female pupil. Unquestioningly, the teachers were prepared to strike the pupil offending pupil off the school register. Thembi felt that this was not acknowledging the pupil's regret at his actions. When she ordered the pupil back to the class, she immediately set up another form of "dislocation" between the staff and herself.

Thembi also reflects on the humiliating experiences that teachers made their pupils endure at this school. She recalls the incident of the teachers making a girl read out to the staffroom a love letter she had written to a male pupil. The teachers seemed to take this as amusement or a form of disciplining. Thembi wishes to distance herself from such unprofessional staff behaviour.

Looking back at the SMEC from the classroom perspective, Thembi comments that the course should not have been divided into separate modules which necessitated that student teachers make choices between the modules offered at any one point in time. She felt that her lessons on developing reading skills were hampered by her not having attended the module on "Developing Reading Skills". She argued that all the modules were necessary in the SMEC and that it was not possible to compensate for non-attendance through the provision of the written course material. She recognises the length of the SMEC programme does not allow for all the modules to be taken by all the students. Therefore, she recommends that the SMEC should begin at a much earlier level in the undergraduate years, so that these modules could be spread over the four-year degree programme.

Section Five: Synthesis of Emerging Issues from the Cross-case Studies

In Section Three of this chapter I presented a synthesis of the emerging issues arising from the narrative and discourse analysis of the two main case studies. In this Section I present a synthesis of the emerging issues arising from the analysis of the seven case study student teachers. These two sections (Section Three and Five) form the foundation upon which the conclusions of this study will be made in the next chapter.

The text of this section will be presented in the form of a table depicting in the first column the emerging issues, and in the second column references to particular exemplars from the data highlighting the issues being discussed. I have placed, in brackets, convergences and divergences made from the two main case studies and the auxiliary seven case studies.

From the seven case studies the following general research findings about language learning and teaching emerge; the particular life experiences of the student teachers captured in the data supporting these findings are presented alongside:

[Click here for details of Research Findings and Supporting Data](#)

Summary of Chapter Four: Words, Lives and Music

This chapter served as the demonstration of the musical talents of the student teachers who yielded the rich data that is captured here. It was not in their ability to play any musical instruments that the student teachers were able to render this musical performance. It was through the opening up of their lives to the researcher that we heard the strains of melodies, harmonies and counter-harmonies that emanate.

This chapter captured some of the degree of musical complexity of the process of becoming teachers within the changing context of post-apartheid South Africa. We heard in this chapter the sounds of struggle, of pain and triumph as the student



teachers experienced ELTL over the different periods of their lives. We heard the detailed stories of two student teachers' developmental career path from their rural and financially-strapped home environments, about their struggles to develop English language competence in the schooling context where the teachers had, in the student teachers' opinion, limited abilities in language teaching. The students concluded that they would definitely choose to distance themselves from the methodologies that their own teachers had presented to them during their schooling career. The student teachers celebrated the awakening to the music of alternative conceptions of ELTL. However, they suggested that Special Method English Course, was "too much, too late" in their careers as teachers.

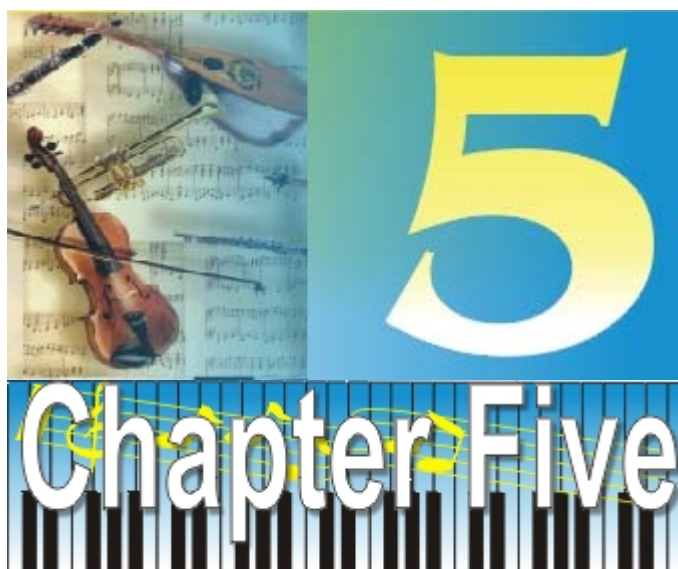
Together with a cross case analysis of seven auxiliary case studies, this chapter, focused on the emerging issues about ELTL. It provided an insight into the way in which the English language is being taught and learnt in school and the teacher education institution. It foregrounded also, how STs developed their thinking about the process of teaching the English language. It provided insight into the competing forces of influence over student teachers' formative experiences of ELTL. Student teachers are critical of the continuation of poor teaching strategies within the schools, especially, in realising the goals of promoting multilingualism amongst first and second language speakers of the English language in the post-apartheid South Africa.

The chapter also foregrounded the process of analysing the data that is produced in the form of language. The words rendered in the data collection were analysed in detail as a product of the social discourse which produced them. This form of data analysis is a underexplored strategy of teacher education research in South Africa, and this chapter therefore provides insight into the data analysis strategies for researching teacher thinking.

The chapter concluded with providing the baseline of emerging issues that constitute the findings of this study. These issues are further analysed in the next chapter, which organises them into emerging constructs learnt from this research study. These constructs form the foundation for the presentation of a theoretical model for understanding lives in transitional times as well as positing a model for teacher development in the context of a rapidly changing society. These last deliberations are the subject of the next chapter.

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• Orientation to Chapter Five

After the performance of a musical concert, the general public is usually provided with a critique of the rendition. The role of the critic is firstly, to inform those who had not attended the concert about the nature of the concert itself: who performed the concert, what did they perform, when was it performed, will it be performed again. This assists the readers to gauge whether they would consider attending another performance rendered by the particular musicians. Secondly, the critic's role is to provide a critique of the main features of the musical experience. In doing so, the following issues are usually reviewed: the choice and selection of the musical pieces rendered, the artistic delivery of the musicians, the strengths and weaknesses of particular players/sections of the orchestra, the conductor's execution of his/her task, the overall contribution that this performance makes to the artistic community, and the wider society, and an overall commentary of the musical performance.

This chapter functions as the musical review of the performance of the dissertation: an overall commentary, synthesis and critique of the data collected, a discussion of the key constructs emerging from the research study, an attempt to review the role of the conductor of the research (a self reflective analysis in this case), and the presentation of possible theoretical implications for wider consideration. It signals how this research performance could influence future performances.

This final chapter is divided into four sections.


The first section presents an overall review of the emerging constructs that have arisen in the research as a whole. This section is organised into four subsections in relation to the following major interests:

- the *methodological interests* which examine the process of data collection and analysis. This sub-section presents views about how the research process can be conceptualised as a dialogical process. The act of constructing, collecting and analysing data is seen as a process of raising the voices of many authors. The development of critical discursive spaces within which research can be conducted is also examined;
- the *theoretical interests* are presented as a contribution of new or reworked constructs that have surfaced during this dissertation. I continue the construct of "Dialogue" as a metaphor for understanding teacher development. This sub-section deals with the various complementary, complex and contradictory forces, which compete for influence over the student teachers' identities, especially in the context of unstable and transforming social contexts;
- the *contextual interests* sub-section deals with the construct "biographical suicide" which attempts to understand why student teachers deliberately chose to reject their own biographical experiences of teaching and learning gleaned during their formative years. Nevertheless, student teachers contradict their professed "biographical suicide" when they tend to fall back on their historical lived experiences of ELTL to sustain them during their early stages of teaching; and
- the *practical interest's* sub-section deals with the use of lifehistory as a pedagogical tool and the need for (student) teachers to develop a personal working theory, which marks them as professional educators.

In Section Two, I present the main thesis of this dissertation.

Section Three, deals with the implications of this thesis on three levels:

- The *first level* works towards the development of a theory for understanding lives in transitional times. In this section I posit the concept of "The Multicultural Self" to understand the process of identity formation in the



context of a rapidly changing social context.

- The *second level* of analysis focuses more closely on the process of teacher development. I present here the reworked model of student teacher development first discussed at the end of Chapter Two focussing on the development of student teachers in the context of rapidly changing societies. The original model (Chapter Two: Section Three) is revised in the light of the data analysis and findings of this research study. I choose to label this model "The Force Field Model for Understanding Student Teacher Development in Rapidly Changing Societies". In this section I suggest what are the implications of this dissertation for the way in which teacher education curriculum designers, policy makers, teacher education practitioners and teachers in schools can contribute towards raising the quality of teacher development.
- The *third level* focuses on what avenues of research have been opened up via this study. I present some of the possible future research topics that need to be explored in the area of teacher thinking, teacher development and policy development in relation to English language teaching and learning in the context of a multilingual society.

This chapter closes by focussing on what this dissertation does not accomplish. Its limitations are debated in [Section Four](#). The closing comments of the dissertation are also presented in this section.

Section One: Emerging and Recurrent Constructs arising from the Study: Recurring Motifs

A musical motif is regarded as a strain of music that re-appears several times during the artistic piece. Its function is to develop cohesiveness between the different components of a large composition. The motif might be varied in length, pace, rhythm or key, but signals the same musical strain. In this section, I summarise the recurring constructs that have featured in this dissertation. Some of these constructs are elaborations of earlier research, whilst others are my own creative labelings and descriptions. The aim of presenting these emerging constructs is to assemble the building blocks of this thesis, which posits a theory for understanding lives in transitional times.

These constructs may be assembled into four main categories of interest:

- Methodological interests
- Theoretical interests
- Contextual interests
- Practical interests

1.1 Methodological Interests

In this section I posit two constructs that have arisen out of the process of the instrument design, data collection and analysis:

1. Data Collection as a Dialogical Process with Multiple Authors, and
2. Creating Critical Discursive Spaces.

The first construct arises out of the need to recognise data collection as a process of negotiating social discourse which are embedded in interpersonal relationships between the researcher and the "research subjects".

The second describes the kind of optimal conditions necessary to provide a discursive space between the researcher and the "research subjects" so that the data yielded provides rich insight into the (student) teachers' thinking.



1.1.1 Data Collection as a Dialogical Process with Multiple Authors

Conducting research into teacher thinking has been described as attempting to look into the invisible. One is attempting in this kind of research to access thoughts which have no physical representation per se (except in the kind of neurological representation of electrical impulses on the brain). Therefore, the data that the researcher has available can only be inferred via what the teacher says are his/her thoughts. This means that the data we have available is captured in language (spoken or written) which offers indirect access to the teachers' thoughts.

Hargreaves (1977) argues that language data are never created in a vacuum. It may be argued that language data is always constrained by the act of the process of communication. Whenever language is created, the "author" has in mind a particular audience, context and purpose. Viewed in this context, the act of creating language is always in relation to the process of establishing or extending a "Dialogue". Language is always created in conversation with its receivers, the setting within which it will be received and the function it intends to achieve. (This is equally true whether the "audience" is a one face-to-face interlocutor, a hall full of listeners, or the author dialoguing with him or herself.) The act of creating language is thus always a social act, attempting to establish relationships between interlocutors. (Of course, the author might choose to flagrantly disregard the dictates of the Dialogue norms, but his/her language actions are still seen against the conventions of what the normative dialogue within certain social and cultural settings are.)

Data collection into teacher thinking is a process of establishing the Dialogue between the researcher and the subject. The data revealed during this process would capture also the social nature of their relationship. The data produced will reveal how subjects choose to establish that dialogue, what degree of consistency, coherence and integration of their thoughts they wish to offer in the dialogue.


The data collection process also reveals to what extent the "author" (the student teacher) chooses to stray from the normative conventions of the dialogue process. The purpose of the researcher during this process is to allow maximum representation of the authorship of the language data asserted by the research subject (i.e. the teacher).

This, of course, does not mean that when analysing the data the researcher assumes that what was said reflects precisely the teacher's thinking. Bakhtin (1981) suggests that the researcher must be aware of his/her presence in the act of creating the language data. No language text (data of the research) has singular authorship. Data for accessing teacher thinking is established through a dialogical process and simultaneously has multiple authors: these include the research subject and the researcher. The data yielded in researching teacher thinking is a combination of the different tongues, and voices of varied authors.

In this research study, I have indicated the elaborate means which I chose to elevate the "voice"/ "authorship" of the STs. The data into student teachers' thinking reflected their own experiences of ELTL over different periods of their lives. The deliberate mechanisms for foregrounding their authorship of the dialogue during the data collection is presented in Chapter Three: Section Three: Accessing Teacher Thinking through Language Data: Hearing and Listening to the music". In brief, the research methodology adopted in this study foregrounded the reflective practice of STs through varied means of representation:

- student teachers' reflective writing,
- oral interviews,
- construction of visual artistic texts,
- commentary on classroom performance, and
- individual and group interviews.

Throughout the data collection process, different linguistic and performative skills of the authors of the data were foregrounded. These included expressions in the:

- 
- verbal and written language mode, and
 - creative artistic visual representations.

The distance/space between the authors and the researcher was creatively altered in each of these different data collection strategies. This was intended to allow the student teacher maximum authorship of the data.

The variety of means of cognitive representation (written and oral language, artistic expression) is further interrogated via an analysis of the linguistic presentation captured in the data. Freeman's (1996) discourse analysis strategies provided a tool for the qualitative analysis of the dialogical data collection process (described in Chapter Three), which also elucidates a detailed distinction between representational and presentational analysis.

1.1.2 Creating Critical Discursive Spaces

In order to yield rich and deep data, the data collection process adopted in this research study had to provide a context within which the STs were comfortable with the act of authorship. The underlying philosophy of the teacher development programme, used in this study, was to create a climate where student teachers would more openly display their individual values, beliefs, ideals, and reflections of their experiences.

The aim of the teacher development programme was to allow STs to develop their personal interpretations of what ELTL entailed. Thus the course leaders created spaces for the STs' exposure to a variety of debates around both theoretical and practical views regarding ELTL in a multilingual post-apartheid South Africa.

Nevertheless, the student teachers were not obliged to completely agree with the presentations made by the course leaders themselves. This, of course, is an ideal towards which we strove. The reality is that the course leaders assert (unconsciously or not) a power differential over the STs because of their status of being a "university teacher": usually associated with superior insight and extended experience. Student teachers are consequently, more likely to adopt the teacher educator's authority over interpretations of ELTL.

As a teacher educator and educational researcher, I was therefore, consciously aware of creating the necessary critical discursive spaces wherein STs would be able to develop firstly, the skills of reflective practice, and secondly, the power to articulate their personal interpretations of ELTL. For me, the value of the lived-in weekend workshop, allowed STs the maximum opportunity to challenge my "inherited authority", and get to know me as an individual with many dimensions: personal, social and academic. The value of this kind of "knowing" was useful for developing the creative, critical dialogue between myself as researcher, and the STs as researched subjects. The data yielded during this research study, especially during the SBTP, is particularly as a consequence of consciously creating the critical discursive spaces for a free exchange of ideas and criticisms. Many university teacher educators are not necessarily prepared to encourage this kind of academic, social and personal interaction.

1.2 Theoretical Interests

In this section, I posit two constructs that have emerged as theoretical issues related to the development of teachers within the context of a rapidly changing society:

1.2.1

Teacher Development as Dialogical Tension between:

Inertial Forces

Programmatic Forces

Contextual Forces

Teacher Development in Unstable Contexts:

Patterns of Intersecting Individual and Institutional Biographies

The first construct attempts to describe the process of teacher development as involving the STs negotiating a field of complex, complementary and contradictory forces of influences. These influences comprise:

- inertial forces: the forces that tend to draw student teachers back to their rich biographical experiences of teaching and learning the English language;
- programmatic forces: the forces of influence of the teacher preparation programme; and
- contextual forces: the specific characteristic forces of the school contexts within which they operate during the school-based teaching practicum.

The second construct attempts to describe a recurring feature throughout the dissertation, looking at student teachers' development as characterised by the process of reacting to the rapidly changing socio-political environment. This context presents STs with various forces of influence from the apartheid past of South Africa and the ideological present policy euphoria of the new democratic South Africa. These forces are mediated via particular individuals who compete to gain influence over the student teachers. The institution of the teacher preparation and the school site do not necessarily cohere. Teacher development is therefore, described as a process of negotiation between the focus of individual and institutional biographies each embedded with nuanced cultural heritages.


1.2.1 Teacher Development as Dialogical Tension

The data analysis revealed one important conclusion: the research context of developing STs in post-apartheid South Africa is characterised by the rich intersection of several layers of complexity, complementarity and contradiction. The STs are immersed into this complex intersection, especially when they enter into the practical contexts of the school environments during SBTP.

This, does not however, mean that the influence of the pre-practicum experiences do not follow them into the school context. Student teachers' successes (or not) as novice teachers lie in their ability to take charge of these competing influences in their development as teachers of the English language.

The analogy that best describes this research context is that of a force field. The ST is simultaneously, being pulled or pushed by the power of particular forces which exert themselves on the developing student teacher. These forces are similar to the kind of competing tensions facing teacher identity in post-apartheid South Africa (See Chapter Two: Section One: The First Movement). For a detailed graphic representation, see Figure 7. This figure represents the forces being exerted by and on practising teachers within the school system in relation to the emergence of new educational policy initiatives of the post-apartheid educational system. In this section I wish to elaborate on the model for analysing student teacher development in a rapidly changing educational context which was presented at the end of Chapter Two.

Firstly, the conception of a "force" needs to be explored. It is perhaps erroneous to regard the STs merely as being at the mercy of the forces, which exist externally. This would slide into seeing the students as passive recipients of the system. I believe that this research study shows that the STs emerge into this complex force field with a large amount of "inertial forces". These inertial forces arise from the rich biographical experiences they have inherited from past schooling and learning environments. These inertial forces, or "the apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie: 1975), could remain dormant and un-activated, especially when the pre-service



teacher preparation programme does not acknowledge the heritages of their students. When a teacher development programme celebrates the biographical heritages that student teachers bring to the teacher preparation course, then STs are more likely to draw on their past experiences (whether to affirm or reject parts of its philosophical, ideological, educational values, beliefs and practices). When a teacher education course does not do so, it runs the risk of STs seeing the "new" educational values, beliefs and practices of the teacher preparation programme, as existing external to their own experiences. Thus, they are unlikely to make it part of their action frames as future teachers. In the latter case, what usually happens, is that student teachers resort uncritically to teaching the way they were taught.

What are the competing forces that exert influence in the force field of teacher development?

This research study suggests that the following competing forces influence the identity and role formation of the STs during their teacher preparation programme:

Inertial forces:

1.

The forces of the student teacher's past personal biographical experiences of learning and teaching ("Biographical forces")

2.

The forces of the student's personal/ religious/ideological/cultural philosophy of teaching and learning ("Cultural forces")

3.

The forces of the student teacher's gender identity and projection of that identity ("Gender forces")

4.

The forces of the student teacher's racial identity and the projection of that identity in relation to other/same race group/s ("Racial forces")

5.

The forces of the student teacher's class identity and projection of that identity ("Class forces")

6.

The forces of the student teacher's language status i.e. as a first or second language English speaker ("Linguistic forces")

Programmatic forces:

7.

The forces are exerted from within the teacher preparation programme in the form of propositional knowledge that is presented ("Propositional forces").


8.

The forces exerted via the influence of the biography of the teacher educator/s on the student teacher's identity ("Educator forces")

9.

The forces of other student teachers' biographical influences ("Collegial forces")

10.



The forces exerted as a consequence of the experiences generated during the teacher preparation course ("Experiential forces")

Contextual forces:

11.

The forces exerted via the culture of learning / teaching within the school context. The stability or fluidity of this cultural context is particularly pertinent. ("School forces")

12.

The forces exerted from the school managers, mentor teachers' in relation to practical teaching action within the classroom ("Forces of classroom practice")

13.

The forces of personal biographies of the pupils of the school context in relation to their expectations of teaching and learning ("Pupil forces")

14.

The forces exerted as a consequences of classroom experiences gained during the teaching practice practicum ("Practice forces")

15.


The forces exerted by the nature of supervision and assessment patterns of the mentor teachers and the teacher education supervisors ("Supervision forces").

I have listed above the range of forces that were particularly foregrounded during my research study. The aim of presenting such a list is not to suggest that this is an exhaustive categorisation of forces exerting influence on the student teacher's identity during the process of becoming a teacher. Instead, the purpose is to foreground the "messiness" of the process of influence on student teacher's developing identities. The list is intended to reflect the many levels of influence on the teacher's developing identity.

Many of the forces that are listed may be complementary for any one particular individual student teacher i.e. there is a degree of congruence between the different exerting forces- "they pull/ push in the same direction". For example, if student teachers' own perceptions of their gender identity and role coincides with that of their

university supervisor and mentor teacher (forces number 3, 7 and 12), then it likely that the STs will experience a degree of compatibility and coherence in formulating an identity within the context of a particular school environment. If this coherence between these different forces does not exist, STs are likely to adopt particular borrowed perspectives and identities. These adopted perspectives may not necessarily be congruent with what the STs believe or value personally. It is therefore, plausible that alternations between various professed views about teaching and learning might surface in relation to specific contextual demands as perceived by STs. For example, STs might attempt to fashion their actions in order to satisfy the perceived expectations/wishes of the teacher educator/assessor, or mentor teacher. This might be to secure a cordial relationship or a favourable assessment. Hence, a clear distinction might arise between what student teachers profess (say), practice (do) and ponder (believe).

Teacher development therefore, occurs as a result of several intersecting/interacting forces. It occurs within a necessarily complex context (force field) of competing influences which do not necessarily pull together in the same direction. The inertial, programmatic, and contextual forces may not necessarily neatly complement each other. The STs develop a sense of their identities



and roles as teachers in relation to all these competing forces of influence. It is through establishing a continual and critical dialogue with all of these forces that STs develop a sense of what kind of teacher they wish to become, what kind of actions and behaviours they wish to demonstrate as professionals, how they would like to describe their identities and roles as teachers. Teacher development is thus a process of managing these dialogical tensions between each of the different forces of influence.

1.2.2 Teacher Development in Unstable Contexts: Patterns of Intersecting Individual and Institutional Biographies

In relatively stable contexts, it is more likely that the student teacher will find that the contiguous forces of influence bear a semblance of greater congruence. For example, in a relatively stable context there is likely to be a greater degree of compatibility between the beliefs of individuals within the teacher preparation programme and the school contexts regarding the goals, ideology or approaches to be adopted when teaching and learning English. The STs are thus likely to experience greater congruence in their transition from the world of the teacher education institution to the learning/teaching site. Such STs teachers are likely to experience a greater degree of relevance of their teacher preparation programme in relation to their practicum teaching sites.

A stable context might be described as a system in which the ideological, philosophical and practical worldview has been largely agreed upon. It is usually found in contexts in which the economic, social and political order is built on agreed certainties and predictions.

The post-apartheid South African society is characterised by transitional instability. The political transformation of a new democratically elected State, the cultural worldviews of the past, present and future are all being seriously contested. The old and the new exist alongside each other. Increasingly new ideologies, policies and practices attempt to exert their demands for a reconstructed society. The lack of stability is also represented in the social, cultural and economic world.

In post-apartheid society, the cultural world of the teacher education institutions and the world of the school has become caught in a process of competing dialogical tensions. This point gains credence in the light of the following recent developments:

The School Context:

The school context has been characterised by forces of change exerted from both the wider macro-environment and the internal micro-environment:

- the school contexts have to contend with the exigencies of educational policy, which seek to rationalise (euphemism for "cut back on") the number of teachers employed (Singh: 1997);
- school environments are characterised by a new legislation regarding its governance (DNE: The South African Schools Act: 1996);
- a new school curriculum (Curriculum 2005) is being introduced (Department of Education : 1997a +b);
- in some school contexts, there is a rapid change in the linguistic composition of their pupil population. Many of the teachers have not been sufficiently prepared to

handle teaching and learning in a multilingual school landscape (Msimango and Samuel: 1997).

- schoolteachers have to deal with the changing cultural influences of urbanised youth, gangsterism, drugs, and sexual abuse. All of these forces exert influence on the schoolteacher.

The Teacher Education Institution (e.g. the university Faculty of Education):

The university teacher preparation system contends with its own litany of



internal and external forces. These include inter alia:

- the reduced ability to attract pre-service teachers in the light of media publicity of scaling down of the present teaching force in schools;
- the growing tendency for Faculties of Education to promote post-graduate research into education rather than under-graduate pre-service preparation;
- the exigencies of teacher education policies promoting the development of educational practitioners to service multi-level educational and training needs within the society (Department of Education : 1997c);
- the recognition that graduating teachers seek employment in teaching sites beyond just formal schools (Jaff, Rice and Hofmeyer: 1994; Ramrathan: 1997);
- the recognition that graduating teachers do not necessarily teach the specific subject specialisation and at the level for which they had qualified (Ramrathan: 1997)
- the exposure of faculty staff to different modes of teacher preparation as a result of engagement with international partners around teacher development (Samuel: 1998b).

These are examples of the kind of forces that begin to assert themselves as university faculties of education choose to construct their own identity and role in the post-apartheid South Africa.

For a discussion of these above competing forces impacting on teacher preparation curriculum design, see Ramrathan's et al.: 1998 deliberations on the introduction of a new Bachelor of General Education and Training (BAGET) Degree at UDW.

In relation to the development of STs, it should be noted that the majority of schoolteachers within the current as school system receive their pre-service training at teacher education colleges. A strong possibility exists for the ideological, belief and value system of college-trained mentor teachers to be incongruent with the pre-service university ST. (This is affirmed by the data generated by the case study students.)

The teacher education institution world may also be characterised by values, ideals and beliefs that are not necessarily in congruence with the practical world of the school. Many university lecturers may also suffer from having very little experience of teaching within a school context. Certainly most university faculty would not have had the personal experiences of teaching in the present climate of change within the school system.

These above descriptions may tend to stereotype both the school and the university (teacher preparation) institutions. It must be recognised within each of these different contexts that the possibility exists for there to be exceptions to the rule.

Both the school and university sectors thus, exert their own institutional history/culture on the student teacher. The student teacher thus has to hold these contiguous forces of influence in creative tension. STs develop their individual identity as novice teachers in creative dialogue and tension with all these complementary, contradictory and challenging forces. Teacher development occurs in relation to the various intersecting individual biographies of the personnel, as well as the institutional biographies of the school and the teacher education institution. Both these individual and institutional biographies are themselves products and agents of the wider socio-cultural context within which they find themselves.

1.3 Contextual Interests

Biographical Suicide



I have thus far indicated the emerging methodological and theoretical constructs that have recurred in this study. I now highlight contextual constructs that seem to characterise the data as it pertains to the specific context of this research study.

I offer these as insights into the nature of novice student teachers' development in my particular research context so that other researchers may judge how "dependable" (Guba and Lincoln: 1982) these conclusions are in the specific context within which the data was gathered. I have described these constructs in detail so that readers may decide upon the degree of "transferability" (ibid.) to other research contexts.

A recurring pattern exists amongst the data collected in this research study which I have chosen to label as "biographical suicide".

In the data collection process student teachers repeatedly reflected negatively on their own experiences of learning English during their primary and secondary schooling. They recalled their schooling experiences as dull, uninspiring, routinised, unproductive and above all unsuccessful in stimulating the development of their English language competence. STs hinted that these poor experiences of schooling might have been a deliberate apartheid manoeuvre. Up to the stage of them attending the SMEC, students had limited views about what ELTL entailed. For some of the students, English language and teaching was seen as a "simple process" of teaching pupils the grammar of the language. For others, it was about the teaching of literature. Those who had recollections of positive experiences of English language teaching/learning saw it as the opportunity to raise pupils' social awareness (a kind of social studies forum). The debates around the teaching of English within the context of competing power differentials in increasingly multilingual schools, as well as the similarities and differences of teaching and learning to English first or second language speakers, were not fully realised by the student teachers prior to their engagement in the SMEC. The course was successful in developing a set of tools with which to critique these schooling experiences.

As a consequence of this broader and more critical understanding of learning and teaching English, the STs consciously reject their past teachers' approaches, methodologies and techniques of English language teaching. Whilst recognising what are their own biographies constructed during the apartheid era, student teachers choose to signal a desire not to teach as they were taught.

Four possible reasons could be forwarded for this assertion:

1. The student teachers see the SMEC as presenting an alternative means of operating as an English teacher.
2. Having rejected their past learning experiences as being unsuccessful, the student teachers are dissatisfied to see these patterns of teaching and learning of English still exist in schools.
3. The STs reflect the idealism to be expected of newly qualified graduates who have not yet been fully inducted into the everyday lifeworld/ culture of schooling.
4. The STs are presenting to me, the teacher educator and researcher, what they believe I would like to hear about the course / programme that I had designed.

All of these above possibilities compete for offering an explanation of the data that this study presented.

I choose to label this phenomenon of rejecting to teach as one was taught, as "biographical suicide". The student teachers are in effect attempting to consciously discount or marginalise the biographical experiences of ELTL which they have gathered during their schooling years. They are in effect saying that they would try to thwart, dampen or kill their "inertial forces" (See Sub-Section 1.2.1: "Teacher Development as Dialogical Tension" and the force field metaphor).



This form of suicide may be compared to a kind of "class suicide". When a person of one class background attempts to move into the ambit of another class, s/he is likely to attempt to abandon all traces of the previous class. This is an understandable form of attempting to "assimilate" into the culture of the new class. Schumann (1978) presented the same kind of theoretical explanation to understand the way in which immigrant non-English speakers might choose to acculturate to the linguistic and cultural norms of the dominant English "host country" in order to facilitate their development of second language competence. The value systems, behaviour, actions, or culture of the target group ("in-group") is explored in much detail by the learner group ("out-group") (ibid.). The degree of acceptable transition into the in-group is related to the degree to which the out-group members are prepared to accept the cultural norms of the in-group. Schumann (ibid.) highlights the facilitative conditions which best result in this transition. These include how compatible the two groups view each other's culture, rather than simply on how linguistically compatible or structurally close the two groups' languages are.

In the scenario of the student teachers presenting their desire to reject their biographical experiences of English language teaching and learning gained during their school years, the student teachers might be signaling their desire to be accepted within a new group of English language teachers different to their own school teachers. In their estimates and arising out of their limited experiences of schooling, the target group to which they aspire does not physically exist as an entity in post-apartheid South African schooling. Student teachers interpret the present teaching force of the schools as working within a continuing apartheid-like mentality. This results in student teachers being critical of their mentor teachers. STs therefore, see themselves as being the new target group, albeit, an ideological grouping with limited experience of teaching.

Ironically, while rejecting a part of themselves (their "inertial forces"), they are in effect choosing themselves again, to be the ambassadors of new ideals. Their "biographical suicide" is at best a botched attempt since they choose to appropriate sections of their biographical experiences from their university programme ("programmatic forces") to reconstruct an alternative identity as a teacher of English. Whether they are able to sustain this idealism is a matter for further research.


The data also reveal that while the student teachers profess to distance themselves from their past experiences of English language teaching and learning they still continue to draw heavily on their biographical heritage. This biographical heritage they draw on usually extends beyond just their own schooling experiences of teaching and learning. Their own private cultural world of influence from their homes, their families, their secular and religious communities exerts its force over or into the kind of personal ideals to which they subscribe during the actions of teaching. The political ideologies of an integrated South Africa also exert its influence over their thinking. This latter construct is noticeable in the repeated claims in the data to contribute towards inter-racial and inter- linguistic dialogue.

1.4 Practical Interests

This section is divided into two sub-sections:

1. Using Lifehistory as a Pedagogical Tool
2. Developing a Personal Working Theory of English Language Teaching and Learning

In this section I would like to present some of the practical issues that have recurred during the design of the research study, the data collection process and the SMEC as a programme for teacher preparation. Here, I highlight the integration of the roles of educational researcher, teacher educator and reconstructivist agent, in the context of the transformation of South African education.



The first construct focuses on my own practical role as researcher and reconstructivist agent, using the methodology of lifehistory research to develop STs' understanding of their biographical heritages.

The second construct focuses on the goal of the teacher development course to develop in a practical way student teachers' personal working theories of ELTL.

1.4.1 Using Lifehistory as a Pedagogical Tool

When I first included the methodology of lifehistories within my teacher preparation programme, I was not entirely clear about whether it was to serve my own agenda as an educational researcher trying to understand the biographical experiences of my students, or was it that I believed inherently that this process would assist the development of my student teachers into becoming better teachers of the English language?

Up to the initial stages of the research study, I had been working in the tradition of developing student teachers as reflective practitioners (Carr and Kemmis: 1983; Schon: 1987; Elliot: 1991; Naidoo: 1992; Samuel: 1995). Our own faculty programmes had attempted to shift (in policy, at least) from preparing student teachers as passive imitators of "best practice", to a model of teacher development which celebrated the need for teachers to see themselves as researchers of their own teaching. I have described this shift as not only a re-emphasis on the professional awakening of the teachers as agents of their own destiny, but also as campaigners for the development of qualitative practice within the critique of existing apartheid schooling, teaching and learning. I have labeled this kind of teacher development elsewhere as "critical reflective practice" (Samuel: 1994), an appropriate ideological (? idealistic) label at the dawn of the new democratic era in South Africa.

This research study extends this tradition of critical reflective practice to include not only a critical reflection on the kind of teaching strategies being learnt, or the need for alternative roles in the reconstructionist era, but also:


- a critical reflection of who we are as teachers,
- a critical reflection on the biographies of learning and teaching that we have gained,
- developing a sense of one's own lifehistory,
- an accumulation of intersecting experiences and people, programmes and possibilities.

Through understanding deeply who we as teachers are, we can assemble an important set of tools for reconstructing a new society.

The practical process of engaging STs in the constructing of their autobiographies, of encouraging them to reflect on and share their apartheid-boxed cultural, racial and linguistic experiences of ELTL, of working collaboratively in ST teams, are invaluable teaching strategies for the professional development of teachers of English within the rapidly changing South African educational context. . The process of recalling and rewriting one's history is a pedagogical tool for self and professional development.

My own Catholic religious upbringing may be said to filter into this kind of celebration of the act of acknowledgement of who we are (as sinners and worshippers of God), of breaking bread together, of collective celebration of our communal existence, of our campaign for a better life for ourselves and others. However, the teacher preparation programme should not be seen as a confessional box which grants absolution of past deeds; as prospective teachers the act of professional development should be an ongoing quest, an active search for better quality of teaching and learning.

1.4.2 Developing a Personal Working Theory of English



Language Teaching and Learning

A particularly disappointing feature of my research study was the realisation that the student teachers had not at the end of the teacher preparation programme developed what I would like to call a fully-fledged "personal working theory" of English language teaching and learning.

I regard a personal working theory for English language teaching and learning as a highly individualistic set of axioms or established set of principles upon which personal choices can be made in relation to the strategies, plans and actions for classroom practice. This theory is a "working" set of maxims, which embody principles that are contextually relevant. The teacher who is able to articulate what these underlying principles are, is still prepared to acknowledge the tentativeness of the "theory", since its principles are likely to be altered in relation to other more plausible perspectives or explanations which may surface in the context of everyday action. This tentativeness is not a weakness, but is rather preparedness with which to engage in the process of continual redefinition and reformulation of the values, beliefs underlying one's practice. The "working" component of the construct also foregrounds the need for teachers to be able to actively engage in the process of finding better explanations, perspectives, understandings and insights into their teaching practice. This does not mean that the teacher is carelessly "blown in the wind" of popular rhetoric. Instead, s/he is willing to test out the value of "fashionable" models of ELTL, not so that they will become part of their own evolving theory, but because in the process of experimentation they may more convincingly reject or accept its tenets. Such a degree of flexibility is the hallmark of a competent professional teacher.

The analysis of the data for this study reflects that student teachers are on the road to the process of developing such a personal working theory of English language teaching and learning. The difficulty may not be whether they have developed this "personal working theory" per se, but whether they as novice teachers have developed the ability (or vocabulary) to articulate it.

However, the student teachers do show some evidence of the first signs of being able to develop/ articulate their "personal working theories". The evidence for this assertion derives from the discussions that student teachers present about the role of the formal propositional knowledge that is offered to them during the course of their SMEC.

In this section I present the evolving stages of understanding of the value of the "theories" that are offered in the SMEC. To address this issue, the following discussion attempts to understand the following questions:

- What meaning do student teachers afford to the lectures about theories of English second language acquisition and English language curriculum design?
- How do they regard the precepts, principles and accounts of practice that are shared during the SMEC?

When student teachers entered into the SMEC they expressed their expectation that the "methodology course" (SMEC) would offer them techniques and methods of executing classroom practice of English language teaching (i.e. a strongly practical and pragmatic focus). They believed that their undergraduate courses in English 1, 11 and 111 had provided them with the foundation in understanding the English language because of their exposure to the theories of English Literary criticism. They therefore, believed that they had developed an understanding about how to analyse and interpret English literary texts. They therefore, expected the SMEC to offer them knowledge about the English language structure, about how to design lessons to develop comprehension and writing skills in their pupils. These latter categories do not feature in their undergraduate courses because of their emphasis on English Literature rather than on English Language Learning and Acquisition. Their own experiences of schooling influenced their expectations that the SMEC should focus on the kind of compartmentalised



sub-divisions of the schooling syllabus. These expectations are revealed in the data yielded in this study especially in Emmanuel's narrative (Chapter Four; Section One: Text One). At the beginning of the course, Emmanuel ponders, "what more can the SMEC offer me?" especially after the rigorous undergraduate English courses. Most of the interviewees at the opening of the course (Appendix Three: Student Teachers' Expectations of Teaching English in a Multilingual Classroom) indicate that they expected the SMEC to provide them with a course in English grammar.

When the student engaged with the course they began to realise the need for understanding the nature of language teaching as a field in its own right. They drew the distinction between studying English Literature (in their undergraduate years) and studying about English Language Teaching and Learning. Given the absence of focus on

Language Learning in the undergraduate years, the course was designed to offer theoretical debates around Curriculum Design and Development (Module One) and theories of English Language Acquisition and Learning (Module Two): See Appendix 9: Special Method English Curriculum Programme Schedule 1997. Both these two opening modules of the SMEC begin to challenge student teachers' expectations of what language teaching and learning entails.

Firstly, it must be understood that the so-called theories of ELTL were presented to the students in the context of a timetabled slot in their teacher preparation programme. This might account for the elevated status that student teachers afford to any material that is presented in the lecture halls. Traditionally, the lecture halls were seen as venues for presenting assertions of truth, enduring explanations of social phenomenon: constructs of the ideology of the "scientific empirical paradigm" (Kuhn: 1962). Student teachers approach the lecture hall expecting to be told these universal truths about, in the case of this study, English language teaching and learning. This is also evidenced by the data of the study, which reveals student teachers' high regard for the theories of language acquisition and learning, curriculum design and development offered by the SMEC (Refer to Zakiyya' comment: Chapter Four: Section 4.2 that these modules were a highlight of her academic career as a student of languages). STs regard these "new found theories" as offering them insights into their own schooling experiences of ELTL. They therefore, attach strong currency to the value of the theories of first and second language acquisition and learning, and the debates around designing an integrated English language curriculum. Sanelesiwe (Chapter Four: Section One: Text Two) comments about these modules, "At last I found an explanation for my failure to acquire a developed competence in the English language."

Student teachers reported that during SBTP, mentor teachers expressed skepticism about the use or value of the "theories" learnt at university in reference to the organisation of the curriculum experiences of English first and second language teaching/learning. Other comments from mentor teachers usually revolved around the use of action research as a tool for curriculum development. Both these issues are regarded by the mentor teachers as typical "university theories".

Some mentor teachers openly profess their disregard for these "theories" suggesting that there is no time for the luxury of such contemplation in the practical world of teaching and learning.

They indicate to the STs that their foregrounding pupil initiated learning activities is also an idealistic notion of the "university lecturers". STs often reflected in their journals that mentor teachers cautioned them that these ideals do not work "in the real world". This particular opinion was reflected in the two main case study students: Emmanuel was told blatantly to forget his "university theories", and Sanelesiwe was advised to design lessons to please her university lecturers, but that these strategies would not work in an everyday classroom (Chapter Four: Section One: Texts One and Two).



This stance of the mentor teachers is in and of itself a "personal working theory". However, it is seldom articulated publicly and therefore, remains uncontested. It conceptualises theory as anti-practice, and therefore, as an obstruction to the everyday world of schooling. Refer to Figure 16 (A) which affords a high status to practice. The development of the student teacher during SBTP may be described as the process of finding a balance between theory and practice, represented as a see-saw in Figure 16.

Student teachers on the journey to developing their "personal working theory" first latch on to the supremacy of their university lecture hall precepts, discussions and theories. This is after all what they believe that they have to rely on to support their practice. Emmanuel openly suggests that he used his mentor teacher's viewpoints about "university theory" as a deliberate challenge: he wanted to prove the mentor teacher wrong. Refer to Figure 16 (B) which affords a high status to theory.

In this climate of insecurity and inexperience of being exposed to the world of teaching and learning English, the STs first approach the theories they have learnt as "Explanations" (Figure 16 B1) of the problems they encounter.

For example, when they see English second language learners encountering problems within their classrooms, they are likely to evoke the explanations from one of the theories of second language acquisition that they have studied. As is evidenced in the data, the student teacher (Emmanuel: Chapter Four: Section Two: Text 2.3.1) chooses the vocabulary of a particular learning theory to explain his failure in a particular class. Theory at this stage is seen as a grand explanation of facts. STs also reflect on their lessons using the vocabulary of a theory, in an unquestioning tone. For example, student teachers speak about "The Monitor" from Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition, as if "the monitor" is a physical entity in the brain, rather than a theoretical construct.

As student teachers progress towards becoming professionals, they begin to develop a more hesitant stance towards the "university theory". They begin to look at the theories offered as a "Hypothesis to be tested" (Figure 16 B2). The data shows student teachers at this stage wanting to experiment with alternative ways of handling the classroom (Figure 16 C1).

Of course, it is not entirely possible to distinguish between whether they are imitating patterns of practical activities demonstrated in the SMEC, or whether they are drawing from the theory directly. This merging of the theory and the practical experiment perhaps stems from the way in which the SMEC is presented to student. In Modules Three and Four (See Appendix 9) the process of developing reading, writing or speaking skills are

"demonstrated" by the teacher educator. The delivery of the module (its practical methodology) inherently embodies the teacher educator's theoretical assumptions about English language teaching and learning (his/her personal working theory). When student teachers reflect on this school-based classroom actions, they usually resort to the vocabulary of the theory to explain failure or success.

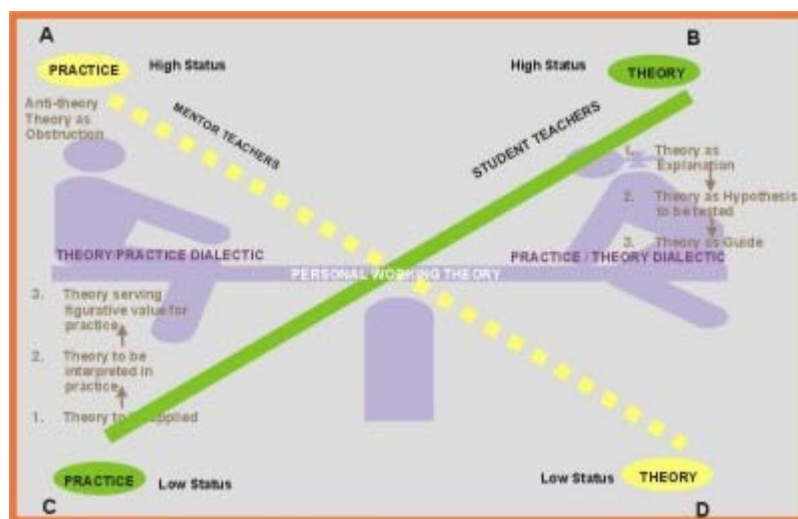


Figure 16 : The Practice - Theory Relationship : Developing a Personal Working Theory

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Figure 16 : The Practice - Theory Relationship : Developing a Personal Working Theory

A later stage of the student teachers' development is characterised by the progressively abandoning the elevation afforded to "Theory". A more pragmatic approach develops as STs talk about what works in the practical context of their classrooms. This more pragmatic focus is usually made with the hindsight of failed attempts at achieving the goals set out for individual lessons or particular class of pupils. (Figure 16 C2). Theory is placed in the background as an orientation to guide the student teachers' choices. (Figure 16 B3). This stage is also characterised by the student teachers themselves not fully sure of the practical management of the classroom. Issues like classroom discipline are more on their mind than about what principles underlie their English language teaching. It is their practice which drives the formation of a particular theoretical orientation to their teaching.

In order to promote critical reflective practice, the teacher educators in this programme usually challenged the student teachers to provide explanations for their actions. This often created tensions amongst the university lecturers and the student teachers because student teachers were not always able to articulate what was the source of their actions. Student teachers at this stage usually externalised blame to the pupils, the mentor teacher or the wider school system i.e. they foreground contextual factors influencing their lack of success in particular lessons. Rarely do student teachers comment on their inexperience as explanations of their classroom "failures". The student teachers in this research study were nevertheless, keen for me, their supervisor to provide interpretations of their classroom actions. This dialogue was equally characteristic of the data yielded during the SBTP interviews.

It should be noted here that the student teachers do not foreground the degree of influence of the mentor teachers on their own developing theoretical conceptions of English language teaching and learning. Perhaps, the mentor teachers' own preoccupations with the practical action of the classroom obscures their own understanding of their implicit theory of English language teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the mentor teachers continually project to the student teachers a "personal working theory" of ELTL reflected in the way they organise their classrooms, how they act within those classes, how they talk about their classroom actions. In a somewhat indirect manner, the mentor teachers are subtly revealing to the STs their underlying assumptions about ELTL, their unarticulated theory of classroom action. Few STs are able to understand these unexpressed theories of their mentor teachers at the early stages of the teaching practicum.

Towards the end of SBTP (six weeks later) the student teachers begin to develop a more holistic set of explanations of the particular characteristics of the school, its culture, its teachers, its pupils. Their



understanding is illuminated into more effective strategies for addressing ELTL in their particular school (Refer to Chapter Four: Section Two: Texts 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.8.1 and 2.8.2). Both Emmanuel and Sanelesiwe attempt to understand the pupils of the school in a more holistic way: they reflect on where these pupils originate from, what motivates them as learners, what are their individual personalities. Imraan and Zakiyya become more understanding of the "trap" that teachers seem to be caught in within the school system: wanting to make changes to their practice, but overwhelmed by the pragmatic demands of assessments, school syllabi and management expectations. Thembi distances herself from the kind of activities of the practising teachers in her school (See Chapter Four: Section Four for a detailed analysis of these emerging understanding of their roles as teachers). Unfortunately, this realisation comes too close to the end of the practicum and they are not able to test this newly evolved version of English language teaching and learning. Their "personal working theory" is not allowed to develop fully. It withers away in a premature death.

In the above characterisation of the developmental stages of the STs, I have not given enough room for flexibility of different individual personalities. The above description also suggests a linear process of development. I hope that my earlier section explaining the process of "Dialogical tension" will be read alongside this section to reflect my view of the complex interplay among individual personalities, particular school contextual settings, school culture, pupils, etc. all of which (potentially) compete simultaneously in shaping the process of teacher development.

I conclude that the STs do not develop a fully-fledged "personal working theory" because the school-based teaching practicum is far too short to allow a more rooted and developed dialectic between theory and practice (represented in Figure 16: as the horizontal see-saw). Before the STs are able to develop their own footings within the school, they are expected to return to the university. Student teachers therefore only develop a set of possible hypotheses about English language teaching and learning by the end of a short six-week placement. This potential dialectic between theory and practice is terminated before being allowed to develop.

They are unlikely to be assisted into developing the dialectic between theory and practice within the context of their appointment as newly qualified teachers because the "induction" programme for support of these teachers is often non-existent in many schools.

Newly qualified teachers are often unassisted during this early period of their appointment, and as a coping strategy they usually resort to imitating existing practices of more senior teachers. This last assertion is not grounded in any concrete evidence from this study, but is a possible hypotheses that a future study should address to understand the "washed out effect" of the pre-service curriculum: where newly graduated teachers abandon what they had learnt during their teacher preparation programme.

Is the endeavour of pre-service teacher development worthwhile anyway?

Certainly more analysis needs to be made of the STs' rejection of "theory". Let me offer three arbitrary categories of the Acceptance/Rejection of Theory Continuum:

Group One: teachers who foreground pragmatic concerns in opposition to theory;

Group Two: teachers who see theory as serving a framework for guiding practice; Group Three: teachers who use theory as a tool for dialogue about their practice.

Whilst this is the topic of a whole new research study, I posit that teachers caught up with the daily routines of making their subject matter knowledge available to their pupils are often unimpressed by the lack of direct applicability of a theory to practice. When they first encounter this disjuncture



between theory and practice, they immediately develop an anti-theory stance.

All theory is of no use, is the immediate generalisation. Little questioning is made about whether theory ought to have this kind of direct applicability. Few teachers move onto another platform for understanding the use and value of theory. (Refer to Figure 16 C1).

This second group usually adopts a more interpretativist view of theory, seeing it as offering a guide for interpreting at least some (certainly not all) problems that are encountered in their daily practical world of the classroom. The need for several theories to act as guiding frameworks becomes evident to a more sophisticated member of this group. I would posit that the mentor teachers, who served as supports for our student teachers, do not clearly belong to this latter group of reflective practitioners. (Refer to Figure 16 C2).

A third group of teachers are those who have developed the confidence to posit their own personal working theories, arising closely out of their informed practice. They are likely to view other theorists serving as a figurative value for their own professional development. Eraut (1996) defines this group of practitioners as those who refer to the theories of others by metaphoric association i.e. they refer to points of congruence and divergence with their own thinkings. (Refer to Figure 16 C3).

The fact that STs are unable to develop their own personal working theories of English language teaching and learning may simply be too high an expectation for pre-service education. It may simply be an unrealistic expectation given that many mentor teachers have themselves not made this journey.

I acknowledge that the above description of the journey of STs' relationship between theory and practice is highly context-bound to the specific curriculum programme offered by the SMEC 1997 course at UDW. I hope to have provided sufficient detail about this course so that readers might gauge the degree of transferability to their own contexts and programmes. Appendix 9 depicting the details of the Special Method English Curriculum Schedule is an important reference point against which the above research constructs should be examined.

Summary of Section One:

Emerging Constructs of this Study

In the above section I have attempted to restate some of the repeated motifs that emerged as constructs in the course of this research study. The written word is an unreliable messenger of the complex intersection between these different constructs. It is for the sake of clarity of focus that this section was organised into the following four sub-sections each with its embedded constructs:

Methodological Interests:

- Data Collection as a Dialogical Process with Multiple Authors
- Creating Critical Discursive Spaces

Theoretical Interests:

- Teacher Development as Dialogical Tension between:
 - Inertial forces
 - Programmatic forces
 - Contextual forces
- Teacher Development in Unstable Contexts:

- Patterns of Intersecting Individual and Institutional Biographies

Contextual Interests:

- "Biographical Suicide"

Practical Interests:

- Using Lifehistory as a Pedagogical Tool
- Developing a Personal Working Theory of English Language Teaching and Learning

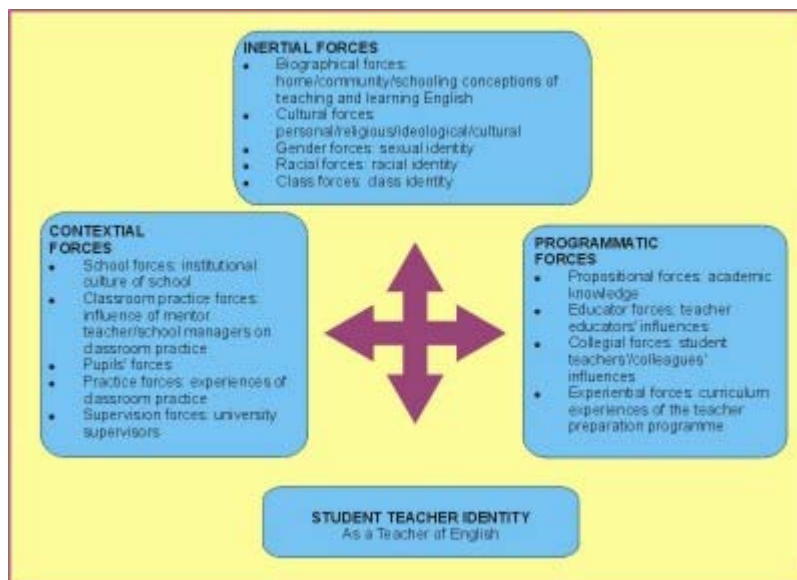
Section Two: Overall Conclusions of this Research Study

This research study has shown that conducting research in unstable and rapidly changing contexts is characterised by the rich intersection of several layers of complexity, complementarity and contradiction. I have chosen to use the analogy of a force field to indicate the varied forces competing for influence over the student teachers' identity formation as a teacher of the English language (See Figure 17 for a diagrammatic representation of this force field). The forces being exerted within the force field originate from both within the STs themselves as well as from the external environment of the teacher preparation programme and the school contexts within which they conduct their teaching practicum. The internal forces ("inertial forces") are constituted by the biographical heritage accumulated from the years of experience of the learning and teaching of the English language gleaned during their formative years in their homes, community and schooling. The external forces ("programmatic forces" and the "contextual forces") are constituted by the quality of curriculum that is experienced during their teacher preparation programme: both in the teacher education institution and the school context.

STs placed within the field of these competing influential forces begin defining their identities in relation to biographical history and individual personality, as well as in relation to the institutional biographical culture within which they are placed to learn about and practice ELTL. Student teachers develop their understanding of their role and identity as teachers of English through the lens of their personal and experiential biographies.

Within rapidly changing educational, social and political contexts, the forces themselves are not always aligned in the same direction. Each individual force has its own rationale and potential power to influence the ST. Contradictory messages are being offered to the developing student teachers. This arises partly because the agents of these forces are individuals who, within a changing context, are themselves being pulled by several different forces. Forming an identity that is coherent and stable is not always possible. It is thus possible that student teachers may offer contradictory signals in what they profess (say), practice (do) and ponder (believe), since they are likely to be influenced by particular forces constraining them to dialogue in a particular manner in a particular context. This makes conducting research within such a context a process of attempting to understand the dialogical influences of "multiple authors" of the data: the student teacher, the researcher, the target audience. The educational researcher therefore has to be particularly detailed in being able to tap into this level of dialogicality when analysing data collected. Creative forms of data analysis attempt to understand both what student teachers represent in the data, as well as how

they present the data in the choices of particular language forms.



[Click here for enlarged version of image](#)

Figure 17: The Force Field Model of Teacher Development:

Towards Understanding Student Teacher Development in Rapidly Changing Educational Contexts

The Force Field Model of Teacher Development assembles the constructs for understanding STs' development in rapidly changing contexts. This is a revised version of the model presented at the end of Chapter Two. It focuses on the specific characteristics foregrounded by the data of this study. Whilst presented as discrete forces, it should be recognised that the forces impacting on STs' identity development have less rigid boundaries. These forces also have the potential to mutually affect each other. The STs equally have the potential to utilise their developed sense of identity as teachers to challenge and influence the contiguous forces.

The main thesis of this dissertation is that the process of developing understanding of what it means to be or become a teacher of the English language in a rapidly changing context is influenced by a number of competing factors. The consequence is that STs develop a teacher identity, which is fluid, flexible and a product of the specific contextual forces within which they practice. The process of development is characterised by them being "pulled or pushed" in different directions in relation to the power of the different forces being exerted on their emerging identities. These include inter alia:

- their own biographical experiences of English language teaching and learning,
- the teacher preparation programme,
- the particularities of the school contexts within which student teachers conduct their practicum.

Each of these potential forces embeds a rich legacy of cultural heritage activated through persons as individuals, or collectively as institutions. The student teacher gains a sense of becoming a teacher of the English language in relation to these contiguous forces of inheritance.

Teacher preparation programmes should be seen as provocative interventions in the lives of emergent teachers, forcing a reconceptualisation of the enshrined, routinised practices of ELTL. This provocation is not, however, a process of "pouring into empty heads" the propositional knowledge of alternative practices and theories about teaching and



learning of the English language. Teacher preparation programmes should be seen as a process of developing qualitative and critical discursive dialogue:

- about the student teachers' biographical heritage of learning and teaching English,
- about the rituals and patterns that characterise the past and present teaching and learning practices, and
- about the possibilities for alternative conceptions of practice as teachers of the English language.


This dissertation has traced the process of how student teachers experience the learning and teaching of English during different periods of their lives. It has shown that the conceptions about what English language teaching and learning entails originate in the early years of the home and the community. It is within these contexts that attitudes towards schooling, education and English, as a language of power, are shaped. These experiences of the superior status afforded to the English language are usually described by the student teachers in this study as being negative. The schooling experiences of English language learning and teaching have not been exemplary in their estimates. Their own autobiographical accounts recall that the English language classrooms were characterised by being uninspiring and routinised. Above all they did not satisfy the goals of the pupils: which were to develop communicative competence or develop their ability "to read their own worlds". Nevertheless, it is these negative biographical experiences of schooling that inspire the student teachers to become teachers of English. With the hindsight of the teacher preparation course, they are convinced that they will not want to teacher as they were taught.

The university experiences of learning English in the undergraduate years are criticised as inappropriate for future teachers of English. Its over-emphasis on studying literature and literary theory is estimated by the students as too far removed from the focus of secondary school ELTL. The introduction to debates around the teaching and learning of English in the context of multilingual society, presented in the final year of the teacher preparation programme, is seen as "too much, too late".

The experiences of developing personal biographical reflection and critique of their English language learning and teaching, were reported to be a valuable lesson in self-awareness and professional development.

The experiences of ELTL during school-based teaching practice were reported as being the highlight of the student teachers' development as future teachers. The daily realities of dealing with personnel expectations, curriculum planning, lesson designs and team reflections raised their awareness of the competing forces of influences over their identity as teachers. Student teachers were also influenced by the institutional culture of the schooling contexts within which they were placed. The cultural practices of the institution of schooling introduced student teachers to the need for developing a strong personal working theory about teaching and learning of English. Equally competitive in their influence over STs' identities were the language learners (English first and second language pupils; males and females) within the school contexts. This influence was noted especially in relation to their (pupils') expectations of how student teachers should conduct themselves as teachers of English. However, a fully-fledged personal perspective was not developed with the student teachers in this research study. The dissertation presents possible explanations for this phenomenon. The main reason, being insufficient time to develop a personal working theory within the limited SBTP period.

Despite student teachers attempting to distance themselves from their own negative schooling experiences of ELTL, their biographical heritages have an enduring presence in shaping how STs develop a sense of what it means to be or become a teacher of the English language. Their personal philosophies



developed from their religious and socio-political life as members of a reconstructing society have a powerful impact on their sense of identity as teachers of English in the new South Africa.

Section Three: Implications of this Study

This section is divided into three sub-sections which address the following implications arising out this study:

1. Towards Understanding Lives in Transitional Times,
2. Towards Understanding the Process of Teacher Development,
3. Implications for Future Research.

The overall conclusions of this dissertation point in three possible directions:

- The need to develop a theory to understand the making of lives in transitional times: how do individuals develop a sense of identity in a rapidly changing political, social, economic and cultural context? Using the above data concerning the developing identity of student teachers, I posit a theory of understanding lives in transitional times.
- The need to relook at the process of teacher development: how can teacher preparation programme designers or policy makers benefit from this thesis?
- The need to examine the possible avenues for future research: what do we still need to research in order to understand teachers and teaching in changing times?

3.1 Towards Understanding Lives in Transitional Times

In Chapter Four, I provided an analysis of two student teachers' biographical experiences of ELTL, which was extended into a cross-case analysis of seven auxiliary case studies. The emphasis of the analysis was on their similar and different biographical development as English language teachers. The conclusions of the study (Section Two above) were presented specifically to address the key question of the research: how student teachers experience the learning and teaching of English over different periods of their lives? The conclusions are confined within the domain of teacher development arising specifically from the data collected in this study.

In this section I have taken the liberty to extend these conclusions in an attempt to explore theoretical understandings which this study points to. This section explores the next level of abstraction of the data yielded in this study. I extend the concept of the "force field" metaphor beyond teacher development to explore its possible usefulness in understanding the developing of identity in a rapidly changing social context.

I believe that this exploration may assist towards understanding some of the debates around the concept of a "multicultural-self", a phenomenon particular pertinent to South Africans as we emerge out of our history of apartheid cultural, racial and linguistic boxes. I do believe however that the phenomenon is potentially useful for all societies undergoing a rapid reformulation/re-examination/challenging of the foundations upon which their present day identities are built.

It is particularly interesting to observe the responses made to the question, "So what are you? I mean are you African, Indian...South African...Black... what are you?" These are usually the kind of questions foreigners ask South Africans. I suppose a similar variety of questions might arise in the conversation between "foreigners" and "nationals" ("outsiders" and "insiders") in many different contexts. To many South Africans this is interpreted as indirectly political. The questioner is (perhaps unconsciously) asking the



listeners to reveal their political identity, their views about the inter-racial, inter-cultural relationships within the new South Africa. The question is about "who are you?" in relation to the existing norms about the meanings attached to the different labels of "South African", "African", "Black", "Indian", etc... To choose a particular label is to reveal one's views about how one relates to oneself and fellow South Africans.

A sophisticated response to the question is usually prefaced with, "well, it depends..."

Most responses plunge into the campaign to assert a particular perspective of one's self, one's identity. "I am African..." or "I am Black". The reasoning for this description is probably more valuable "data" for analysis than the choice of the single label.

What is notable in this question-answer discourse, is how contingent the response is on the specific context within which the question is framed, the audience present when the response is offered and the perceived purposes of the questioner. With each of the above variables of context, audience and purpose manipulated, it is likely that the individual will offer different responses. In the context of a foreign country, in the presence of individuals from other countries, the answerer might be likely to foreground his/her national identity. "I am South African". This assertion might be presented with the intention of defining one's divergence from the group of others (who might also choose to foreground a national identity).

However, the nuance between the different labels become politically loaded when the discussion arises about the value of these labels. Do the labels themselves have inherent meaning or have meanings been ascribed to them - a debate about "natural" or "socialised" constructs?

This latter debate usually surfaces in the South African post-apartheid context, where the ethnic labeling of the population by the former apartheid government is still used by individuals to describe their own identity. "I am a Zulu. I was born a Zulu"; or more broadly racial categorisations are used: "I am an Indian"; "I am White", "I am a Coloured".

This debate highlights the difficulty of attempting to use language to describe one's identity. The labels themselves are not inherently endowed with meaning. The meanings of words are only ascribed to the linguistic representation, and therefore have a potential for different meanings to be ascribed to it. Words only have potential for meaning.

Individuals when using words/ labels believe that there is a shared understanding of what they mean, and therefore, it is possible to engage in dialogue with others because of the level of predictability that has been agreed upon. To choose a label unquestioningly is to concur with the invested meanings which were usually baptised by external hostile, rather than amicable forces.

In a rapidly changing context the meanings ascribed to the labels begin to be questioned and debated. It is likely that several different interpretations of the meanings of the labels begin to compete for attention if not dominance.

For example, the label "African" might arguably refer to any exclusive one or a combination of the following individuals:

1. a person who resides in Africa,
2. a person who was officially classified by the previous South African government as African,
3. a person who shares the cultural practices of people living in Africa,
4. a person who shares the political aspirations of people who live in Africa.

Of course, the above simplifications are meaningless without further exploration of other embedded concepts, words and labels. Is it possible to describe homogeneously the "cultural practices people living in Africa", when



the continent consists of a multitude of cultural practices, ranging from tribal customs to neo-colonial dictatorships? Can the political aspirations of African people be homogenised?

Often the quest to develop this concept of what it means to be African is an attempt to hearken after a bygone past, to look over the shoulder to see where one came from i.e. one's biographical heritage or history. This latter limited view of what it means to be "African" therefore, falls into the trap of associating "Africanness" with traditional practices and rituals. It often ignores that the present cultural identity of people living in Africa as being influenced by the intersection of several competing forces, which originate both in the past and the present. These forces include the influence of different peoples, and different approaches to life. Africa is not the romanticised village of communal living that is usually celebrated by proponents of this version of "African". "African culture" includes the aspirations and dreams of a host of values, ideologies, beliefs and practices. It includes as much the middle-class drug dependent teenagers, as it does the working class grandmother trying to pass on the traditions of bread-making or basket-weaving to the next generation.

All of these forces compete for their assertion of dominance within the changing cultural context. The individuals within a rapidly changing society are therefore caught in the tension of this process of redefinition. In the process some will cling to the established labels which embody for them, particular values, ideals and beliefs. Others will be more likely to challenge the boundaries that the labels circumscribe. In the process they will broaden the understanding of those labels, and usher in a new set of values, beliefs, and practices. Nevertheless, the new beliefs will always exist in tension with the old and both these systems of understanding will co-exist.

This co-existence need not only take place between two "competing" individuals. It may exist within a single individual. This latter phenomenon is more likely to be the case when the scale of change is so rapid that immediate and continual redefinitions are being contested almost simultaneously. The individual therefore, finds the need to adopt a transient identity, which I have labeled "The Multicultural-Self". This transient identity is not a sign of psychological weakness. Rather, it is an identity which foregrounds the need for the critical and discursive space to dialogue with all the competing influences over one's existence. It includes the perspectives, values, insights of many different cultures: ways of life, ways of seeing the world. It includes perspectives from the past and the present. It embodies influence from varied levels of social existence: politics, religion, education and economics.



WHO AM I?

Prominent South African politicians define themselves.



Corne Mulder, Freedom Front MP
 "I am a Christian first, then Afrikaner, then a South African. My family came to Africa in 1685. I belong to a people who have named themselves after their continent: Afrikaners of Africa. My mother tongue is Afrikaans. I am not a European. If I have to speak in racial terms, I am a white African but I am African. I don't have any other country. I have no relations or family anywhere else in the world."

Thenjwe Mntso, ANC Deputy Secretary "South African."

Pallo Jordan, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
 "I am an African, born in South Africa and therefore South African. My first name is Xhosa, my second name is Sesotho, my last name is English. I speak three languages fluently and re-learned the language I first learnt to speak, Sesotho, after a 32-year hiatus. So what do you make of that? As Die Burger said of me in 1991, "stam, onbekend". I identify the important thing here. I am obviously black, so I don't have to proclaim that. But that is more than the colour of my skin, it embodies a particular experience peculiar to South Africans of my pigmentation. Whether I choose it or not, those with whom I interact, especially a society such as ours and in most countries in the West, factor that in when relating to me. No American will not take account of it, no-one from Britain will ignore it, no French person will say it is irrelevant. So my self-definition is not the issue. The issue is the relevance and salience of race, place of birth and so on in society."



David Malatsi, National Party leader in Mpumalanga, member of the national Council of Provinces
 "I am Ndebele. I am of Ndebele ethnic grouping and that is very important to me. Before I do anything else, I need to express myself in my mother language- and that is Ndebele. People should stop thinking in terms of colour. I take offence if people call me black. I know I am black. I don't need to be reminded of that."

Douglas Gibson, Democratic Party Whip
 "I am a proud South African democrat. But if you insist, I am a white, middle-aged, bald, middle-class, Anglican husband and father!"

"South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity," says the Constitution. But building a non-racial, united society is proving to be difficult.

Jeremy Cronin, South African communist Party deputy Secretary
 "Well, I'm obviously white and obviously South African. I'm not embarrassed by either. My distant forebears are from another country. I am all too well aware of that. But that does not get in the way of me being South African and African. I would like to be acknowledged as South African and African. Maybe we should start a new term, Euro-African! But we all have cross-cutting identities, which are complex. That is why this question is so difficult to answer. For example, I hate to admit it, but because of my Boer upbringing I like rugby!"



Yunus Carrim, ANC MP
 "I am primarily a South African and a socialist. Someday, I hope to see myself primarily as a South African socialist. But I'm also Indian and black- the latter in the sense that I'm a person of colour. Like everybody else I have multiple identities. I have no major difficulties with these identities; they're entirely reconcilable."

Malcolm Dyanil, Pan Africanist Congress MP
 "I am an African. I am aware of the fact that ethnic groups are still a reality. I know I belong to the Xhosa ethnic group, but my political education has inculcated in me an African nationalism. I was taught, and accepted, that my first loyalty is to the African people and African nation in the process of being made."

Farouk Cassim, Inkatha Freedom Party MP
 "I think we have to define ourselves as Africans in the first instance, but Africans of different cultural background. If I were to check my perspective with someone who comes from India, then I would say quite clearly that I am not Indian. My views have changed in so many ways that to say I am Indian is no longer valid. I think it is true to say I am African as I do see things as Africans do. But because of the layers of culture, my eating habits may be oriental. Then there are many Eurocentric layers that have imposed themselves (on me), for example language usage."

#43 Extract from Magazine: Kerry Cullinan (1998) "The Zebra Nation?" *Siyaya!*, Issue 2, Winter 1998, Idasa publication.

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#43 Extract from Magazine: Kerry Cullinan (1998) "The Zebra Nation?" *Siyaya!*, Issue 2, Winter 1998, Idasa publication.

A portfolio of "The Multicultural-Self" will contain the following listings:


1. The multicultural-self is a multiple self, a construct that celebrates the uniqueness of each individual to foreground any facet of their identity within a particular social context. The facet the individual chooses to foreground is a matter of personal choice in relation to the context, audience and purpose of the interactions that s/he is involved with during social discourse.
2. The multicultural-self is characterised by a dialogical interaction between the various forces within the individual's concept of identity. The analogy of the force field is again useful here to describe the "pushing and pulling" exerted by different competing, complementary or contradictory forces, exerting influence over the individual's sense of self. The identity of the individual is constituted as a consequence of this dialogue.
3. In the context of an increasingly multicultural, multilingual context, it is likely that an individual will be characterised by ingredients from each of the different cultural influences that exist within his/her ambit. Since all the forces of influence do not originate from the same coherent source, it is more likely that the forces will embed cultural values, beliefs and practices that do not necessarily complement each other.



4. Within the context of a rapidly changing society, it is more likely that the individual would encounter a transforming set of cultural values, beliefs and ideals that are constantly being re-negotiated within a short period. Past cultural practices and beliefs co-exist with present and future ideals, which are responding to the changing macro- forces within the society. The individual therefore has to negotiate his/her identity in relation to forces that themselves are not coherent and consistent over a short period of time.
5. All forces do not exert equal influence and power over the particular developing sense of multicultural identity. The individual has the autonomy to interrogate the forces of influence, shape them and appropriate new meanings to them.
6. The multicultural-self, in a rapidly changing society, will always be in a dynamic state of becoming. By contrast, in a relatively stable context, definitions concerning one's identity are more likely to be more clearly agreed upon because there is greater degree of agreement about the values, beliefs and practices (culture system) that operates. There is usually more agreement about the definitions, labels, and words used to describe one's identity in a stable context. Hence, individuals are more likely to develop a greater degree of coherent rendition of what they profess, practice and ponder (say, do and contemplate). This coherence is unlikely in a rapidly evolving context.

A few examples may serve to illustrate the multicultural-self in operation: Individuals might reflect a multicultural-self, which contains the following elements:

1. A liberated professional woman might choose to foreground a particular human rights cultural agenda to assert her campaign to challenge the male-centered hierarchies in the workplace. Nevertheless, the males within her workplace might resist her campaigns simply because they do not believe it is within the cultural traditions of women within a certain religious/ social group to assert their voice in this way. Given another women from another religious social grouping, the chauvinistic males might be more willing to accept her "assertiveness". The first woman might develop a multicultural – self that further asserts her new ideologies as a form of resistance to the male chauvinism. Her audience is a powerful influence over the identity she asserts.
2. A homosexual office worker might choose deliberately to mask his sexuality in the context of a homophobic profession since he believes that this will jeopardise his future prospects within the firm. His homosexuality might, nevertheless, be flaunted openly in the context of other gay friends. His multicultural-self is thus highly context-bound, foregrounding different messages about his sexuality in different contexts.
3. The post apartheid South Africa is characterised by a set of ambiguous and contradictory relations to the learning of languages. On the one hand, there is recognition of the need to elevate the status of the previously marginalised mother-tongue African languages within the formal education system for all South Africans. African first language speakers are therefore supportive of the campaign to have African languages taught and learnt by more members of the diverse South African population. These campaigns are accompanied by assertions that the cultural heritages of African people is best achieved through the preservation of their mother-tongues. On the other hand, arguments against the promotion of the African languages surface from an emerging middle-class of Africans who suggest that the promotion of the African language, marginalises African people from the locus of power that English language proficiency awards. Therefore, individuals who present this view, understandably accept that the choices one makes are not only necessarily based upon idealistic preservation of their past cultural heritage. Their decisions about the language their children are to be educated in, is made in



relation to the forces of power that individuals can wield if they have the language of power: English. English is the preferred choice as a consequence of it allowing their children access to better life opportunities, as a passport to better jobs. The multicultural-self of the latter group of individuals will thus be characterised by abandonment to the forces of power within the society within which they live. The former group will more likely see their identity related to challenging the forces of power, yet often resorting to a preservationist view of culture.

Developing social identity within a rapidly transforming society may be described as a process in which various labels, words, definitions, constructs, ideologies and philosophies compete for supremacy. The rapidity of the change warrants that individuals hold all of the competing forces of influence over their identity in creative tension with each other. Any researcher focussing on such individuals is likely to yield data with complementary and contradictory messages. I have posited the construct of a "Multicultural Self" to conceptualise the process of extending the critical dialogical space within which competing and contradictory forces of power argue for supremacy. Individuals during the dialogical process gain definition about themselves in relation to the choices of the forces that they allow into their dialogical space and in relation to the kind of dialogue that they establish with other selves within their society.

3.2 Towards Understanding the Process of Teacher Development

This dissertation has provided an in-depth "insider perspective" of the way in which student teachers make sense of their experiences of learning and teaching of the English language. It has foregrounded the influence of the student teachers' home, community and schooling experiences in shaping their attitudes towards education in general, and English language teaching and learning in particular. It has provided detailed accounts of how student teachers experience the process of becoming teachers of English within a teacher preparation programme: both within the on-campus and SBTP experiences. On one important level, it revolves around who are the learners (student teachers), what do they learn and how do they learn to become teachers of English. On another level this dissertation has revolved around discussions about who we (as teacher educators) teach, what we teach and how we teach. It therefore, has raised important issues about the nature of teacher preparation curriculum. In this section, I share some important learning points that I have made in this regard.

An important learning experience that has arisen from this study is the recognition of the wealth of biographical experiences that student teachers bring with them to the teacher preparation programme. They enter into the course with a range of unarticulated theoretical assumptions about how learners learn the English language. These theoretical assumptions need to be surfaced within the teacher preparation programme, otherwise they remain a powerful dormant and uncontested set of axioms which influence the way in which STs conceptualise teaching and learning of the English language. STs should experience the teacher preparation curriculum through the lens of their biographical experiences of English language teaching and learning.

Within the context of an educational system, which did not necessarily prepare learners to develop positive experiences with language teaching and learning, it is necessary to develop within a teacher preparation programme powerful tools to develop different conceptions of processes, approaches, methodologies and techniques of English language teaching and learning. The teacher preparation programme is one forum to present these tools for critique of past experiences and current practices of ELTL. These tools need to include both the presentation about theories of ELTL, as well as demonstrations of different practices to the ones that STs may have experiences during their formative schooling years.



In the presentations of innovative, practical demonstrations, it is necessary for teacher preparation programme designers to realise that the STs' own competence in the English language may not be sufficiently well developed. The teacher preparation programme therefore will need to simultaneously address the STs' own development of English language skills as a user of the language, as an analyst of the language, in conjunction with being a teacher of the language (Edge: 1986).

This study has shown that the presentation of theories about English language teaching and learning as isolated and disconnected to practice, runs the risk of being regarded as limited in its use. Initially, STs see the theories presented at the teacher education institution as useful tools for analysing existing classroom and school practices. As STs engage further with the demands of classroom practice they are more likely to be influenced by the dictates of what succeeds pragmatically i.e. what works in the classroom. The opportunity for student teachers to develop beyond this second stage of rejecting theory is cut short. Consequently, they are more likely to be influenced by the dominant anti-theoretical view presented to them by existing teachers within the school system. The STs do not develop a sufficient dialogue between theories and their practice in the formulation of a "personal working theory". This is as a result of the short period of time within which they are expected to engage in the process of developing critical reflection during the SBTP.

The implication of the above discussion for teacher preparation programme designers is that we should develop curricula, which allow for a more dialectical relationship between educational theories and the practice of teaching and learning. If critical

reflection is to continue into the lifespan of the professional teacher, it is necessary for novice teachers to develop a dialectical relationship between theory and practice early in their careers.

Firstly, the length of time that student teachers spend within the school/ learning sites during the teaching practicum must be reviewed. Secondly, the teacher preparation programme designers need to focus on what curriculum processes are being engaged in i.e. how are the experiences of schooling (teaching and learning of English) being planned, organised, delivered and experienced by the student teachers whilst on teaching practicum? Are their experiences an ad hoc teaching of "crit lessons", the fitting into the existing patterns of teaching and learning of English, or the development of alternative conceptions of lesson planning or programme organisation? Who gets involved in the process of STs learning to become organisers of the English language experiences of their learners? How is this process structured to ensure maximum benefit for all participants? How is this process monitored, evaluated or assessed? Thirdly, the programme designers need to focus on what kinds of influential forces compete for the student teachers' developing understanding of being teachers of the English language. Teacher education should be seen as a deliberate intervention into the force field of competing influences of the lives of the student teachers. The teacher education institutions should therefore, be more conscious of how different competing and contradictory messages are being presented during the process of their development. This means that crucial consideration needs to be given to how teacher education institutions develop the partnerships with the schools/ learning sites within which their student teachers are placed.

The need for the more deliberate assertion of the voices of influence of these different actors/ players should be acknowledged in the course of the preparation of teachers. Each of these different influences exerts particular theoretical force on the developing student teacher. Each of these forces of influence does not necessarily pull or push in the same direction (and they do not need to!). The design of teacher preparation curricula should therefore, allow a genuine space for these different voices to be heard. This space should be seen as an opportunity for open, honest and critical



dialogue around the different beliefs, ideals, aspirations, and concerns of the participants. A simple endorsement of the underlying assumptions of the different participants does not create a sufficiently critical discursive space. All views presented should be seen as capable of being contested within the ambit of the goal of developing quality ELTL within the school/learning site.

The mentor teachers would certainly need to be incorporated into the design of a meaningful curriculum for the preparation of STs. The study reveals that the mentor teachers do not fully acknowledge the potentially powerful effect they have on the development of the student teachers. They often contribute (consciously or not) to seeing the teaching practicum as a farce meant to satisfy the needs of the teacher education institutions, rather than the school and the student teachers. Serious attention should be given towards the role, purpose and potential of mentor teachers in the development of novice student teachers. Deliberate attempts should be made by teacher education institutions to work more closely in mutual support of both the school and the university. The stereotypes of both the university lecturers at teacher education institutions and the mentor teachers about each other, need to be tabled in an open and frank debate. Usually mentor teachers are framed, as "anti-theoretical" and university lecturers are labeled "ivory-towered" because of their respect for theory. The dialogue to develop genuine partnership should be developed as a deliberate attempt to improve the quality of the teacher preparation programme as well as to assist the school teaching/learning of English.

Despite the range of experiences that the STs of this study were engaged in during their teacher preparation programme, I am still concerned that student teachers are not approaching teaching/learning as a process of engaging one's whole self. Perhaps my own idealism about teaching as a career influences this comment. Student teachers seem to hold back from fully revealing their personalities, their biographies, their individual creativity, and their heritages. They tend to adopt a kind of pseudo-personality in the classroom. It is as if they do not really want pupils to get to know them on a personal level. It might be a consequence of the student teachers being cautioned by the management of the school to "keep their professional distance between the pupils and themselves". Or it might be that novice teachers are insecure about their own identity when placed in the context of a public space of the classroom. A more macro-analysis of this phenomenon might suggest that coming out of a repressed apartheid society, many student teachers are not yet comfortable to assert their own individual identity in public. The reasons for why they hold back may be analysed on a psychological level to suggest that political liberation has not yet been accompanied by personal liberation i.e. the freedom to express who one wants to be.

Many of the student teachers retreated into a presentation of self that was not as vibrant as the "identity" that I had enjoyed in the lecture-hall, or in private conversations with them. This may result simply from the fact that these STs are really novice teachers and have not yet gained personal confidence to assert themselves more in the context of the school classroom.

Nevertheless, the implication of this above comment is that we need, as teacher educators, to develop student teachers to become confident about their own developing identity (their "multi-cultural self"). Teacher educators need to be able to see the process of the teacher preparation programme as an opportunity to experiment with representations of who we are, what we believe in, and how we would like to practice being a teacher of the English language. This might encourage STs to more rapidly strive towards developing their own "personal working theories" about ELTL.

I do not believe that our current teacher education programmes (at least in the South African context) allow for that kind of breadth, of latitude, for students to find "critical discursive spaces" to develop alternative and varied creative perspectives of themselves and their own teaching and learning. Our teacher preparation programmes are often overloaded with



presenting students with more and more "academic propositions" without sufficient attention to how individuals student teachers make sense of those academic propositions. We may find that our STs emerge as sophisticated critics of educational practice, but who are themselves not able to practically engage in developing learners to become quality users, analysts and manipulators of the English language. The experiential base from which student teachers develop their "multicultural selves" or their "personal working theories" is very limited in most teacher preparation curricula.

These comments are offered as a set of possible issues to consider when understanding the process of teacher development in the context of preparing teachers of the English language.

These issues also have implications for policy makers in the field of teacher development and language education generally.

Firstly, it highlights the need for policy to become sensitive to the extended degree of involvement of both personnel within the school and the teacher education institutions in the process of professional development of novice student teachers.

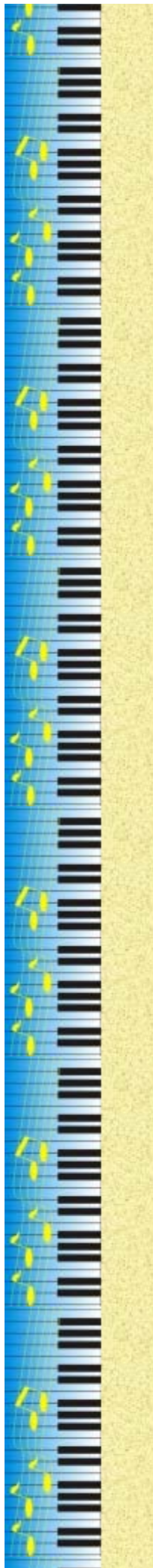
There is need to support mentor teachers within the school for their role in novice student teachers' development. Mentor teachers should be more firmly acknowledged in the form of being presented with incentives and rewards for being willing to serve this role. These incentives might include affording greater status in the form of promotions and financial rewards, and granting official time within the school programmes to professionally execute these roles.

Of course, teacher education curriculum designers need to develop curriculum programmes for supporting mentor teachers' understanding of their pivotal role. Teacher education institutions should develop programmes at in-service levels to research the kind of partnerships between the teacher education institutions and the school/learning sites.

This study has also revealed the specific pragmatic realities of developing English language teaching and learning within the context of post-apartheid South Africa. It highlights the idealism of the constitutional provisions granting recognition to eleven official languages. It shows the slow process of attempting to introduce the ideals of policymakers around development of language policies for education. It shows the internal resistances to recognise the goals of developing a truly multilingual society being exerted subtly from within schools. It shows the level of complexity of how ardent democratic teachers espouse the rhetoric of transformation, but pragmatically defend their own continued employment within racially and linguistically limited school staffrooms, resulting sometimes in an obstacle to the democratic goal of multilingualism, of a reconstructed society. It shows the scope of re-education about English language teaching and learning that needs to be adopted to assist experienced teachers who have not been educated to handle the context of multilingual teaching and learning within their schools.

Although not the intention of this dissertation, this study focuses on the need for deliberate policy intervention within the pre-service and in-service teacher education policies to address the concerns around teaching in and towards a truly multilingual school. These reformulated policies should address the specific issues around the linguistic and language teaching skills of current practitioners within the school, perhaps making it obligatory that all teachers be at least familiar with a rudimentary understanding of the nature and influence of language theories and practice, methodologies, approaches and techniques to promote multilingualism.

The linguistic repertoire of the teachers in relation to their pupils' repertoires also needs to be addressed via a more deliberate educational policy intervention. At present many school governing boards hide behind the



constitutional loophole which allows school to declare that it is not "practicable" (Constitution of South Africa: 1997) to offer any new language within their schools. This results in the continued dominance of the apartheid officially recognised languages. This study shows the effect that school-governing bodies, school management and staff can make in relation to respecting the different languages within a multilingual school context. "Practical solutions" to address multilingual teaching and learning are possible. The study highlights the need for more assertive engagement with creating the necessary policy regulations to facilitate the realisation of the constitutional ideals regarding languages in this country.

3.3 Implications for Future Research

This study has opened up several avenues for future research. The following are suggested areas:

1. The first major area of future research should attempt to explore the convergences and divergences of teacher preparation programmes within different societies undergoing rapid changes in their social, economic, political and educational environments. Out of such research may emerge the need to develop specific understandings firstly, of what it means to do research in such dynamically transforming contexts. Secondly, the exportation and importation of educational research (methodologies, approaches and orientations) across the more stable and unstable world contexts. Thirdly, it would be useful to consider whether new theoretical, conceptual and methodological understandings of teacher preparation and development emerge despite the specificities of different cultural contexts.
2. Such research should not be confined to merely the analysis of macro-teacher educational concerns ("restructuring teacher education": Wideen and Grimmer: 1995): for example, about the influence of donor aid on teacher development

projects, or research on the relationship between teacher development and human resource of developing world countries. Instead, it should attempt to address the growing global concern amongst teacher educators about the relationship between these macro-educational concerns and the day-to-day design, delivery and implementation of teacher preparation programmes ("reconceptualising teacher education": *ibid.*). Issues around exploring for more useful models of ensuring quality teacher education may emerge from this kind of research.

3. This research has suggested the concept of individuals within such rapidly changing contexts being pushed or pulled by forces exerting influence on the development of their "multi-cultural selves". The teacher preparation programme is one example of the arena wherein the multicultural self is presented with opportunities for definition. Using the approach of autobiographical reflections was seen as a powerful intervention in the development of these student teachers' identity. What other influential and acceptable forces brought to assist teacher educators and STs to realise the potential of their multicultural selves? What other enabling processes can be used to develop strong "personal working theories" amongst novice and experienced teachers?
4. I have shown in this study the use of engaging in lifehistory as a pedagogical tool for teacher development. Could practicing/experienced teachers within other rapidly changing contexts also benefit from using a lifehistory methodology to develop deeper conceptions about their "personal working theories" and about their "multicultural selves"? Could the same process of critical reflection also not assist teacher educators examine their own sets of expectations about English language teaching and learning, which they project (perhaps unconsciously) onto their student



teachers? These are potential areas of research.

5. This study has focussed on pre-service teacher preparation. How can this model of teacher development be used within the context of in-service teacher development? What changes will be necessary? How will mentor teachers benefit from a process of autobiographical analysis of their ELTL during the apartheid era and in the context of change?
6. This study has focussed on student teachers during their engagement over the span of one year. The research focus has been primarily on the teacher preparation process as novice student teachers in a pre-service programme. An obvious longitudinal study needs to be conducted in order to follow these STs into their places of employment. This will enable the researchers to trace the development of the student teachers' experiences of ELTL over the path of their career as future teachers. It would be useful to track student teachers evolving "personal working theories" as they develop from novice to expert teachers. This will enable teacher educators to evaluate the impact of the pre-service programme interventions in their lives. This could enhance the delivery of in-service programmes tailored to teachers' specific developmental needs.
7. A more deliberate analysis needs to be conducted exploring the nature of the relationship between teacher education institutions and their school partners. The process of setting up more democratic partnerships is a valuable area for future research, which will benefit both the teacher education institutions and the school/ learning sites.
8. Research into teacher thinking in the South African context has been an under-researched area. Teachers have usually been on the receiving end of educational research. Future research should be engaged in in order to reveal the sophisticated and complex processes that are involved when dealing with the teaching/learning process in the context of a rapidly transforming society. Teaching involves the teacher making decisions all the time during the process of engagement with their learners. More detailed analysis of the thought process needs to be conducted to reveal how teachers make sense of the act of teaching their pupils. This research study has presented some of the creative methodologies accessing STs' thinking, and of analysing the data produced during the data collection processes. Future research should extend these methodologies of data collection and analysis by looking at practising teachers within school/learning sites. Besides elevating the status of the voice of teachers themselves in the educational research arena, it will also provide insightful perspectives on how teachers make sense of the intended policy initiatives that are characteristic of a transforming educational context. Such insights will benefit the development of more informed discussions about the quality of pupils' teaching and learning.

Section Four: Limitations of this Study

This research study has consciously attempted to steer away from the over-emphasis of educational research in the South African focussing on emergent new policies around education. In particular, the dissertation does not focus on the most recent discussion documents (November 1997) issued by the Technical Committee on the Revision of Norms and Standards for Teacher Education (Department of Education: 1997). Certainly this document raises pertinent issues around the intentions of the policy makers to construct a systemic teacher education framework for human resource development in post-apartheid South Africa. It offers a managerial/administrative model for how the teacher development process will be regulated in the light of other educational policy proposals such the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA), the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Curriculum 2005.



It offers views about how standards for teacher development should be arrived at within the context of an inclusive consultative policy-making process.

It refers to a theoretical rationale for the development of teacher education programmes in relation to outcomes based qualifications.

At the time of designing my research study, as well as during the analysis of the findings, the full legal status of this discussion document had not been accepted. Such is the fluidity of conducting research within the context rapidly changing times. I decided therefore, to exclude any full reference to what this document signals in terms of focusing on the quality of teacher preparation.

My brief comments about this document's conception of professional teacher competence are reviewed in Chapter Two: Section 2.2 "The Nature of Professional Knowledge". I also believe that the focus of my dissertation is not completely related to the emphasis of this document, since it has been based on the experiences of STs during the course of the preparation to become teachers of English. In the light of the policy euphoria that still characterises post-apartheid South Africa some may regard this as a limitation of this dissertation.

In delimiting the scope of this research study, I made a conscious decision to focus on the research agenda of teacher thinking. This area of research has been an under-explored area of teacher education research in South Africa. This research report therefore does not draw on the wealth of research that has been developed within applied linguistics circles around teacher development of English language teachers. The following exemplary works have been neglected: Earl Stevick (1980), Larsen-Freeman (1983), Rod Ellis (1985), Richards and Rodgers (1986), Allwright and Bailey (1990), Jack Richards and David Nunan (1990). Instead I have chosen to explore the possibilities that teacher thinking research from the international context might bring to bear primarily on South African teacher development generally, and then more specifically on the preparation of teachers of the English language in rapidly changing contexts.

A third limitation of the study may be said to be the limited number of STs used in the "sample" to assert the research findings and conclusions of the study. In Chapter Three, I outlined the research methodology which suggested that there is no need to apologise for the use of the case study approach to research, so long as both the researcher and the reader are able to acknowledge the intentions of the research design. I drew heavily on the writing of Guba and Lincoln (1982) who argue that in searching for alternative methodologies to gain in-depth analysis of educational phenomenon, we also need to develop other criteria by which we evaluate research. I have presented in this chapter some of the alternative criteria to elevate the trustworthiness of the research endeavour suggesting that this dissertation will provide in-depth and qualitatively rich data. The choice for "transferability" (ibid.) to other research contexts is a decision that each individual reader will need to make. How "dependable" (ibid.) the data yielded in this study is on the specific individuals and /or contexts of this research is also a choice to be made by the reader. My responsibility as a researcher, is to provide sufficient background information within which readers can understand the specificities of the research context and thereafter, make their own decisions about the value of the research.

Another limitation of the research may be the level of inference that accompanies any research into the nature of individual thought processes. I have elaborated in Chapter Three: Section Three, the methodological and theoretical debates around this issue. We as researchers can only infer from the data we receive from the informants (student teachers in this study) what their thoughts are. I have described this as "looking into the invisible". In the research methodology chapter I indicated the multiple ways of attempting to obviate these concerns, to gain access into teachers' minds beyond using language data alone. I have utilised different forms of representation of these



thoughts (visual, oral and written). I have presented in Chapter Four elaborate means of analysing the data to ensure that one can get as close as possible to the interpretations of the teachers' thoughts.

In the presentation of the report I have made a conscious choice to vary the voices of different participants in the research process. I have attempted to creatively represent them through the use of different typographical fonts to indicate where my own presence as author recedes or is foregrounded (See Preface for explanation of these issues). In doing so, I presented a textual experience of dialogue within this dissertation. I believe that this form of representation of the dissertation is directly related to my view of research being a dialogical process. This dialogue occurs at several different levels between:

- the researcher and the research subjects,
- the researcher and the texts created, and
- the various theoretical and conceptual issues raised in the dissertation report.

I will admit that as author of the words that you see represented in this report, the voices of the actual data sources have been somewhat marginalised. This is an admitted limitation. I would have preferred more feedback from the participants involved in this study to be able to comment, reformulate, justify or verify my written representations in this study. This was not pragmatically possible. The varied and elaborate research methodology hopefully presents sufficient triangulation of the data from the variety of sources to help substantiate the claims made in this dissertation.

Closing Comments:

Stepping off the Podium

This dissertation explores an under-researched area within educational research in the South African context. It focuses on the crucial area of teacher development during the era of reconstruction of a post-apartheid context. This context is marked by rapid changes within the society and this has an important impact on the process of conducting research.

This dissertation is an example of the tensions that surface during the process of conducting research in such contexts. This dissertation attempts to present insights into the way in which student teachers experience the teaching and learning of the English language during various periods of their lives: within their homes, their primary and secondary schooling, their university experiences during the teacher preparation programme and during the period of their engagement as novice teachers during the school-based practicum. The research study employs the methodology of lifehistory research in order to gain insight into the student teachers' thinking as they engage in the process of becoming teachers of English. It focuses particularly on the words that are used to describe this process of becoming language teachers. It captures a glimpse into the lives of these student teachers. It uses a metaphor of music to capture the process of rendition of the research process: setting up the research process, collecting the data for this study and analysing the data produced. It attempts to gain insight from the student teachers' perspective of the process of becoming a teacher of the English language.

The voices of the student teachers are important contributions to the critique of the teacher development process.

The study presents the argument that teacher development is a complex process, which involves developing critical perspectives of one's biographical experiences of teaching and learning. In particular, this study looked at how teacher develop perspectives of teaching and learning English through the lens of their biographical experiences of language



learning and teaching. Various forces compete for dominance during the course of this process of development: the internal forces of the student teachers' biographical experiences, the forces of the institutional biography and culture of the teacher education institution and the school environment, and the macro- forces of the rapidly transforming social context. These different forces are held in creative dialogical tension as the student teachers work towards the development of a personal working theory of English language teaching and learning.

The study extends the constructs around developing identity as teachers of English into an analysis of the process of identity formation within the context of a rapidly changing social, political, economic and educational environment.

The construct of a "multicultural self" is posited to understand the complex, complementary and contradictory messages that emerge when individuals represent who they are in such an evolving and transforming social landscape. This study presents both theoretical and methodological tools for attempting to conduct research in such contexts.

The study has particular relevance for teacher educators, policy makers and educational practitioners in their united quest for improving the quality of teacher preparation programmes and the teaching and learning of the English language.

Having now rendered the musical experience of this dissertation, I hope it will be remembered not for the specific notes that one has heard, rather I hope, that the power of the music it has created will influence creative and critical thoughts about teacher development in rapidly changing social contexts.

As conductor of this research process, I now step off the podium...

[Continue to Bibliography](#)

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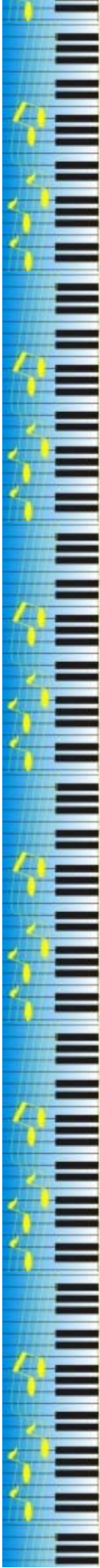
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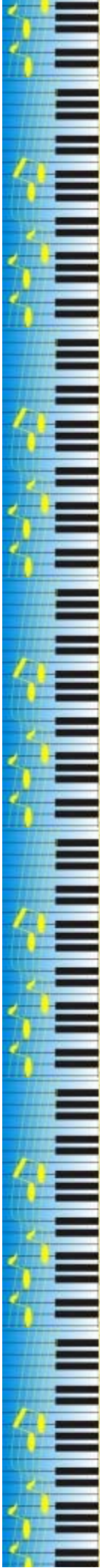
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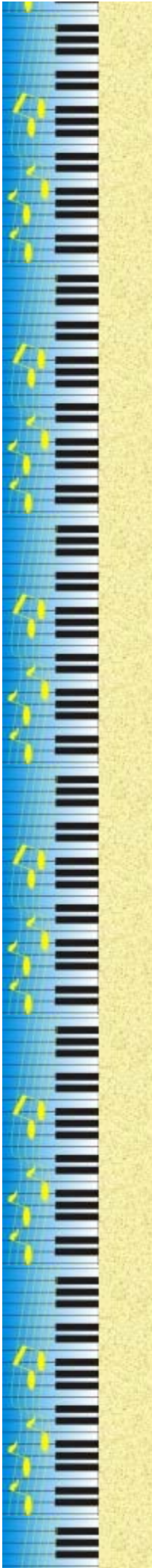
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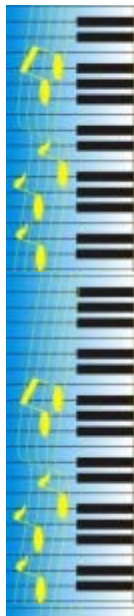
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Glossary of Musical Terms

Sections of the orchestra:

1. Strings

Violins, Violas, Cellos, Double basses, Harp

2. Woodwind

Flutes and Piccolo, Oboes and Cor Anglais, Clarinets and Bass Clarinet, Bassoons and Double Bassoon

3. Brass

Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, Tuba

4. Percussion

Kettle drums, Bass drum, Snare Drum, Cymbals , Triangle, Tambourine, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Celesta, Tubular Bells, Castanets, Woodblocks, Tam-tam or Gong, Whip, Maracas

The Orchestra Pit

The performance space within which the orchestra is seated : usually below the surface of the stage in the context of a stage musical production. The orchestra in concert is more likely to perform on the centre stage of the auditorium.

The Musical Score

The written notation of the music which is read (interpreted into sound) by the musicians.

Sonata

A composition which is created to highlight the potency, subtleties and attributes of chiefly one individual instrument (e.g. the piano) , or the relative contrast between two instruments (e.g. the piano and violin). The sonata usually consists of two or three movements, which are varied in rhythm and speed to reflect the potential of the focal instruments.

Movement

A section of a musical score which depicts a characteristic mood, tone, rhythm and speed.


Finale

The last movement of a musical instrumental composition, performed as the closing act of the drama, opera or musical performance.

Programme Notes

The description of the particular performance being witnessed is captured with details concerning the background of the musical composition, the conductor, the musicians, and the order of presentation of the musical repertoire to be rendered.

Harmony



The agreeable arrangement of apt arrangements of different musical parts creating an overall artistic effect of congruence. Usually, referring to the melodious blending of different sounds.

Counter-harmony/

Counterpoint Melodies added as accompaniment to a given melody, offering contrast with the main melody. The accompaniment is attached to the composition according to fixed rules within a conventional classical musical composition. I have used the term counter-harmony to refer to the convergence and divergence from the main melodic line.

All Italian musical terms depicting intensity of tone and volume, speed and pace that were used in this dissertation are explained in the course of the text.

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I am grateful to Anriette Chorn (KwaZulu-Natal Performing Arts Company: Co-ordinator: Music Education and Development) for her advice and comments about the musical metaphors used in this dissertation.

Thank you also to Jenny James-Singh (UDW : Music Department) for her assistance in the musical labelling of the text.

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Declaration of Originality

Declaration of Originality I, Michael Anthony Samuel, declare that this dissertation is my own work, and has not been submitted previously for any degree in any other university. Michael Samuel

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Appendices

• Appendix 1

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER 1: ATTITUDES OF MENTOR TEACHERS TOWARDS UNIVERSITY OF DURBAN-WESTVILLE'S (UDW) MODEL OF SCHOOL-BASED TEACHING PRACTICE

BACKGROUND

During School-based Teaching Practice, the student teachers are attached to mentor teachers who supervise their day-to day activities in the school. The student teachers at UDW are involved in a collaborative curriculum development project, which sets out to develop a response to a contextually based school/classroom situation. An action research project of developing a curriculum response within the teaching of English is envisaged to address the problem identified. This interview aims to tap mentor teachers' views of this model of school-based teaching practice. The interview should take place immediately after the students have completed their school-based teaching practice session.

The following set of data will be collected in the interview. The interview questions should guide the discussion with a mentor teacher about their attitudes/ views about the UDW model of school-based teaching practice:

A. Biographical Details of the Interviewee:

1. Teacher's Name/Initials:
2. Name of School:
3. Number of UDW student teachers supervised during the year:
4. What grades/standards were the student teachers allocated to? Why?

5. Have you been a Mentor Teacher in the past? Yes___No___
 1. For UDW Student teachers?
 2. When/How often have you served as a mentor teacher for UDW student teachers?

3. For Other Teacher Education Institutions: (provide name/s)

When/How often have you served as a mentor teacher for other teacher education institutions?



B. Being a Mentor Teacher

1 How do you interpret your role in relation to the student teachers during school-based teaching practice?

2. How and when was this role defined for you?

3. Who defined this role for you?

4. What do you like/dislike most about being a mentor teacher?

5. How do you think the role of a mentor teacher could be improved?


C. UDW Faculty of Education Model of School-based Teaching Practice

1 The Faculty of Education at UDW expects you to assist the student teachers in particular ways. What do you think the Faculty expects you to do? What are your opinions of these expectations?

2. Are the expectations of UDW Faculty of Education the same/different from other teacher education institutions? Describe the similarities and/or differences.

3. Have you worked with an Action Research project before? If so, could you describe this project.

4. Describe the process within this school for the development of



the curriculum for language teaching and learning.

5. What do you think of the model of school-based teaching practice being used by the Faculty of Education at UDW?

6. What do you think was the role of :

1. the university lecturers

2. the student teachers

3. the mentor teachers

7. What is your opinion of these roles in terms of preparing student teachers:

1. as teachers of languages:

2. as developers of the language curriculum:

3. as researchers about language teaching and learning:

8. As a resident/mentor teacher, what do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of the UDW model of School-based Teaching Practice?

1. Strengths:

2. Weaknesses:

9 Curriculum Package:

9.1 Did you receive a copy of the Curriculum Package produced by the Student Teachers? Yes___No___

9.2 What is your opinion of this package?

3. Will you use it in your classroom in the future?

9. In what areas of English language teaching/learning did you find the UDW students teachers most proficient/most lacking

Most Proficient Most Lacking

Areas



2

3

4

5

D. Pre-service Teacher Preparation Curriculum

1. What do you recommend should be some of the essential topics that a PRESET curriculum should address in preparing future teachers of English?
2. In which of these areas (10 above) do you think you are most proficient?
3. Would you be willing to participate in the teacher preparation by offering a lecture/ workshop on an area of English language teaching and learning?

• Appendix 2

ASSIGNMENT HANDOUT: THE POWER OF TEACHERS' NARRATIVES: USING AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Special Method English 1997

Assignment One: Term One

Writing My Autobiography


Adapted from Karen Johnson (1996a)

Rationale

All teachers have views of teaching and learning, which are implicit in their practices, but are rarely articulated, even to themselves. Thus, teachers have prior knowledge and ideas about teaching/ learning, which they use to make sense of their classroom practices. This becomes important when teachers are asked to implement new teaching and/or curricular approaches (e.g. Curriculum 2005) in the classroom because such approaches may challenge their underlying views of teaching and learning. For some teachers, they may wish to change their teaching and/ or curricular approach, but they have a very limited conception of how to do this because such approaches were not part of their prior experiences.

Procedures:

Constructing your own autobiography is an attempt to capture the



richness of your experiences and the complexity of your understandings of teaching and learning that was inherited during the apartheid era of schooling. Your autobiography will be a combination of reflections on your prior experiences and beliefs, a critical analysis of your experiences and beliefs during your school years, and the application of your insights into your current or future teaching and learning practices in a rapidly changing social context.

Your autobiography should reflect intensive and critical thought, be the result of multiple drafts, and be between 7 to 10 pages in length. The writing style should be informal but concise and relevant. Each autobiography should contain the following:

- Reflection
- Critical Analysis
- Application

Reflection: *Should address but not be limited to your:*

- Memories/impressions as a student, of your former teachers as a first/second language learner (inside and outside the classroom), of your teacher preparation programme, and of yourself as a teacher in the new South Africa;
- Beliefs/assumptions about how first/second languages are learned and how they should be taught;
- Beliefs/assumptions about the role of the teacher and the role of the students in a multilingual classroom/monolingual classroom.

These may overlap- extensive detail is not necessary – get to the point- which is central about these memories, beliefs/assumptions and why?

Critical analysis: *Should address but not be limited to:*

- Conceptions of how your prior experiences and beliefs shape you as a teacher/learner;
- Dimensions about yourself that you recognise and wish to maintain in your teaching/ learning;
- Dimensions that you wish to alter in your teaching/learning;
- Dimensions about teaching/learning that represent your greatest challenges for teaching in the new South Africa.

Application: *Should address but not be limited to:*

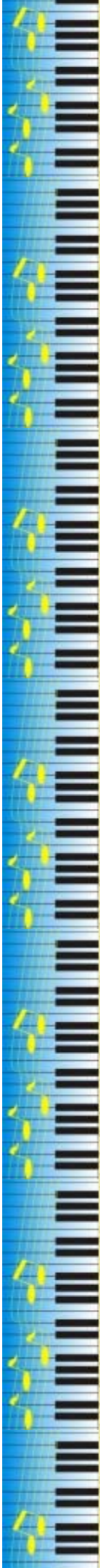
- A description of a critical teaching/learning incident that encapsulates you as a teacher/ learner during your school days
- Your description should illustrate how you understood this incident, how you responded to it, and how your understanding of and response to this incident reflect your conceptions of yourself as a teacher/learner.

This can be a past, present or future (what you anticipate facing as a teacher) incident.

DUE DATE: Wednesday 19 March 1997 :14h000

NO late submissions will be accepted.

• Appendix 3



INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2: STUDENT TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHING IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM

BACKGROUND:

Most South Africans speak many languages. Some of these languages are taught within the formal school system. However, not all these languages are given equal recognition in the school system.

This interview schedule is aimed at understanding your expectations of teaching English within the context of a multilingual classroom.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS:

1. INITIALS:

2. HOME LANGUAGE:

3. B.PAED IV _____ HDE _____

4. SCHOOLS YOU ATTENDED:

Primary:

Secondary:

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1 What is your definition of a multilingual classroom? Describe some examples.

2 What do you consider to be the obstacles and challenges that you are likely to find in the teaching of English in a multilingual school/classroom ?

- *Prompts:*
- social issues

- cultural issues


- historical issues

- political issues

- resources:

human resources: staff/administration

physical: textbooks/classrooms/materials



financial

- management related issues

departmental

school level

- educational

assessment/examinations

curriculum

syllabus

classroom methodologies

- other

3 Do you think you will be able to overcome these obstacles and challenges facing the teacher of English in a multilingual classroom? If yes, why ? If no, why not?

4 What strategies do you think you will use in order to teach English in a multilingual classroom?

5 What do you expect to gain from the Special Method English programme?

Thank you for sharing your views in this interview.

• Appendix 4

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER 3: STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR LIFE EXPERIENCES AS REPRESENTED BY THEIR VISUAL COLLAGES

In this interview we will attempt to understand what you consider to be the shaping influences in your life experiences. We will explore how you think these past/present life experiences influence your understanding of teaching and learning of the English language and about your conception of "a teacher".

1. You have chosen to represent your life experiences through these particular selected images. Can you explain:
 1. what these images are,
 2. why you chose these particular images, and
 3. What you think they say about yourself: who you are.
2. How do you think these past/present experiences influence you as :

2.1 a future teacher

2.2 a future teacher of the English language

• Appendix 5

EXTRACT FROM ACTION RESEARCH BOOKLET FOR SCHOOL-BASED TEACHING PRACTICE: SPECIAL METHOD ENGLISH (1997: pages 5-7)

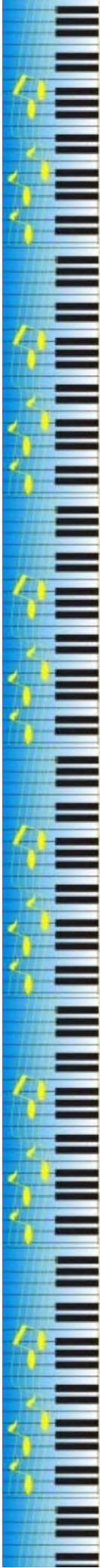
Reflective Journal

You must record in a Reflective Journal all your own involvements and actions during the period of developing insight: beginning on the day before you go to the school (what you anticipate) and ending on the first day after the two week block session (what you think you have learnt, achieved).

This journal must be recorded on a daily basis, including any number of entries per day as you discover "new insights". This is an individual exercise.

Your reflective journal must include:

1. your critical evaluation of the quality of language learning and teaching within the particular classrooms, the particular lessons you teach or visit. This includes therefore analysing and evaluating:
 1. your own lessons taught;
 2. your buddies' teaching of English lessons;
 3. the resident teacher's lessons;
 4. the lessons taught by other teachers (besides English) who teach the particular class that you are focusing on;
 5. the lessons of other language teachers (perhaps teaching the same grade/standard or level of



pupils as your target class).

2. The insights you have gained through observing, interviewing, discussing with "relevant others" (You will decide who this description includes.) Be sure to include a range of different individuals which more accurately represent a diversity of views about English language teaching and learning at your particular school.
3. The emerging picture of the source(s) of the problems with English language teaching and learning at your particular school. This picture might emerge after a process of gathering data about the specified problem area through, for example, questionnaires, interviews, tape recordings of classroom dynamics, etc...

Do not be surprised that the problem is usually a messy one as different interpretations of the problem may be possible. Record your own changing (?) views about the problem.

4. Document the process of identifying which problem you have come to focus on and how you would like to tackle it.
5. Document the process of negotiation with the resident teacher and "relevant others" as you begin to focus on the specified problem area which you will work on from week three. Be aware of what curriculum programme the resident teachers and pupils intend working on during your planned intervention.
6. Your daily reflections on the comments made by the resident teachers, the supervising lecturers during their visits to your school.
7. Any other valuable comments about your role as a student teacher of the English language.

MOST IMPORTANT:

This reflective journal IS NOT a descriptive diary of events;

It IS a document, which reveals your ability to provide critique and evaluation of events, plans, actions, persons, practices, etc...

The reflective journal must be kept with you at all times during the school-based teaching block session. Your supervisors will be referring to them as part of your evaluation of teaching practice. Therefore, the supervisor will be monitoring very closely the kinds of reflections you make during this period.


Your completed reflective journal must be handed in when you return to campus.

Due Date: First week of Term 4.

• Appendix 6

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER 4:

SEMI-STRUCTURED



QUESTIONS FOR STIMULUS RECALL SESSION: STUDENT TEACHER'S COMMENTARIES ON THEIR CLASSROOM PRACTICE

This interview schedule will be used to prompt a student teacher's commentary on a video-taped lesson (Tape 1) (one period) of one of his/her classroom lessons. The interview will take place immediately after the lesson is taught. The student teacher (respondent) will view the video of his/her lesson (Tape 1). During the viewing of the video the student teacher will be asked to stop the video by remote control to comment on the strategies used in the classroom lesson. This stimulated recall session will also be video-taped (Tape 2).

The semi-structured questions below will be used to prompt responses during the taping of video Tape 2.

The purpose of this interview is to understand:

- 1 What strategies for English language teaching and learning (ELTL) do student teachers use in their classrooms?
- 2 What reasons do student teachers provide to account for why they use these strategies?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Before watching video tape 1


- 1 What did you intend to achieve in this lesson? Do you think you achieved these intentions? Why/Why not?

During watching video tape 1

- *2 Why did you use this particular strategy during this lesson? (prompted by the action strategy used in the video-taped lesson: Tape 1.)

* MAIN FOCUS OF THE INTERVIEW

- 3 What alternative strategy could you have used?
- 4 Where did you see this strategy being used before? (Strategy used on Tape 1.)
- 5 Whom did you learn this strategy from?
- 6 Was this a strategy that you learnt/observed:
 - during your lessons as a pupil in school?
 - during your university lessons: undergraduate/HDE programme?
- 7 Has the mentor teacher influenced your choice of strategy? Were any strategies prescribed to you by your mentor teacher?
- 8 How have your peers influenced you in the kind of strategies used in this lesson?



9 How has the university lecturers/supervisors influenced you in the kind of strategies used in this lesson?

10 Do you think that your strategies were influenced (consciously) by any theoretical views of ELTL? If so, which theories? How did these theories influence your choice of strategy?

11 How do you think your personal/social/family/religious/cultural background influences the choices you made in this lesson?

12 What influence do you think the following issues have on the choice of strategies used in this lesson:

- the school context?
- the school syllabus?
- the particular pupils in this class (general characteristics)?
- the language status (L1 / L2) of the pupils?
- the language competence of the pupils?
- the university's view of school based teaching practice as enunciated by the Teaching Practice Guide?
- any other influences?

Thank you for participating in this interview

(Approximate time of interview: 40 minutes)

• Appendix 7

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER 5: END OF YEAR REFLECTIONS:

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW: NINE CASE STUDY STUDENTS

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this interview is to reflect on your experiences of the Special Method English Course (SMEC), now that you have completed this year of study. This is an opportunity to look back on this whole academic year together as a group. Do not hesitate to contribute your objections to or affirmations of what your colleagues say during the course of this discussion. We will be focusing on the following main areas of concern:

your experiences of the Special Method Course;


your experiences of School-based Teaching Practice;

your views about how this course has influenced you in relation to the profession of teaching;

your future plans.

QUESTION ONE

What do you consider to be the highlights and limitations of the SMEC?



QUESTION TWO

Developing critical reflective practice has been one of the important characteristics of the SMEC. You have been engaged in the following activities:

1. writing your own biography of English language teaching and learning in your home, school and university education;
2. constructing a collage depicting your life experiences and its impact on your role as a future teacher;
3. compiling a reflective journal of your experiences of both on-campus and school- based activities and programmes;
4. conducting an action research project to address English language teaching and learning during school-based teaching practice;
5. a live-in weekend course based on Curriculum 2005.

By reflecting on your personal development during the duration of this course, evaluate the strategies in this course in developing your becoming a "critical reflective practitioner" of English language teaching and learning.

QUESTION THREE

What would you recommend to a future student who is registered in the Special Method English Course?

QUESTION FOUR

How has this course (its experiences/its activities) developed you:

Personally?

Academically?

Professionally?

QUESTION FIVE

Do you feel adequately developed to handle English language teaching in a multilingual context?

QUESTION SIX

What are your future plans now that you have completed this course?

• Appendix 8

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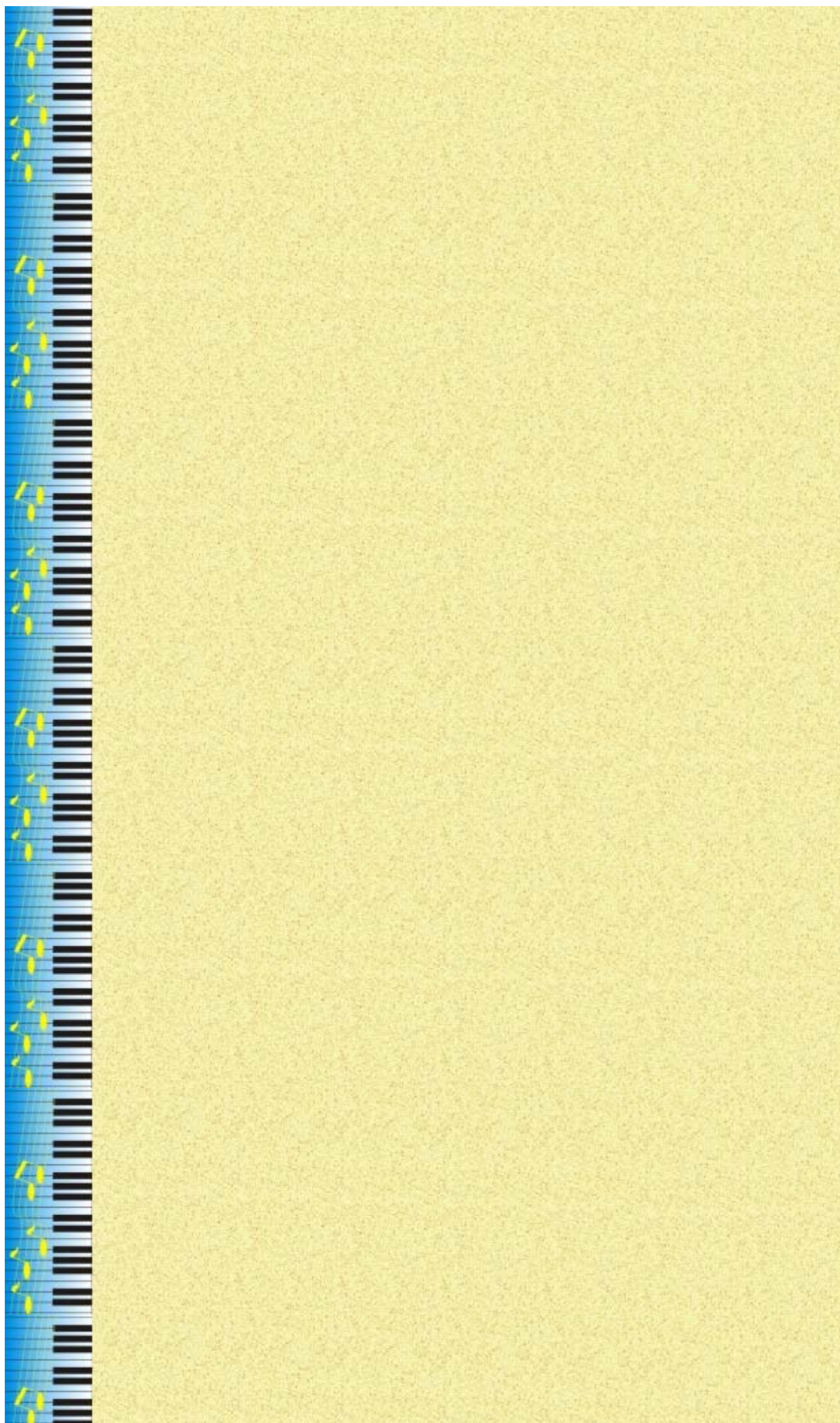
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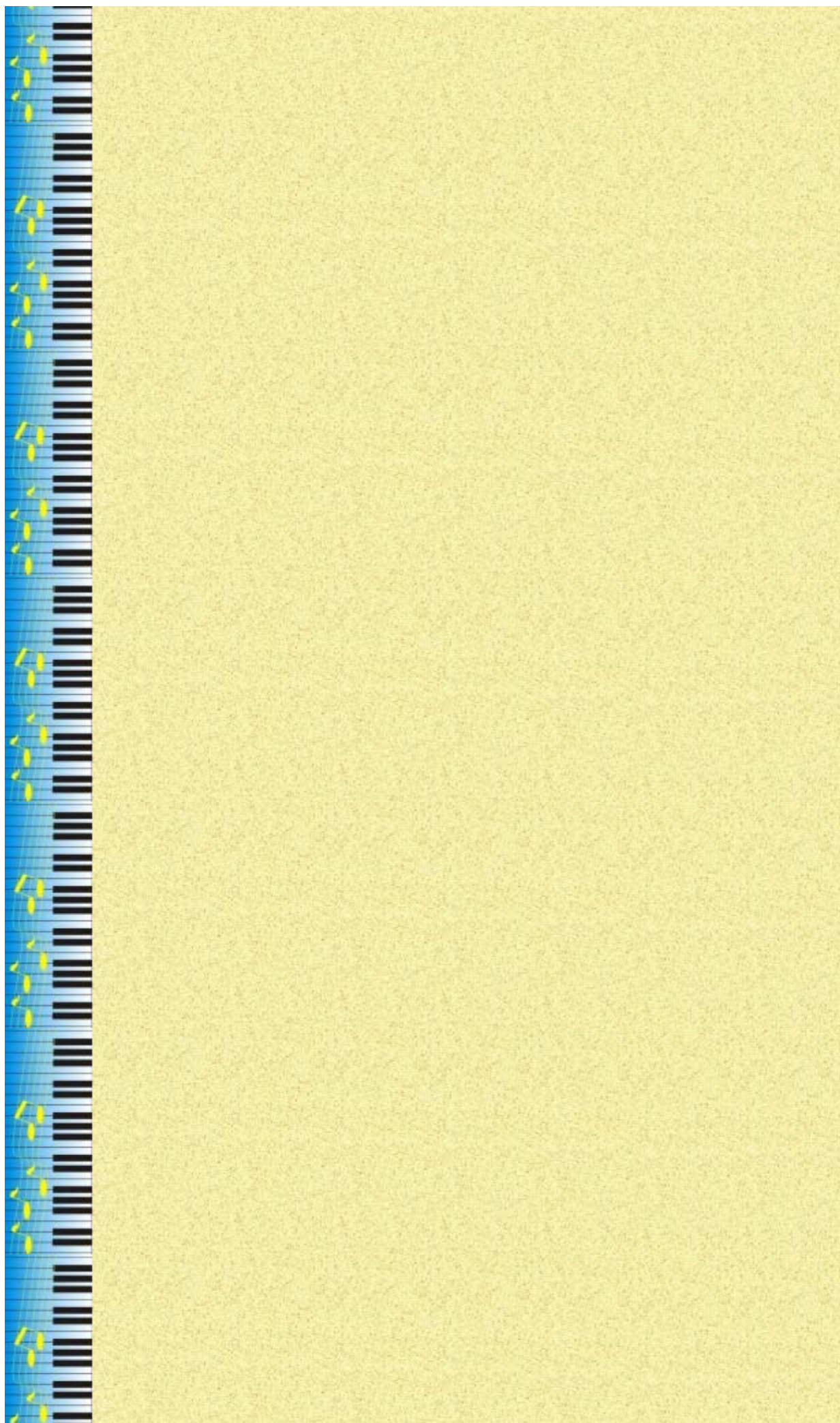
• Appendix 9

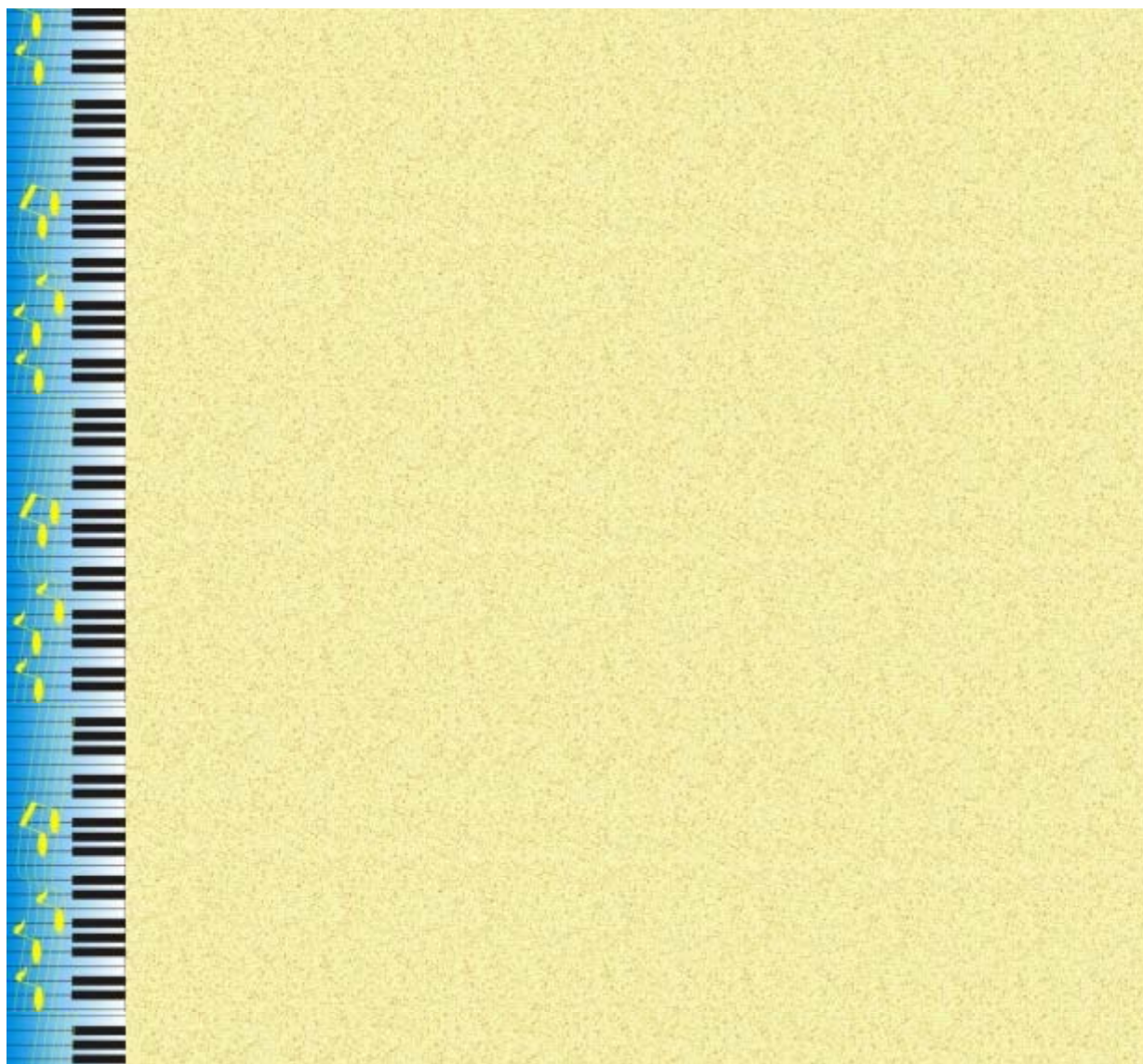
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❖ Appendix 9

SPECIAL METHOD ENGLISH CURRICULUM PROGRAMME SCHEDULE 1997

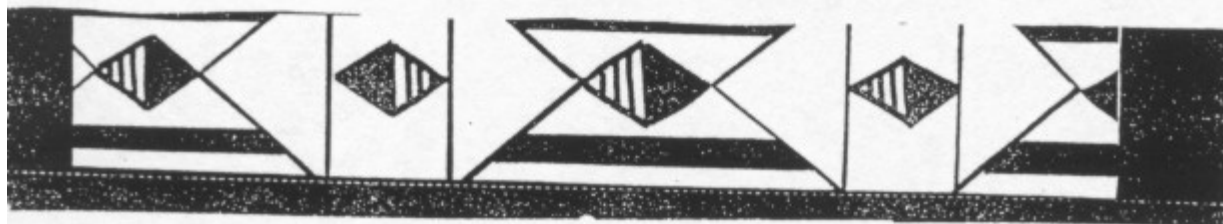
OVERALL THEME : TEACHING ENGLISH IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM



FOCUS	MOD U L E	no of sessions		SECONDARY		PRIM	CURRICULUM TOPIC
				Multi lingual ism	Literature and Textual Analysis	Prim	
Lecturers				MAS	BG	HVR	
"INPUT"	1	17/02 19/02 (2)					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Orientation to programme • School placements
• Context issues		24/02 26/02	A	C	X	C	1.1 C (S+ P):
• Student back-ground		03/03 05/03 10/03 12/03 17/03 19/03 (8)	T1	(S+P) 1.1		(P+ S) 1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the language? • Developing biographies of ELT+L in the SA context • School based language policies • Curriculum Policy and Development • Designing an integrated curriculum
"INPUT" + classroom focus	2	24/03 26/03	B	X	X	C	C (S/P) 2
• Theory		07/04	T1			(S/P) 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Acquisition • Models of ESL teaching and learning • Approaches to ESL • Error Analysis
Back-ground (Knowledge)		09/04 14/04 16/04 21/04	T2				

	23/04 (8)					
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Skills focus: Developing Students teachers' and pupils' skills	3	* 30/04 05/05 07/05 12/05 14/05 19/05 21/05 26/05 (8)	C T2	E (S) 3.1	E (S/P) 3.2	X	3.1 Developing Writing Skills 3.2 Reading Textual Materials
Skills focus: Developing Students teachers' and pupils' skills	4	28/05 02/06 04/06 09/06 11/06 * 18/06 23/06 25/06 27/06 (9)	D T2	E (S) 4.1	E (S/P) 4.2	E (P) 4.3	4.1 Developing Reading Skills and Oral Skills 4.2 Teaching Literature 4.3 Designing a writing programme Writing stories for children Storytelling
SBTP Practice focus	5	21/07 23/07 28/07 30/07 (4)	E T3	SBTP group I	SBTP group II	SBTP group III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to SBTP • Action Research • School based research • Collaborative Teaching • Lesson Planning • Worksheet design
		04/08 06/08 11/08 13/08 18/08 20/08 25/08 27/08 01/09 03/09 08/09 10/09 (6w)		SBTP group I	SBTP group II	SBTP group III	School based teaching practice session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical reflective practice • Research • Curriculum Planning and design • Teaching • Developing worksheets • Marking and assessing pupils • Feedback to pupils
		15/09 17/09 (2)		SBTP group I	SBTP group II	SBTP group III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalising the workbook • School research Reports • Reflections
Critical reflection (Attitudes)							
Skills focus: evaluation	6	29/09 01/10 06/10 08/10 (4)	F T4	C (S)	X	C (P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and Evaluation • Orientation to Exams



Welcome to the Special Method English course! The prime aim of this course is to develop you as committed teachers of English who respond positively to the challenges facing the design, production and implementation of a new curriculum for education and training. The course aims to cultivate your competencies (knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) in designing and programming qualitative experiences for learners of the English language. The strategies that you will develop to handle English language teaching and learning will emerge from a continuing critical reflection on the nature of current practices within the school system.

The aim of the course is not to prepare you merely to fit into the current patterns of English language teaching and learning within any educational or training site. Through debates about the nature of language acquisition we hope to provide you with the appropriate tools with which to critique our own past experiences of language learning. We will be specifically focusing on the recognition of the rich source of many different languages within the South African society and how these different languages can be developed alongside each other. We will critique how the school system contributes to the development of our multilingual society.

We will look at the different contexts within which English language teaching and learning occur in the South African society: e.g. schools and the workplace. We will look at the policy documents regulating such contexts in relation to the theme "Teaching English in a Multilingual context".

The course aims to balance the values of having a sound theory about English language teaching and a sound repertoire of practical strategies to cope with developing pupils' language competences. The theories we will discuss will help you to ask better questions about English language teaching and learning. The approaches, methods and techniques will help you to critique the theories about language acquisition.

It is impossible to complete the process of professionalisation. This academic year will only be the beginning (?continuation) of a long journey of developing your expertise as a teacher of English. As a developing professional, a large degree of the responsibility for your development will be placed in your own hands. The course leaders will make available to you the extended reading material which is compulsory reading. The readings for each module will be collated into a coursepack.

There are only 45 contact sessions with your course leaders during the course of this year. You must read the prescribed material from the coursepack before and after each session. The limited number of contact sessions can only introduce you to the issues with which you must be familiar. It is your responsibility to read the prescribed materials in order to contribute meaningfully in the contact session.

This course should be seen in relation to all the other courses in the final year programme. In particular the two main components of the course are:

- 1 the formal contact sessions (ALL LECTURES ARE COMPULSORY)
- 2 the school-based teaching practice session in term three (pre and post SBTP)

Most students have seen the SBTP session as the culmination of the work done during this course. Note carefully the details for the SBTP programme using an Action research framework.

MODULE ONE : EXPERIENCES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

CORE MODULE FOR ALL STUDENTS



- Module one begins with an exploration of what constitutes the phenomenon language and raises awareness of experiences of learning and being taught English.(2)
- The background experiences of the students will become the focus as the varieties of contexts within which English language teaching and learning takes place are examined. The students will construct biographical accounts of their own experiences of teaching and learning English. (2)
- The policy documents of the Interim Core Syllabus for the school system (both L1 and L2) and the proposed NQF Areas of Learning Committee Report : Literacy, Communication and Language will be explored. (3)
- The learning of English in contexts other than the formal school system will also be explored.(1) (8)

The design of an integrated (school) curriculum will conclude this module.

Assignment : Writing a biography
(Michael Samuel and Peter Reddy)

MODULE TWO : LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

CORE MODULE FOR ALL STUDENTS



BY TOM ARMSTRONG

- Theories of language acquisition
- Models of ESL teaching and learning
- Approaches to ESL
- Error Analysis

(Peter Reddy)

CHOOSE EITHER MODULE 3.1 OR 3.2

MODULE 3.1 DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

ELECTIVE (SECONDARY)



Adapted from Quebec frances October 1981

This module aims to develop the students' personal skills at writing new material for their pupils. It will through the process unpack the debates around the differences between testing the outcomes or product of learners' writing , and the developmental process approach to writing skills. Some discussion around "genre analysis" and its relation to developing writing skills will be conducted. Assessment of pupils written work will also be discussed.

(Michael Samuel)

or

MODULE 3.2 READING TEXTUAL MATERIAL ELECTIVE (PRIMARY)



This module will examine the kinds of textual material that is used in the English language classroom. The debates will help the students to make informed choices about the selections of textual material in their classrooms. Some of the debates will include: what constitutes literature study? what is a critical reader? how is ideology / hegemony being fashioned in the classroom? whose identities are being affirmed or negated in the English language classroom? These debates will be examined in the context of the requirements of developing critical literacy within the primary school.

(Betty Govinden)

MODULE 4 CHOOSE ONLY ONE EITHER 4.1 OR 4.2 OR 4.3

MODULE 4.1 DEVELOPING READING SKILLS ELECTIVE (SECONDARY)



This module will address the issues of the poor reading culture that exists within secondary school pupils generally. It will begin with an analysis of what the process of reading entails and how teachers can design reading programmes to develop the interest of pupils in reading. The development of second language learners reading skills will be particularly highlighted. The focus will be on the effective use of reading materials as a central pillar of curriculum development.

(Michael Samuel)

or

MODULE 4.2 TEACHING LITERATURE ELECTIVE (SECONDARY)

i A critical HISTORICAL background to English Studies, and a survey of traditional approaches to reading literary texts, will form the broad introduction to this section of the English Studies course.

ii Student teachers will be encouraged to explore the use of their university academic studies of literature in the context of the classroom. This module will focus specifically on the use of POST-STRUCTURALIST approaches to reading literary texts in our schools.

iii CRITICAL LITERACY, as an important element of reading, writing, listening and speaking, will be considered in the light of its implications for a critical pedagogy.

(Betty Govinden)

or

MODULE 4.3 DESIGNING A READING PROGRAMME FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

ELECTIVE (PRIMARY)

This module examines the modes of storytelling present in various cultures within South Africa. It will then focus on orality as a feature of storytelling. The students will be expected to design, write and produce a "reader" for primary school children. Graphics and Artwork accompanying written text will be explored. These readers will be "piloted" during the school based teaching practice.

(Peter Reddy)

MODULE 5 SCHOOL BASED TEACHING PRACTICE

THE GROUPS WILL BE DIVIDED INTO THREE GROUPS ACCORDING TO THE SUPERVISORS WHO WILL WORK WITH THE STUDENTS IN SBTP

2 weeks before SBTP:

The following topics will be dealt with :

- Orientation to SBTP
- Action Research
- Collaborative teaching
- Lesson Planning
- Worksheet design

6 weeks of placement within school (SBTP)

- Students will be expected to work in collaborative teams with the resident teacher , their teammates and the university supervisor to develop a strategy for resolving an identified English language teaching and learning problem within the school. The emphasis will be on the ability to develop a coherent curriculum programme in the form of a workbook of implementable strategies for the English language classroom.

1 week after SBTP

- A critical reflection of experiences gained during SBTP.
- Finalisation of the workbook
- School-based reports

HAND IN 19 SEPTEMBER 1997 at 14h00

MODULE 6 IN SEPARATE SECONDARY AND PRIMARY GROUPS

This module will be used largely as a reflective opportunity to address some of the gaps that the students and course leaders may have identified during the course of the SBTP and the course programme. Issues like assessment, evaluation and appraisal will be conducted during these remaining sessions.

(School-based teaching practice supervision groups)

YEARMARK

The yearmark will be calculated in relation to the tasks set during the modules and the major action research project. The process of determining the yearmark will be part of the discussion in term four when the issues of continuous assessment, formative assessment, summative assessment ; evaluation and appraisal are debated. It is envisaged that the SBTP projects will form a large part of the assessment.

GENERAL

We encourage you to participate actively in challenging the issues that are raised by the course leaders and your colleagues during the contact sessions. If you wish to consult with the course leaders outside of the lectures, it is necessary to plan an appointment. Please approach us in class to make an appointment.

The way to be successful in this course is to engage completely in the discussions. Also, you will certainly have many opportunities to present individual and group exercises. These exercises will often form the building block of the year's activities in the method classroom.

Hopefully by the end of it all you will have been enabled to meet the challenges of the classroom with some confidence and perhaps vitalise the teaching and learning of English in schools.

Do look forward to a challenging experience in Special Method English.

From the course leaders

Betty Govinden, Michael Samuel and Peter Reddy

Here's something to think about for the next session:

"All teachers have a theory of language learning. That is they act in accordance with a set of principles about the way language learners behave. This theory, however, may not be EXPLICIT. In many cases the teacher's views about language learning will be covert and will be implicit in what he or she does.

It is only when principles are EXPLICIT can they be examined with a view to amending or replacing them. Teachers who operate in accordance with implicit beliefs may not only be UNCRITICAL but also RESISTANT TO CHANGE.

Alternatively they may shift and change in an UNPRINCIPLED way, following blindly the latest fashion in language teaching.

Teachers who make the principles by which they teach are able to examine those principles CRITICALLY."

Rod Ellis