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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>ABSTRACT</u>	v
Keywords	v
<u>DECLARATION</u>	vi
<u>PRESENTATIONS EMANATING FROM THIS RESEARCH</u>	vii
<u>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</u>	viii
<u>LIST OF GRAPHS</u>	ix
<u>LIST OF TABLES</u>	x
<u>LIST OF FIGURES</u>	xi
<u>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</u>	1
1.1. Problem purpose statement	1
1.2. Research frame	2
1.3. Rationale	3
1.4. Research question.....	4
<u>CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE</u>	6
2.1. Introduction	6
2.2. Bernstein’s Pedagogic Device- a broad overview.....	8
2.3. What is history within the Field of Production?.....	10
2.4. What is history within the Field of Recontextualisation?	13
2.5. The purpose of school history	19
2.5.1. School history curricula	20
2.5.2. School history textbooks.....	22
2.5.2.1. The purpose of history textbooks	22
2.5.2.2. Recent history textbook research in South Africa	26
2.6. Construct validity in history	29
2.7. The content focus of this research	31
2.8. Conclusion	32
<u>CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY</u>	36
3.1. Introduction	36
3.2. The sample	37
3.3. Different approaches to textbook research	39
3.4. What is the methodological approach?	41

3.5. Conceptual lenses	44
3.6. Conceptual tools (the process of tool generation)	46
3.6.1. Academic dimension (operationalising Morgan and Henning's Dimension A)	46
3.6.2. Political dimension (operationalising Morgan and Henning's Dimension C)	48
3.7. The coding process	50
3.7.1. Coding of the academic dimension	51
3.7.2. Coding of the political dimension	55
3.8. Conclusion	59
<u>CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS</u>	61
4.1. Introduction	61
4.2. General overview of textbook chapters under review	61
4.3. Presenting data for the academic dimension	64
4.3.1. CAPS: levels of cognitive demand	64
4.3.2. Textbooks: levels of cognitive demand	66
4.3.3. Textbooks: conceptual knowledge dimension: quantitative data	68
4.3.4. Textbooks: conceptual knowledge dimension: qualitative data	74
4.4. Presenting data for the political dimension	78
4.4.1. CAPS: political stance	78
4.4.2. Textbooks: political stance	79
4.4.3. Textbook answer guidelines: political stance- quantitative and qualitative data	83
4.5. Conclusion	107
<u>CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION</u>	109
5.1. Introduction	109
5.2. The significance of the key findings	110
5.2.1. The academic dimension	110
5.2.2. The political dimension	114
5.3. Conclusion	117
5.3.1 Key insights	117
5.3.2 Limitations	118
5.3.3 Recommendation	119
<u>REFERENCE LIST</u>	120
Ethics protocol number	122

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to determine what understanding of doing school history is portrayed in assessment tasks in a sample of Grade 10 history textbooks. Bernstein's pedagogic device provides the framework for an investigation into the nature of history within the fields of production and recontextualisation. Within the field of recontextualisation it is important to understand the purpose of school history as portrayed in curricula and textbooks. The construct of history must be clear to determine whether construct validity exists in history textbook assessment tasks. This construct consists of an academic and political dimension. The analytical lens to determine the construct of history evident in Grade 10 textbook assessment tasks is drawn from Morgan and Henning's Dimension A and C. The analytical lens for the academic dimension is operationalised through the History CAPS, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, and the political dimension through Wertsch's Table of Collective Memory and History. The finding that emerges from the academic dimension is that the textbook assessment tasks are rigorous in terms of cognitive level spread, and that conceptual knowledge is most often assessed. In the political dimension it is evident that both official (explicitly identifiable in the History CAPS) and unofficial (implied or not identifiable in CAPS) political projects exist.

Keywords

History

Curriculum

Assessment

Pedagogic Device

Doing history

Knowing history

Construct validity

History textbooks

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Basil Alexander Mackenzie

30th day of November in the year 2014

PRESENTATION EMANATING FROM THIS RESEARCH

Mackenzie, B.A. (2013, October). *What understanding of 'doing history' is portrayed in the Early Expansion and Conquest units of the assessment tasks in a sample of Grade 10 CAPS-compliant history textbooks?* Paper presented at the South African Society for History Teaching Conference, Pietermaritzburg.

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LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1: Oxford History Grade 10: Frequency (percentage) of different cognitive levels across Unit 2 activity questions.....	68
Graph 2: Focus History Grade 10: Frequency (percentage) of different cognitive levels across Unit 2 activity questions.....	69
Graph 3: Viva History Grade 10: Frequency (percentage) of different cognitive levels across Unit 2 activity questions.....	70
Graph 4: Percentage of questions per textbook chapter that correspond to Grade 10 History CAPS cognitive levels.....	70
Graph 5: Oxford History Grade 10: Conceptual knowledge focus.....	72
Graph 6: Focus History Grade 10: Conceptual knowledge focus.....	73
Graph 7: Viva History Grade 10: Conceptual knowledge focus.....	73
Graph 8: Prevalence of Wertsch categories: Oxford History Grade 10 teacher guide.....	84
Graph 9: Prevalence of Wertsch categories: Focus History Grade 10 teacher guide.....	91
Graph 10: Prevalence of Wertsch categories: Viva History Grade 10 teacher guide.....	99
Graph 11: A comparison of the prevalence (in percentages) of broad Wertsch categories across all three textbook chapter answer guidelines	106

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Grade 10 National textbook catalogue.....	37
Table 2: Data sources.....	38
Table 3: CAPS cognitive levels and abilities covered during formal assessments compared to the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive levels.....	47
Table 4: Summary of knowledge dimensions of the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy.....	48
Table 5: Wertsch's Table of Collective Memory and History.....	49
Table 6: Codes used.....	52
Table 7: Examples of how coding of cognitive levels took place.....	53
Table 8: Key historical concepts- History CAPS.....	54
Table 9: Examples of coding of knowledge dimensions.....	55
Table 10: Overview of Grade 10 History topics.....	62
Table 11: Percentage that each European expansion and conquest chapter makes up of total textbook content.....	62
Table 12: Number of pages allocated to each textbook topic.....	63
Table 13: Activities and questions per European expansion and conquest chapter in each textbook.....	64
Table 14: Table of key historical skills from the History CAPS.....	65
Table 15: Summary of descriptions of the levels of cognitive demand of the doing history approach.....	66
Table 16: Cognitive levels and skills to be assessed in formal source-based history assessment tasks for Grade 10	67
Table 17: Percentage of questions per chapter that correspond to the CAPS cognitive levels.....	71
Table 18: Wertsch's Table of Collective Memory and History.....	83

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: A flowchart demonstrating the types of analysis conducted..... **43**

Figure 2: A mural by Mexican artist, Diego Riviera, painted in the early 20th Century **80**