

https://dspace.org/

Perspectives in Education, 16(1)

Shirley Pendlebury; Edward French; Bobby Soobrayan; Kuzvinetsa Dzvimbo; Catriona Macleod ...

1995-03
University of the Witwatersrand
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/29149
Pendlebury, S. (Ed.) (1995, March). Perspectives in Education, 16(1).

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

VOLUME 16 NO 1 MARCH 1995

PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION

Special Issue: Systems in Transition

Bobby Soobrayan, Banking on Education. Kuzvinetsa Dzvimbo, Basic Education in Mozambique. Catriona Macleod, Transforming Pedagogy in South Africa. Botlhale Tema, Democratizing the Matric Biology Curriculum. Stephen Lowry, A Critique of the History Curriculum in South Africa.

Editor:
Shirley Pendlebury

Assistant Editors:
Nazir Carrim, Pam Christie, Michael Cross, Edward French, Shireen Motala

Production Editor:
Lesley Hudson

Honorary Treasurer:
Derrick Young

Regional Associate Editors:
Ken Harley: *University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg*; Saleem Badat: *University of the Western Cape*; Yousuf Gabru: *University of the Western Cape*; Zubeida Desai: *University of the Western Cape*; Peter Kallaway: *University of the Western Cape*; Benito Khotseng: *University of the Orange Free State*; Peter Kota: *University of Fort Hare*; Enver Motala: *University of Durban-Westville; Crain Soudien: University of Cape Town*

Consulting Editors:
Michael Apple: *University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA*; Madeleine Arnot: *University of Cambridge, UK*; Basil Bernstein: *University of London, UK*; Linda Chisholm: *University of the Witwatersrand*; Marg Csapa: *British Columbia University, Canada*; Andre du Toit: *University of Cape Town*; Michael Katz: *University of Pennsylvania, USA*; Es'kia Mphahlele: *University of the Witwatersrand;* Johan Muller: *University of Cape Town*; Njabulo Ndebele: *University of the North*; Mokubung Nkomo: *New School for Social Research, New York, USA*; John Samuel: *Ministry of Education*; Elaine Unterhalter: *RESA, London, UK*; Michael Young: *University of London, UK*; Harold Wolpe: *University of the Western Cape*

Editorial Correspondence:
The Editor, *Perspectives in Education*, Department of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Type-setting & Design: Lesley Hudson

Printers: Natal Witness

Perspectives in Education is published twice a year by the Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and incorporates the Johannesburg College of Education journal *Symposium*.

ISSN 0 0258 2236

PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION
Volume 16 Number 1 1995

Introduction
Edward French 1

ARTICLES

Banking on Education
Bobby Soobrayan 5

The Status, Constraints and Potential of Primary Teacher Education Reform for Basic Education in Mozambique
Kuzvinetsa Dzvimbo 33

Transforming Pedagogy in South Africa
Catriona Macleod 63

Democratizing the Matric Biology Curriculum
Botlhale Tema 83

A Critique of the History Curriculum in South Africa
Stephen Lowry 105

REPORTS, DOCUMENTS AND DEBATE

Reflections on the 1994 History Workshop Teachers' Conference
Cynthia Kros 131

Report on Language Policy for Education
Nazira Cachalia 147

The Politics of Specialized Education
Sigamoney Naicker 163

Curriculum Reconstruction, the RDP and Late Capitalist Crisis
Frank Wilderson 173

Radical Posturing, the Challenge of Policy Making and the RDP: A Response to Wilderson
Andre Kraak 183

Kenton-at-Gordon's Bay, October 1995
Mark Abrahams 191

REVIEWS

Education Policy Discourse and the New South Africa
Ran Greenstein 193

W. Flanagan *et al* (eds.) *Vintage Kenton*
Tony Morphet 205

Subscription Form

Faculty of Education
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3
Wits
2050

	Individuals	Institutions	Students	Donors
Home	R40	R60	R25	R200
UK & Europe	£25	£40	£15	£200
USA & Canada	$50	$60	$25	$200
Austr and New Z	$50	$60	$25	$200

Name: . . . . . .

Address : . . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

I wish to subscribe to *Perspectives in Education* for volume : . . . .
and enclose my subscription for R/£/$
Cheques etc should be may payable to :
Perspectives in Education

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 1-5

Introduction

EDWARD FRENCH
Independent Examinations Board, BKS House, Wellington Road, Parktown 2193

Perhaps the most haunting moment in this special focus edition of *Perspectives in Education* devoted to education systems in transition is Mr Nkomo's complaint against the endemic rote learning encouraged by the system (quoted by Kros). The quotation is haunting for two reasons: Mr Nkomo made his complaint in 1939. And the complaint was stimulated partly by the concern of WWM Eiselen about the quality of "native education". Eiselen went on to draw up the blueprints for Bantu Education.

Survivors of decades of struggle for progressive education who were plotting against rote learning in the 40s and 50s warn wryly against too great an optimism about educational change. They caution us to dig for the deep and entangled roots of what we consider to be unsatisfactory practices. Recourse to "apartheid education" is no longer sufficient if we are to understand the inhibitions to change. Macleod's article on "Transforming Pedagogy in South Africa" takes up this theme. It looks intimately at the discontinuous discourses in which teachers are inserted and calls for a considered approach to helping teachers to understand the complex interplay of identities and contexts.

This edition of *Perspectives* underlines the toughness and the ample ironies of transition. For a framing sense of issues and debates readers might be advised to go to the substantial second part of the issue. Greenstein's "Education Policy Discourse and the New South Africa" offers a thoughtful, sobering setting of the context. He focuses on the shift of discourses from People's Education, through the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), the ANC policy framework, the Implementation Plan for Education and Training (IPET) and the first public draft of the White Paper. The article highlights the inescapable tensions in the move from emancipatory priorities and equity to technical planning for an education system that will contribute to economic reconstruction.

The economy features prominently in this issue. In the first place there is its impact on the financing of education. The volume opens with Soobrayan's study of World Bank practices. Soobrayan demystifies the bank by providing a welcome historical overview and shows that while the bank's funding and research interventions in education are problematic, they cannot be dismissed lightly. He argues the benefits of World Bank funding. As long as it is recognised that a simple top-down view of the bank's operations is inadequate and that the bank's positions

can and should be contested, it becomes possible to see ways of accessing the bank's resources without serious infringements of autonomy.

The effects of financial constraints on transition can be perceived throughout the issue, but nowhere more strikingly than in Dzvimbo's article on education in Mozambique. A major part of the article covers the general background of funding and provision. The huge backlogs, the legacy of the colonial era and of subsequent failed education plans, the lack of professional training and above all the sheer lack of money lead to a situation in which even where children are enrolled they are almost certain to have no books or resources and no teacher qualified with anything better than the equivalent of a school-leaving certificate. Indeed, they are quite likely to have no pencils, exercise books or classrooms. Given the huge constraints Dzvimbo's recommendations for giving priority to the professional features of training for teachers have little likelihood of being put into practice.

The question of the relationship of education to the economy comes alive in Wilderson's speech to the SASCO National Education Policy Conference and in Kraak's measured response. There may be justice in Kraak's description of Wilderson's polemic as "barracks socialism", but Wilderson provides tonic – for many readers it will also be nostalgic – reminders of concerns, convictions and analytical frameworks from a time when the compromises of implementation were unthinkable and the linkage of education to the purposes of the economy was heresy. (His barbed criticisms of the roles and practices of universities, though something of an aside, may be a foretaste of the next *Perspectives* special issue on tertiary education.) There is something reassuring in Kraak's hope that the interests of equity and critical education can be served by the thoughtful post-socialist, but also post-Reagan and Thatcher, approach to policy that he describes. However, he warns that a conscious, sometimes oppositional, effort is going to be needed to keep the balance between these values and the economic imperatives of reconstruction and development.

One major omission in the discussion of education and economy in this issue is any extended consideration of the future of work. Underlying most of the discussion is an assumption that the curriculum, whatever its deeper goals, must somehow lead to a job. This assumption is increasingly troubled by doubts about the future of 'jobs' as such within the global economy. A reconceptualisation of the nature of 'work' in the light of possible future patterns of distribution and consumption in which there are very few 'jobs' underpins some of the better thinking in educational projects abroad (like the now threatened *Goals 2000* programme in the USA).

A related omission, and one that is much closer to home and more urgent, is a discussion of the project, now enshrined as the first substantive recommendation in the White Paper, to integrate education and training within a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) aimed at promoting "lifelong learning". This intention has already become ingrained. "Education" alone is no longer. (Indeed, to keep in line,

this journal may well need to consider changing its name to "Perspectives in Education and Training".)

The NQF is intended to undermine the class hierarchy of education/training. It proposes to link education and training in such a way that learning will be enhanced. A strong concern within the integrative ideal is to ensure a growing role for general education in training, not to reduce education to factory management's needs – which is what some educationists seem to fear about the new planning. There are many issues to be explored around this intent, such as the shift from content and syllabus-driven curricula to 'outcomes-based' curricula, the pressure towards problem-solving, contextual understanding and technical competencies, modular design and rules of combination, and the shaping of the identity and roles of 'stakeholders' – something which is central to the new planning. The relationship of the integrated system to formal, general education demands much more exploration.

In this issue only Dzvimbo touches on the relevance of the debate on school effectiveness and quality assurance measures. Given that South Africa's budget allocation to education must be close to the sustainable maximum and that an overwhelming share of the allocation goes to the salaries of teachers with very low general 'productivity', questions of effectiveness and systemic evaluation certainly demand exposure. We must hope that these questions and the questions of the future of work and the design of the NQF will soon be the subject of *Perspectives* articles.

Some of the most durable work in this issue is to be found in the articles on curriculum. Tema and Lowry on biology and history syllabuses respectively disagree about the need for popular participation in curriculum design. Whatever the merits of the positions in this debate, the two articles constitute a vivid vindication of the importance of deeply informed and sensitive expertise in the construction of curriculum. At the same time, Kros's reflections on the 1994 History Workshop show just how much will have to go into supporting practitioners in the implementation of curriculum renewal.

A ghost appearing in several articles, but one that must haunt the whole issue, is the role of education policy intellectuals in giving shape to the actual system. The first months of the new government of national unity proved a major disappointment for many of those who had been involved in the drawn out process of policy development over the past four years. Important thinkers and issues seemed to be out of the running. To use Tony Morphet's expression in his review of *Vintage Kenton*, there were hopes that leading education intellectuals "might constitute the core of a new and glittering education 'court'. Somewhere there must have been some loose wires because it hasn't turned out that way". Yet it is clear, for example in Greenstein and Kraak, that the policy process has had a deep, if compromised, impact on pronouncements and may even be affecting practice. That the influence of research on policy and practice is very limited in some areas is clear from Naicker on specialized education and Cachalia on language policy.

Both the times and this special issue would seem to have called for much more rigorous work around the intractable yet essential questions of the relations of discourse/practice, policy/implementation etc. Not only the articles on general policy but those on specific curriculum issues point in the direction of these questions and seem to cry out for attention to them. The specific theorising is often lusty and healthy, while the theories of theory/practice relations in education starve. The subject for another special issue?

In a call for papers for this issue *Perspectives in Education* editorial committee wrote:

> In many countries the modernist project of universal, standardised, public education is under pressure. Schooling systems, received curricular practices and professional standards are widely questioned. Especially in the English-speaking world, education systems are faced with fiscal limitations, privatisation, new modes of management and control, demands for a stronger vocational orientation, heightened requirements for assessment and accountability... At the same time we are aware of the inertia of education systems – their resistance to change... The special issue will focus on South Africa, but articles with international perspectives will be welcome. We hope to be able to cover a range of approaches to the theme, from the broadest theoretical reflections on change and the processes of policy development and implementation to micro studies of the ways in which transition is reflected in local contexts, individual careers, specific areas of the curriculum. (draft call for papers)

The issue did not fulfil this ambitious intent. Several shortcomings have already been set out. And yet it is rich in vitality and quality. One leaves the issue with great ambivalence, though. On the one hand there is the sense of the richness of our theoretical resources, the abundance and contentiousness of Kenton, the History Workshops, the policy forums (and, after the article on Mozambique, even of our material resources). On the other hand there is the awareness of the insuperable gap between the wealth of this issue's articles and the struggle in the provinces to set up barely working transitional systems out of the disgrace of multiple apartheid education departments. Let us hope that the theory helps the practice.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 5-32

Banking on Education: A Critical Assessment of the World Bank's Involvement in Education in the South

BOBBY SOOBRAYAN
Department of Education, University of Natal, King George V, Durban 4001

The World Bank's involvement in developing countries often invokes passionate responses within intellectual and political circles. The numerous constraints, especially shortcomings in respect of financial and technical capacity, which encumber the transition project in education in South Africa, provide a compelling motivation to solicit the assistance of international agencies. However, there is very little systematic public debate in South Africa which could help to clarify key questions which need to be posed in the context of engaging with such institutions. This paper, which attempts to provide an assessment of the World Bank's involvement in education, is aimed at stimulating such debate. It examines the historical background of the bank, its education policies and practices and ends with a brief analysis of implications for South Africa. It argues that the bank's education policies and research in the past have been determined largely by institutional imperatives and ideological orientation. However it also discourages the tendency of viewing the Bank as a static entity and cautions against a deterministic analysis which gives rise to a conspiracy thesis in which the institution is viewed as a mere instrument of international capacity.

INTRODUCTION

Carnoy[1] begins his review of the World Bank's 1980 Education sector working paper thus:

> One of the most interesting features of the world education scene today is the extent to which international institutions influence educational policy in low-income countries.

The extent of this influence is even greater in the 1990s. More significant, and perhaps contrary to intuitive wisdom, is the fact that this huge influence is not matched by a corresponding financial commitment: contributions from external aid agencies account for a mere ten percent of the total expenditure on education provision in the South.[2]

This paper focuses on the World Bank, by far the most influential of all 'aid' institutions. Despite its progressive rhetoric, the World Bank's involvement in Southern countries is surrounded by controversy, prompting many people in South Africa (especially, though not entirely, from within the left) to express strong reservations about the motives and policies of the institution.

Two sets of developments suggest that the World Bank is anticipating a significant role for itself in the process of educational change in South Africa. First, the Bank has engaged in a number of pre-appraisal studies aimed at formulating projects to address specific problems in education provision in South Africa.

Second, the Bank has approved the sum of one billion rand for education lending to South Africa.[3]

Given the controversy surrounding the World Bank's role in the South and the widespread scepticism (especially within progressive organisations) about working with the Bank, it is surprising that the debate on the relative advantages and disadvantages of working with the World Bank continues to simmer under the surface. Two questions in particular are pertinent to this debate: What are the implications for transformation of (a) engaging, and (b) not engaging, in borrowing from the Bank? What options are available that will maximise the benefits and minimise the disadvantages of (a) engagement and (b) non-engagement? This paper will not attempt to answer these questions as this can only be achieved through debate and discussion in appropriate political structures and fora. Instead, this paper seeks to provide a critical analysis of the Bank's role in education with a view to encouraging a wider debate around the above questions.

The analysis is presented under the following headings: background to the World Bank; the institutional nature of the World Bank; an historical overview of the Bank's education policies; critical assessment of the Bank's technical assistance and research activities; source of the Bank's power and influence over Southern countries; and concluding comments – implications for South Africa.

BACKGROUND TO THE WORLD BANK

The immediate antecedents to the formation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) are to be found in the conditions of international trade and finance in the 1930s which were characterised by bilateral treaties, autarchic arrangements and imperial blocs. These conditions gave rise to the protected markets of the British Empire and simultaneously served to block the expansion of United States capital into foreign markets. In an effort to open up international economic relations and foreign trade, the US favoured 'multilateralism' – an ideology which underpinned the United States' proposal for the establishment of an international financial body to deal with the economic problems and reconstruction of national economies damaged by the Second World War. Although there was widespread agreement on the need for such an international financial body, the formation of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)[4] and the International Monetary Fund, at a conference of forty countries held at Bretton Woods in 1944, was strongly influenced by the US through the original proposal and the role of US officials in the processes leading up to the formation.

Although conditions in the world economy, which prompted multilateralism, receded with the emergence of United States dominance of the global economy in the post-war years, multilateralism continues to be a central determinant of World Bank and IMF policies. The Bank's commitment to multilateralism, rooted in a market orthodoxy, is clearly discernable in its articles of agreement and appears

frequently, either implicitly or explicitly, in its publications. Critics of the Bretton Woods organisations have advanced compelling arguments which posit the view that the overwhelming aim of these organisations is not in the first instance concerned with the economic and fiscal problems of borrowing countries, but rather that the World Bank's and IMF's policies, formulated to ameliorate economic and fiscal problems, are premised on a more fundamental and overarching objective of promoting a world system of multilateral trade and payments. Far from being ideologically neutral, the Bank and the IMF have a particular ideological orientation – rooted in a market orthodoxy – which underpins their interventions in Southern countries. Harris,[5] for example, articulates this perspective thus:

> ...the IMF's[6] commitment to a particular form of multilateralism is the key: it is the idea of multilateralism as a system where international trade and finance are determined by market forces rather than by state regulation, and this is rationalised on the grounds that market forces allocate world resources according to comparative advantage.

It should be stressed that the literature contains numerous perspectives on the Bank, some of which conflict with the perspective underlying the views expressed in the preceding analysis of the Bank's ideological orientation. One prominent view sees the Bank as a neutral organisation working towards development to the benevolence of all. An analysis of the significance of this and other conflicting perspectives is taken up later in this paper.

Two issues lie at the heart of the huge controversy surrounding the World Bank and IMF's conception of development strategies for Southern countries. First, this conception is imposed on borrowing countries as if it is the only growth path available to them; second, the IMF and World Bank's strategies for development are presented as being universally applicable to all Southern countries without due regard for the differences between countries. However, the robust adherence to a market orthodoxy which underlies their conception of development is not itself an issue. The literature is replete with case studies[7] which indict the Bank's policies in Southern countries at two levels. At the one level, these studies have shown that the Bank's policies ignore the intractable social objectives of borrowing countries and that it is particularly the poor who suffer from the consequences of such policies.[8] At a second level, many studies, including some of the Bank's own evaluations, have shown that many of the Bank's programmes, including the structural adjustment programmes initiated in the 1980s, have not been successful in meeting the Bank's own objectives. Even though the findings of such studies may be hotly disputed by the Bank and its supporters, the sheer scale of intellectual opposition does, at a minimum, make a *prima facie* case to question the wisdom and validity of the Bank's strategies for development and economic growth in Southern countries.

My very brief treatment of the ideological commitments of the Bank – imposed by the limited scope of this paper – may wrongly convey the impression of a deterministic analysis of the institution. Let me therefore clarify what I am not suggesting in the above discussion. I am not suggesting that the Bank has

single-mindedly committed itself to the same ideology since its inception; I am not suggesting that the Bank's overarching ideological framework informs its policies in any deterministic way; and I am not suggesting that the Bank has remained impervious to critique emanating from outside its institutional framework or from its own personnel. The fact is that the Bank has had a dynamic history during which it has undergone numerous shifts and re-orientations in response to a number of stimuli precipitated by changing international conditions, institutional factors, and accumulated experience. The complexity of the Bank's history and institutional structure does not lend itself to any simplistic analysis; however, even in accounting for these complexities, the Bank's abiding adherence, in the last instance, to a free market orthodoxy, remains an incontrovertible feature which has significant import in understanding the institution and its policies.

THE INSTITUTIONAL NATURE OF THE WORLD BANK

The fact that there are substantive areas of conflict between, on the one hand, the actions and policies of the Bank and, on the other hand, a left perspective on development, does not detract from another important fact: that the Bank is by far the most important international player in development in Southern countries.

In essence, the World Bank functions as a conventional commercial bank which borrows money on the financial market and aims to show a positive rate of return. The interest rate attached to loans from the IBRD is not much lower than that of private commercial banks. Only about one-tenth of the Bank's authorised or subscribed capital, referred to as paid-in, is used for its activities, whilst the rest, referred to as callable capital, is used as a guarantee to raise money on capital markets.[9] The huge amount of callable capital available to the Bank makes it a safe borrower, thus enabling it to borrow money on capital markets and from governments and central banks at very favourable rates. This imposes an imperative on the Bank to maintain its credibility as a sound financial institution in the eyes of potential lenders. I will argue later that this imperative has a decisive influence on the Bank's education policies and on what it chooses to fund in education.

The favourable rates at which the Bank is able to raise capital allow it to realise a positive return when this money is lent out at a higher rate of interest. Given the volume of this borrowing, the Bank – and through it, the controlling interests of the Bank – are important players in international financial markets.[10] The profitability of the Bank is contingent on the existence of a market of borrowers and on keeping the lead time for loan disbursements as short as possible. Furthermore, the predominant mode the Bank may use to strive for any significant increase in profitability is to increase aggregate lending volumes.

These characteristics play a central role in determining the way the Bank relates to borrowing countries. Many commentators on the Bank have alluded to the

eagerness with which its operations staff try to conclude loan agreements as quickly as possible in deference to the imperatives discussed above.

To describe the World Bank as essentially a commercial bank, though largely true, is somewhat limiting as it reduces the entire organisation to only the IBRD, which is but one component of the World Bank group. The International Development Association (IDA), another important component of the group, contains some characteristics which are significantly different to those of a conventional commercial bank. Unlike the IBRD, which raises its funding on capital markets, the IDA's funding is made up largely of grants from capital-exporting (referred to as Part I) member governments plus a smaller proportion made up of gifts from the IBRD's retained profits.[11] Although money obtained from the IDA has to be repaid, the terms of repayment are so easy that it is virtually grant aid. Money obtained from the IDA matures only after fifty years (after a grace period of ten years) and attracts no interest – except for negligibly small charges for administration and a fee for undisbursed credits, at 0.75 percent and 0.5 percent respectively. IDA loans, referred to as 'soft loans' because of the favourable repayment terms, are manifestly more attractive than IBRD 'hard loans' or anything available from commercial financial institutions. However, to qualify for access to IDA loans, a country must fulfil two criteria: first, it should not be deemed creditworthy for IBRD loans; and second, it must have a per capita GNP below US$540.[12] Initially, the Bank was resistant to the concept of IDA-type lending. It was only after the lobby for a more liberal type of development fund intensified as a growing number of Southern countries began to support this call, that the Bank "decided it would be wiser to co-opt the demand by incorporating the institution into its own structure than to oppose it".[13] As would be expected, there is an enormous demand for IDA loans and much energy is expanded by countries to qualify for these loans. There are many complex reasons why so many Southern countries engage in borrowing from the Bank (which will be explored later), but the attractiveness of the IDA is plain to see from the above analysis. The IDA strengthens the Bank's leverage as borrowers are reluctant to reduce their access to IDA funding.

The Bank's system of governance is another institutional feature which has a profound influence on its orientation and practice. In 1991, the Bank was made up of 155 member countries,[14] each of which contributes financially to its coffers. These member countries are referred to as 'shareholders' and their voting rights in the organisation are proportional to their share-holdings.[15] Needless to say, it is the most industrialised countries that command the greatest proportion of the votes[16] and consequently exercise considerable influence in the organisation. The United States of America, which commands 17,63 percent of the votes,[17] is the single most powerful 'shareholder'. The extent of US influence is borne out by the fact that nominees for the post of president of the World Bank are ratified by the US president and congress. Indeed, all the successive presidents of the Bank have to

date come from the USA. Empirical studies in the literature point to instances when the US ensured that its own foreign policy objectives were reflected in the Bank's policies toward particular countries as well as instances where the Bank proceeded to fund countries against the wishes of the US.[18] Whilst there can be no denying (on the basis of empirical evidence) the inordinate influence of the most industrialised countries under the hegemony of the US, it is also apparent that the Bank is not a direct instrument of US foreign policy. Further, in analysing the influence of different 'shareholders', it is important to account for the tensions and contradictions between fractions of international capital and between countries and how these tensions play themselves out within the Bank. The major problem with an instrumentalist analysis is that by not accounting for the above contradictions and by affording the US unimpeded power to manipulate the Bank, it obfuscates the possibility for contestation in negotiating with the Bank.

I have tried to show that whilst the World Bank is in essence a bank, its specific institutional characteristics require a conception that goes beyond seeing it as an ordinary bank. It is extra-ordinary not only because it administers huge volumes of financial disbursements, but also because of its definite location in the international ideological and political matrix.

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE BANK'S EDUCATION POLICIES

Lending to Southern countries only really began about two decades after the Bank began operations in 1945.

Table 1

Distribution of Lending for Education and Training by Region (US$ Millions)

Period	Africa	Asia	LAC	EMENA	Total
Total	**2,466**	**4,235**	**1,529**	**3,011**	**11,241**
FY63-68	206	89	61	123	479
FY69-73	577	479	233	433	1,722
FY74-78	537	516	421	742	2,216
FY79-83	538	1,381	367	709	2,995
FY84-88	561	1,770	447	1,004	3,782

The figures in Table 1 show a rapid increase in the aggregate volume of loans to countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This shift to the South coincided with two important developments inside and outside the Bank. First, the prospective client (borrower) base of the Bank was beginning to contract as the lending programme targeted at the reconstruction of Europe was beginning to run its course;

the imperative to find new markets was therefore one of the contributory factors for the shift of focus. Second, the 1960s saw a large number of countries obtain independence from colonial rule. For almost all post-colonial countries, the expansion of social services (including and, very often, particularly education) was seen as an important priority. The financing of such expansion provided the Bank with a huge potential market.

The germ which was ultimately to develop into a World Bank programme on education lending, was first conceived in the Bank in the late 1950s.[19] This was followed by a troubled gestation period marked by intense debate amongst Bank personnel, divided on the merits of lending for education. The debate centred around whether investment in education was compatible with the Bank's imperative to invest only in those areas that could potentially generate a positive return through contributing to economic growth. Investment in education posed particular problems because it was not readily reconcilable with the Bank's economistic conceptual framework and its institutional imperatives. The solution to these conceptual problems was provided by orthodox neoclassical economics which posits the view that education is made up of 'investment' and 'consumption' components. Policies for educational lending were finalised in October 1963 and, in deference to its institutional imperatives, the Bank decided to restrict its lending to those components that were 'bankable' – that is, the 'investment' components.

Table 2

Distribution of Lending for Education, 1963-83 (%)

Distribution	1963-69	1970-74	1975-78
By Level			
Primary education	-	5	14
Secondary education	84	50	43
Higher education	12	40	26
Non-formal	4	5	17
Total	100	100	100
By curricula:			
General & diversified	44	42	34
Technical & commercial	25	30	41
Agriculture	19	15	11
Teacher education	12	12	12
Management	-	-	1
Health & population	-	1	1
Total	100	100	100
By outlay:			
Construction	69	49	48
Equipment	28	43	39
Technical assistance	3	8	13
Total	100	100	100

Loans were therefore to be made available only for those purposes which could potentially contribute to economic growth. The figures in Table 2 show that projects in the first phase of Bank lending for education (1963-69) reflect a bias toward technical, vocational and secondary education, with most of the money going into building and equipping educational institutions. Significantly, in this phase, the Bank avoided investment in primary education, which was perceived to have less of an immediate impact on economic growth. Although there was a marginal increase in projects aimed at primary education in the 1970s, this avoidance persisted until the 1980s when the Bank made an about-turn in its attitude to primary education. From the beginning of the 1970s, financing was provided for buildings and installations (hardware), as well as for projects concerned with aspects such as curriculum, educational technology and teacher education.[20]

Although, as will be argued later, the Bank's conception of education has undergone some significant changes since this initial period, the original debates have had an abiding influence on the Bank's conception of education. It is therefore appropriate to analyse these debates in more detail here.

The distinction between investment and consumption, a basic tenet of neoclassical economics, allowed the Bank to uphold the imperative to invest only in that which is 'bankable'. The Bank did not eschew the consumption component of education, but from an economics perspective, its interest resided solely in education as an investment. This decision by the Bank, and the theoretical justification advanced in support of it, marked the beginning of an abiding relationship with human capital theory as the overall conceptual framework of the Bank's educational policies.

The debate on education inside the Bank coincided with the emergence of a burgeoning academic literature on the then fledgling area of the economics of education. This corpus of scholarship is primarily aimed at applying economic analyses to education and is almost exclusively grounded in human capital theory. According to this theory, more education and training of a certain type is an investment because it creates knowledge and skills which increase the productive capacity of labour in the same way that investment in new machinery raises the productive capacity of the stock of physical capital (factories, equipment and buildings).[21] These views provided a theoretical justification for investment in education that was in accord with the Bank's institutional imperative of investing only in that which is .bankable. Around this time, the Bank's own personnel embarked on intensive inquiry into the economics of education and human capital theory. It is within this intellectual nexus that manpower forecasting emerged as a theoretical justification for the positive correlation between education and economic growth. Further, its attractiveness was in no small measure related to its perceived usefulness as a technical means of identifying and quantifying educational needs for economic growth – thus satisfying the Bank's propensity for measurability. The fact that the theoretical and analytical tools of human capital theory and manpower

forecasting were not yet fully developed and tested for widespread application did not deter the Bank from adopting them. For the Bank, then, issues of theoretical cogency and analytical validity were subsumed by the more important need to uphold its institutional imperatives.

Propelled by the concerns expressed in the initial debates, the period 1963-1968 saw the Bank operating within rigid criteria for limited loans to education. However, this limited focus meant that only a small fraction of the potentially huge market for the financing of education was delineated for World Bank lending, causing tension between the imperative for investing only in that which is 'bankable' and the other imperative of expanding aggregate lending volumes.

Numerous developments both inside and outside the Bank in the late sixties had a decisive and abiding influence on its education sector. The predominance of manpower forecasting in most countries since the beginning of the 1960s provided the intellectual rationale for uncritical expansion of educational systems. This largely quantitative (as opposed to qualitative) expansion of education raised concern amongst people across the ideological spectrum, including the Bank's personnel. Thinking inside the Bank was beginning to shift towards a preference for extending the scope for educational lending. The Bank's response to these developments was heavily influenced by a policy review of its education sector, conducted by Edward Mason, which was completed in 1968.[22] The Mason report expressed the desirability of extending the list of areas eligible for education lending and explicitly advocated a preference for cost-benefit analysis, over manpower forecasting, as a guide to investment in education. Proponents of cost-benefit analysis argued that it "constituted one conceptual means whereby the Bank could encourage borrower restraint on excessive expansion of enrolments".[23] Based on its accumulated project experience, the Bank began to stress the need for more rational planning of education systems. The change from a limited focus to the need to conceive the borrowing country's education system as a whole, marks the beginning of a process which was to lead to the Bank exerting an inordinately high influence on education policy in Southern countries.

This shift reflected a crystallisation of the Bank's response to two interrelated and somewhat contradictory concerns: the need to contain uncritical expansion of education; and the need to expand the market for educational lending. The shift to a wider focus on education was therefore compatible with the need to expand the market for educational lending, whilst the emphasis on cost-benefit analysis supplied the conceptual tools to simultaneously address the need to contain uncritical expansion.

A second important development in this period began with the commencement of Robert McNamara's presidency in 1968 which saw a change in the Bank's rhetoric toward poverty alleviation. The vigour with which the Bank gave expression to this new focus on poverty inspired some observers to dub this shift the *McNamara Revolution*.[24] At the heart of the Bank's poverty thesis and the strategy

charged with giving effect to poverty alleviation was the notion: redistribution with growth.[25] According to the Bank's rhetoric, as expressed in the Education sector working paper,[26] education loans were to be consciously directed to the poor through areas such as primary education, adult literacy, non-formal education and media education.

The *McNamara Revolution* was accompanied by a sharp increase in the amount of capital raised by the Bank.[27] Whilst at a rhetorical level this may have appeared to be necessary to finance poverty alleviation, it was intended to offset a situation where the net capital transfer between the Bank and its borrowers was threatening to become negative. The Bank therefore had to find ways of spending this money, the availability of which led to a dramatic increase in the demand for projects. For implementation of its redistribution with growth strategy, it was necessary for the Bank to develop an operational definition of poverty. Two definitions, captured by the terms 'absolute poor' and 'relative poor', featured in the debate. The 'absolute poor' was defined according to a universal monetary criterion which delineated that section of the people with an annual per capita income of less than US$100. The concept of the 'relative poor' referred to those people whose annual income is less than one-third of the average national annual income for their own countries. Relative poverty, so defined, is also an indicator of in-country income distribution and therefore a function of social inequality. In deciding to adopt the concept of absolute poverty, the Bank's poverty focus remained in the realm of rhetoric in that it avoided the need to pose questions in relation to fundamental issues of social, political and economic inequalities which are the primary determinants of poverty.

Despite the vigour with which the Bank advanced its poverty focus and the concomitant strategy of redistribution with growth in its rhetoric, there were no accompanying shifts in the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of its approaches to education. The Bank's policy statements continued to emphasise only those aspects of education which would lead to a measurable increase in worker productivity and "would countenance only those patterns of provision which could demonstrate the potential to contribute directly to economic growth".[28] The Bank's approach to education from the late sixties and into the seventies – still firmly rooted in human capital theory – continued to view education in a narrow sense but with a conscious effort to exert greater influence on the education policy context of borrowing countries. Although there was no significant shift in its conceptual framework, the Bank did shift towards an orientation which saw it discouraging borrowing countries from using their own resources to develop what it perceived as the 'consumption' components of education.

By the 1980s, the need to influence the broad policy context of the borrowing country's education system was firmly entrenched in the Bank's education policy. Project-based lending, even with the attachment of side conditions and covenants, had failed in 'getting the policy context right'.[29] Education sector lending (ESL) became the dominant mode of lending in an attempt to achieve this system-wide

influence. The beginning of the 1980s also saw many Southern countries embark on World Bank and IMF-financed austerity measures and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs).[30] Structural adjustment lending is one part of sector lending and is primarily aimed at effecting macro-economic (as well as political and social) policy reforms along the lines prescribed by the Bank. The Bank's SAPs and, particularly, the notion of conditionality attached to structural adjustment loans (SALs) have been the subject of huge controversy and have evoked strong condemnation from many analysts. The blueprint for conditionality – whereby loan disbursements are conditional on the borrower effecting policy reforms in line with those prescribed in the loan agreement – is outlined in the 1981 World Bank report *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* – referred to as the Berg Report. The report underplays the importance of external factors and instead identifies domestic economic policy as the root cause of the economic crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The solutions offered are therefore only concerned with domestic factors, such as: shifting terms of trade to the rural sector and in favour of exporters; reducing the activities of the state in the economy in favour of the private sector; cutting down real wages in urban areas and introducing charges for state-provided services.[31] The Berg Report was widely criticised for failing to account for external factors and for imposing export-led growth as the only path available to SSA.[32] Although, in a follow-up report published in 1983, greater cognisance is taken of the influence of external factors, the policy recommendations contained in the Berg Report remained largely unchanged. The literature on SAPs is replete with severe condemnations of the Bank and IMF's meddling in the sovereign affairs of countries in SSA, positing a conspiracy between the Bank's interventions and the interests of international capital. But, as Loxley points out, conditionality is sometimes opposed by narrow sectional interests with a stake in the *status quo* and at the expense of the majority. Under such conditions "donors can make a persuasive case that they would be both remiss and irresponsible if they did not exercise leverage".[33] Conditionality is therefore a complex issue which is not satisfactorily explained through a conspiracy thesis.

Although SAPs have had a pervasive influence on the political economy of borrowing countries[34] – and therefore on their systems of education – space will only allow for a brief discussion of the more immediate implications of SAPs for education. SAPs are pre-eminently concerned with effecting a significant reduction of government expenditure, and therefore bear direct implications for education. Even in the absence of the Bank and IMF-sponsored SAPs, the economic problems of Southern countries (in some cases the result of governments' own doing) led to a serious erosion of their revenue base, thus limiting capacity to sustain pre-adjustment volumes of recurrent expenditure. A reduction of government expenditure therefore forms a logical consequence of these economic problems. No-one would disagree with the economic wisdom of discouraging a one-sided emphasis on government borrowing to make good budgetary deficits in the absence

of concomitant measures aimed at ameliorating those economic problems that gave rise to the need to borrow in the first place. Similarly, one cannot object to the wisdom of the Bank's hesitancy to finance government expenditure unless steps were taken to address macro-economic problems.

The need for financial discipline, particularly within the context of an economic crisis, makes good sense and that it lies at the heart of SAPs is therefore not a problem. However, it is the strategies prescribed by the Bank to implement adjustment that have generated the huge controversy which surrounds SAPs. Within the context of structural adjustment loans and through the mechanism of conditionality, loans to specific sectors such as education and health are used to effect Bank-imposed macro-economic reform. Further, policy reform within each sector is purposefully aimed at creating enabling conditions for the wider macro-economic structural adjustment. As argued above, the objective of reducing spending on education may be seen as a logical and inevitable consequence of a shrinking revenue base. But within the context of the World Bank and IMF structural adjustment lending, such reductions become an instrument to effect macro-economic reform within a particular market-oriented conceptual framework. It is this latter purpose of SALs that is the issue, because in trying to effect savings, it attempts to manoeuvre education policy formulation in a particular direction which goes beyond the inevitability of bringing education spending in line with budgetary capacity. The acceptance that government borrowing should be accompanied by a responsible economic policy framework does not translate into an acceptance of a situation where the Bank uses its leverage to define the content of this policy framework. Interestingly, unlike with other lending, it is generally the Bank and not the borrower which takes the initiative for structural adjustment loans.

Macro-economic structural adjustment is, therefore, the overriding objective of structural adjustment loans to education. In operationalising this objective, the Bank's education policies are determined by the need to find ways of effecting the greatest reduction of government spending in education in line with a particular conception of macro-economic restructuring. The need for financial discipline does not automatically imply an acceptance that the Bank's policy proposals are the only way of achieving this. Conceptual and theoretical approaches to education become subservient to the need to reduce budgetary expenditure in a manner that does not address issues of social and economic inequity. An alternative to the Bank's approach is one which contains a conception of education that poses questions of equity within the context of disciplined state spending. But this raises a conception of development that departs from the Bank's emphasis on a market orthodoxy.

The Bank emerged from the mid-1980s having consolidated and sophisticated its rationale and policies for education lending. These policies it presented to the public domain in a series of publications: *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa* (1988); *Primary Education: a World Bank Policy Paper* (1990); and *Vocational and Technical eEducation and Training* (1991). These documents contain worldwide

reviews of the state of these sub-sectors and have been especially influential in other aid circles.

The publication *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa* has a logical continuity with the shifts in Bank policy occasioned by structural adjustment lending. The Bank's commitment to linking educational policy to macro-economic structural adjustment is reflected in the sub-title of this document: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization, and Expansion. After making the observation that "Although undoubtedly painful and politically difficult, adjustment policies will alleviate the burden of education and training on public budgets",[34] the document advocates that "adjustment will take two main forms: 'Diversifying sources of finance'; and 'Unit cost containment'".[35] Following on from adjustment, the revitalisation of quality is identified as the second dimension of "any complete strategy for educational development" which is to be achieved through: "A renewed commitment to academic standards"; "Restoration of an efficient mix of inputs"; and "Greater investment in the operation and maintenance of physical plant and equipment". The third dimension of the strategy, "viable only after measures of adjustment and revitalization have begun to take hold", calls for a concentration on the following areas: "Renewed progress toward the long-term goal of universal primary education"; "Distance education programmes"; "Training"; and "Research and postgraduate education".[36]

This brief summary of *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa* highlights important features of the present policy stances of the Bank. First, it reflects a strong assertiveness on the primacy of linking education policy to macro-economic adjustment. Second, the strategies for the revitalisation of quality emphasise material inputs such as textbooks and learning materials. Complex issues of pedagogy and educational quality are therefore reduced to an emphasis on material inputs (which, coincidentally, are also eminently 'bankable'). Third, the policy puts a brake on education expansion except in areas specified by the Bank. Although conditionality of educational lending predates the publication under discussion, the policies contained in it ushered in a sharper erosion of borrowers' national sovereignty over educational policy.

One of the more recent additions to the Bank's (as well as that of other major aid agencies) discourse on education in developing countries relates to the notion of capacity development. Many critics of the Bank have for a long time emphasised the need to develop in-country capacity as a means of alleviating the dependence of Southern countries on foreign expert assistance in the areas of policy research, policy implementation and policy analysis.

The origins of the Bank's emphasis on capacity development is to be found in the Berg Report.[37] In addition to calling for cost reduction and quality improvement as central to education policies for Africa, the Berg report also points out that "development of locally appropriate reforms, their implementation and evaluation, cannot be done without strengthened institutions and analytic capacities". The

Bank's report *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa* also brings the need for capacity development under the spotlight. For the Bank, this marks a shift away from enclave projects which are managed and protected by donor support, towards support for locally developed education policies which are managed by local institutions that would in time be sustainable without donor intervention.[38] The Bank's new emphasis on sustainability, strong local commitment to, and ownership of, the project is certainly to be welcomed. This shift, which resonates with some of the most notable criticisms of the Bank, appears to be truly remarkable, as King observes:

> If the logic of capacity building, governance improvement, and policy-based aid is taken to heart, this is nothing short of a paradigm shift for the aid community.[39]

Whether or not this shift in thinking is truly significant in alleviating dependence on the Bank and on foreign experts is best understood through a deeper analysis of what is meant by capacity development and of the mechanisms proposed to foster capacity development. In this regard, the World Bank publication Initiating Memorandum: Building Educational Research and Assessment Capacity,[40] is instructive and worth quoting in some detail:

> In the first 'round', the objective is to establish collaborative relationships with local counterparts and where necessary to demonstrate good practice. In the second 'round', the local counterparts will serve as principal researchers, with technical experts employed to provide backup and quality control. In the third 'round', local researchers will work independently, and possibly serve as models of good practice for researchers in other countries in the region... This three stage strategy has been employed successfully in recent international activities for the transfer of technical skills related to assessment.
>
> A second strategy for building this local technical expertise is to construct professional linkages between groups and individuals in developing and industrialised countries. Again, there is nothing particularly surprising about the procedures needed to solidify these linkages, and thus build local capacity. It involves the Bank in providing resources for analysis and interpretation of data, attendance at international conferences, participation in regional networks, access to international journals, assistance with publication, and development of research grant competitions with peer review. As important as anything in the development of this technical policy culture is the construction of 'appropriate mechanisms' ... to allow the frequent and unimpeded communication between the decision-maker and the researcher.

Capacity development is therefore conceived to proceed with a strong influence from the Bank. Bank appointed individuals are assigned the important role of training and demonstrating 'good practice' to local researchers in the first round. The continuation of this influence is to be assured through later 'backup' and 'quality control'. There would be nothing wrong with this model for developing local analytic capacity if it did not inherently favour an outcome which corresponds to the Bank's own conceptual paradigm. There is a strong tendency for local researchers so trained to reflect the technical culture of the Bank's intellectual tradition and the concomitant approaches to education policy. Should such an

outcome be realised, these local researchers would then provide intellectual justification for the Bank's education policies thus attenuating resistance to policies imposed by foreigners. The notion of 'local ownership', viewed by the Bank as essential for successful project implementation, may therefore be reduced to the need to produce local researchers who will articulate the Bank's policies. Capacity development thus has a continuity with the Bank's concern to influence the policy context of borrowing countries – the real shift being from 'direct rule' to 'indirect rule'. The Bank's conception of capacity development is fundamentally different to the conception which sees capacity building as a means to overcome a situation where policies are imposed from outside and a dependence on foreign expertise. The degree of correspondence between the aims of the Bank's strategies for capacity development and actual outcomes is obviously not automatic – as King and Carr-Hill point out:

> These moves towards 'indirect rule' of the curriculum and the educational system in general through policy based lending and the promotion of particular technocratic procedures can only be successful in so far as the developing countries – or at least the policy cadres of the developing countries – play ball.[41]

My critique of the Bank's conceptions of capacity development does not imply a denial that many Southern countries suffer serious shortcomings in respect of local capacity for education policy development. Rather, it underlines the importance of nurturing a conception of capacity development that will enable people from Southern countries to engage in policy research and debate aimed at defining their own social and development goals.

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE BANK'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

In addition to the Bank's main activity, the lending of money, it engages in two other activities of importance to this paper: technical assistance and research, both of which will now be briefly evaluated.

Southern countries lack a critical mass for developing in-country policy research and policy analysis capacity appropriate to their needs. In the context of this reality alone, which is hypothetically separate from the need to borrow, the enormous research base of the Bank and its availability for technical assistance is extremely seductive.

The World Bank is by far the largest single repository of knowledge and experience in respect of the education systems of the South. Country missions[42] conducted by Bank personnel are backed by government authority and therefore enjoy access to data that is rarely available to other institutions and researchers, including many in the country in which a study is conducted. Much of the information obtained in this way is not available in the public domain.[43]

The Bank's knowledge base and in-house research output is spectacular. The sheer size of the Bank; its extensive involvement in education systems of the world; and its considerable financial resource base give it a capacity for intellectual knowledge production that is unmatched by any other institution in the world. Further, its financial resources allow it to engage some of the best talent in the international scholarly community.[44]

The Bank's research output has undergone phenomenal growth in the last two decades "from a few items that could be counted on the fingers of one hand in the early 1970s to a bibliography of over 150 pages in 1987".[45] Its research reports and public statements are read by a very wide audience of scholars in the North and South and by influential people in government departments. The prominence of the World Bank, in the context of the rising influence of aid as a factor of government policy, largely accounts for this tremendous interest from critics and supporters alike. It has become common practice for most researchers embarking on a country specific study or an international comparative study to consult Bank publications for data or to engage the propositions and assumptions contained in them. Thus, to supporters and critics alike, what the Bank has to say has become an important reference point in the debates on applied educational policy.

The foregoing discussion, in highlighting the extent and influence of the Bank's research activities, begs two important questions: What can be said about the content of these research activities? To what extent does this formidable body of research influence the Bank's own policies on education?

Many writers have commented on the gap between the Bank's policy statements and its practice.[46] King[47] points to the distinct difference between ongoing educational research by the Bank, aimed at arriving at generalisable policies, and the applied research, or technical assistance, that routinely takes place during all phases of the project cycle.

Applied research in the latter case is conducted by short-term consultants and operations staff working under severe time constraints. Although such research involves highly skilled personnel and covers very extensive ground, the scope of the questions posed and the depth of the investigations are necessarily limited by the combined effects of time constraints and rigidly specified briefs. Applied research therefore tends toward a situation where the collection, presentation and interpretation of data is simply aimed at finding local empirical justification for established policy orientations.

The Bank's approach to the ongoing research aimed at arriving at generalisable educational policies has been the subject of much controversy in the literature. Since space does not permit a detailed discussion, this paper will focus on major criticisms that recur in this literature. Numerous writers have criticised the tendency of Bank researchers to arrive at universally generalisable policies based on empirical evidence which reflects conditions of only one or a few countries. This propensity toward easy generalisation is also reflected in the remarkable continuity,

at one level, between studies conducted in different Southern countries and, on another level, between the outcomes of such studies and current World Bank policy stances.[48]

Unlike most academic research, World Bank studies which underpin public policy statements are rarely available for critical scrutiny. As already mentioned, the data obtained for the purposes of Bank studies are often not available to local researchers in the borrowing country, thus limiting their ability to conduct independent research that could test the assumptions of the Bank's research. Many public documents contain claims such as 'research shows' or, as in the case of the 1980 Education sector policy paper, "This paper draws extensively on the World Bank's experience during almost two decades of operations, evaluation, research and reflection...". However, such supporting research, though pivotal to the claims and assumptions embedded in the educational policies, is rarely available for critical evaluation of its reliability, validity and verifiability.

Perhaps the most damning indictment of the Bank's research stems from the claim that much of the Bank's research is aimed at providing justifications for already established policies.[49] The huge corpus of literature on cost-benefit analysis, to which the Bank's Psacharopoulos made a huge contribution, provides justification for a policy stance taken by the Bank in response to institutional rather than intellectual concerns. It was argued earlier that it is the institutional nature of the Bank that determines its adherence to a narrow interpretation of education. The Bank's research activity is heavily defined by these institutional constraints and has therefore not challenged existing policy orientations. Operating within such constraints and in a manner that poses questions which are aimed at the justification of existing policy orientations, it is highly unlikely that such research will contribute to the Bank developing a more comprehensive view of education. The crucial failing of the Bank's research relates to the one-sided emphasis on achieving financial discipline (rooted in a narrow economics paradigm) and the concomitant avoidance of questions aimed at uncovering and addressing those factors which determine economic and social inequality in society.

To suggest that the Bank has a monopoly on intellectual knowledge production in respect of education systems in the South is certainly to overstate the situation – as Jones puts it:

> ... there are clear limits in place as to the Bank's intellectual influence, given the policy-driven nature of its research and the lack of penetrating, critical, open-ended inquiry.
>
> But even though there is much independent and critical work produced by Southern as well as Northern scholars, such work – because it does not enjoy the kind of institutional support anywhere near that which the Bank offers – is hardly as visible and as widely publicised as that of the Bank. The work of Southern scholars very rarely becomes known outside the borders of the country in which the research is done.[50]

A further criticism of the Bank's research relates to issues of style and practice. I have argued that there is sufficient *prima facie* evidence to suggest that the conceptual and methodological approaches and conclusions contained in the Bank's research is, at a minimum, open to serious question. Despite these questions and despite the fact that the research operates within an economic paradigm that limits it to a narrow interpretation of education, the claims contained in public statements and the few research reports that do reach the public domain are presented as if it is "clear as day".[51] For example, George Psacharopoulos – a key Bank researcher at the time and who, a few months later (in August 1981), was to head the Education Department's Research Unit – in a paper published in June 1981 had the following to say in his response to the Bank's 1980 Education sector policy paper:

> The new Education Policy Paper of the World Bank is an important document that deserves the full attention of the academic community. For it represents the major – if not the only – explicit statement on applied educational policy in LDC's [Late Developing Countries]. It might not be an exaggeration to treat this Paper as a modern Bible on educational development.[52]

Psacharopoulos' expectation that the academic community show interest in the Bank's publication is curiously unreciprocated in the Bank's practice of not engaging independent studies that generate serious doubt about the assumptions and findings of its own research.[53]

The research emerging from the Bank has a significant impact in determining the nature of the debate on education in the South. One of the reasons for this influence derives from the relative advantage of the Bank in respect of the scale of its research and its privileged access to information. But the potency of this influence resides more with the fact that behind the research reports and policy statements lies the power of the Bank as a potential source of finance. The intellectual hegemony of the Bank is therefore inextricably linked to its financial hegemony on a world scale.

The influence of the World Bank is not so much based on the perceived validity and appropriateness of the policies advocated, but is due more to structural factors, such as the financial leverage of the Bank coupled with the weak standing (in respect of institutional and financial backing) of alternative views. Although, as was pointed out earlier, the Bank only finances less than ten percent of total educational budgets in Southern countries, it has an extraordinary influence over the way the rest of the educational budgets of these countries are spent. There is a fairly simple explanation for this influence – captured very well by Psacharopoulos:

> ... the willingness of the Bank to finance policy A rather than policy B in a given country might ultimately influence the country to adopt policy A. Adoption of policy A, in turn, means a particular allocation of the recurrent education budget for many years to come.

Since education provision absorbs a huge amount of scarce resources, not only of the Bank but also of cash-strapped countries, it is important that decisions about

priorities and foci should be informed by research. However, the disjunction between pure and applied research and the narrow research paradigm seriously limits what we can expect of the Bank.[54]

SOURCE OF THE BANK'S POWER AND INFLUENCE OVER SOUTHERN COUNTRIES

As this paper has tried to show, there are deep-rooted problems associated with the Bank's involvement in education, why then do so many Southern countries continue to engage in lending and, in so doing, open themselves up to the Bank's influence? Carnoy[55] isolates three broad hypotheses, from the discourse on international financial institutions, about why such institutions "are so involved in the international education business". First, there is the view that borrowing countries 'demand' the expertise of such institutions. Second, these institutions are said to bring their wealth of experience to bear – through the medium of technical assistance – on the problems of Southern countries in a spirit of benevolence. Third, the intervention of these institutions is regarded as "a form of intervention of international institutions as a form of cultural imperialism promoted by the national and international bourgeoisie interested in local markets and local production...".[56]

For Carnoy, the divergence between these views is explained by the fact that each is contingent on more fundamental and divergent views on the international economic system, the state, and the interaction between states. According to his analysis, some countries (or, more precisely, governments) would engage the Bank because they see it as a benevolent organisation with tremendous intellectual and financial resources.

In explicating Carnoy's analysis of the relationship between borrowing countries' political orientation and world view, on the one hand, and perceptions of the Bank, on the other, it is important to analyse the deeper material factors which contribute to the Bank's influence over Southern countries. It is to this analysis that I will now turn.

One intractable feature of the Bank's involvement in Southern countries is the fact that many countries have resorted to borrowing purely as a means of obtaining much needed foreign currency. This phenomenon became particularly pronounced in the 1980s, consequent to the emergence of serious economic problems in many Southern countries. Countries asphyxiated by the effects of a severe debt crisis, shrinking economies, and the consequent erosion of their revenue base, face an urgent need for strong foreign currencies to keep the economy afloat and to sustain a minimum level of government spending. The huge volume of capital available for Bank lending; the possibility of obtaining 'soft' IDA loans; and the fact that there are very few alternative financial sources accessible to Southern countries, all combine to explain why the Bank is such a popular port of call. The extent of

desperation therefore counterbalances the desire to avoid World Bank influence in the affairs of macro-economic and social policy. Obviously, not all governments feel the need to resist the Bank's influence; however, those who are opposed to such influence find that the relative importance of maintaining their sovereignty is subsumed by the imperative to address urgent economic problems.

These countries are therefore left with no choice but to accept the large quantities of untied (that is, not project tied) aid made available through structural adjustment loans. These loans are, however, granted with conditions specified by the Bank in the loan agreement committing the borrowing country to carrying out certain macro-economic reforms that will bring about structural adjustment. Sector-adjustment loans generally carry conditions specifying policy changes which go beyond the parameters of the sector (for example, education) for which the loan is earmarked.[57]

For many countries in the South, severe fiscal constraints combine with poor capacity to seriously limit the scope for educational planning, administration and innovation. Not only is the intellectual resource base not adequately established in-country, but the ministry of education is often overstretched and short of skilled people able to conceptualise and implement much-needed innovation in education. In such a context, the huge financial and intellectual resources that the World Bank is able to marshall on behalf of such countries is unquestionably seductive. Such technical support is an important component of the Bank's activities in education and its importance in attracting many countries to the Bank cannot be underplayed. A formidable wealth – by any measure the largest in the world – of experience and data related to applied educational policy resides in the World Bank:

> The richest and most comprehensive data on education and training in developing countries is held by multilateral agencies, and pre-eminently by the World Bank.[58]

The elements which contribute to the Bank's formidable influence in shaping social and economic policy in Southern countries are many and complex. The most important of these elements is the mechanism of conditionality discussed earlier. Factors which contribute to the Bank's ability to influence the policy environment of borrowing countries are referred to by the Bank as 'leverage'. The formidable institutional power of the Bank which constitutes this leverage is considerably enhanced by the practice referred to as 'cross-conditionality'. The Bank and IMF are centrally involved in the coordination of other international financial and technical organisations, bilateral aid agencies, and export credit institutions. Coordination between donors is not in itself undesirable as it does help to overcome duplication, conflicting donor orientations, and the problem of having to deal with a huge number of donors all at once – issues which have for a long time exasperated officials of borrowing countries, who have indeed called for improved coordination between donors. However, in addition to addressing these problems, donor coordination provides the enabling conditions for the emergence of cross-conditionality,

the practice of making aid from one agency contingent on the fulfilment of conditions set by another agency. For example, it is often the case that the disbursement of USAID[59] funds is contingent on compliance with conditions attached to IMF stand-by agreements. The Bank often gets other (even rival) funding agencies to co-finance projects that have been prepared and appraised for its own funding which automatically brings the funding of such agencies into the ambit of the Bank's conditionality. Further, the Bretton Woods organisations have enormous influence on key players in the international capital market – to the extent that access to finance from private financial institutions or from donor agencies is heavily contingent on prior IMF approval.[60] Campbell points out that negotiations with the Paris and London Clubs for the rescheduling of debt service liabilities are contingent on IMF agreement. It is therefore not surprising that loan defaulting or non-compliance with IMF and World Bank loan conditions is remarkably rare.

The above analysis shows that although there exists sufficient basis for the assertion that many borrowers willingly engage the Bank as a benevolent organisation, the coercive mechanisms at play in the Bank-borrower relationship account overwhelmingly for the enormous influence of the Bank in the affairs of Southern countries. However, it would be dangerously misleading to infer that the Bank's influence derives from an omnipotence that closes off any possibility for contestation. On the basis of case studies of the Bank's involvement in nine countries, Mosley *et al*[61] conclude that its power to change the economic policies of recipient countries is not as considerable as the Bank would like. The key findings of these studies are extremely instructive:

> ... recipients who are in a relatively weak bargaining position, whether because of the gravity of their economic position, their high financial dependence on the Bank or their inability to exert economic or geopolitical reverse leverage, tended to have relatively tight conditionality packages imposed on them and to be treated fairly leniently if they deviated from that conditionality.[62]

Mosley *et al* also found that the deciding impact on Bank-recipient interaction is the outcome of political struggle. Since the effects of Bank conditionality affect specific social fractions differently, the ease with which donor conditions are implemented is contingent on the balance of forces between such contending social fractions. As an illustration, Mosley *et al* refer to the relationship between the urban working class – who suffer the consequences of devaluations and cuts in subsidies and social services – and those who actually negotiate the loan agreement on behalf of recipient governments, who are described as the 'technocracy' "whose inner core usually lay within the finance ministry and central bank".[63] They found that the Bank's reforms enjoyed support where these 'technocracies' could assert themselves over the urban working class.

Turning to education loans, many countries have in fact been able to contest the Bank's influence in determining their educational policies. Jones' discussion of the experiences of China and India are two notable examples in this regard. In the late

1970s and early 1980s, at a time when the Bank was actively promoting a shift in emphasis away from higher education, China managed to negotiate substantial lending for high-level scientific and technological training. Their counter-leverage in this case no doubt derived from their attractiveness as a sizeable borrower. India as well managed to acquire considerable leverage in its dealings with the Bank by adopting a very critical approach to the institution's education policies.

Thus despite the extensive leverage of the Bank, its influence is open to contestation. The scope for contestation is contingent on social and political factors. The insight provided by Mosley *et al*[64] is particularly instructive in its demonstration that upholding national sovereignty is not in itself a guarantee that the interests of the masses will be upheld in loan agreements, but that these interests are contingent on political and social factors – and, in particular, on the balance of class forces.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS – IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Despite its enormous resource base, there are serious limits to what Southern countries may expect from the Bank. Its policy goals and interventions have a specific ideological orientation in respect of international economic relations – an orientation apparently in conflict with the interests of the majority of people in the South. A striking manifestation of this orientation resides in the fact that the Bank's policies do not address the structural problems of the North, particularly the problems of the North in relation to the South. Given conditions in the international economy – particularly the unfavourable terms of trade for economies of the South; the powerful influence of a few industrialised countries in the global economy; and protectionism in Northern economies – it is unlikely that the insertion of Southern economies, through the strategy of export-led growth, will solve their intractable economic problems unless accompanied by structural adjustment of Northern economies. It is instructive that strategies for export-led growth, suggested for economic recovery of the South, are not equally applied to the countries which hold the largest proportion of votes in the Bank. There are also serious limits to what we can expect from the Bank in education. Its education policies and research (so influential and so vigorously applied) are fundamentally determined by institutional imperatives and ideological orientation.

Notwithstanding these characteristics, it is important to guard against a deterministic and conspiratorial view in which the Bank is regarded as a mere instrument of international capital. There are two main reasons for such caution. First, a number of case studies have provided compelling empirical evidence of instances where the influence of the Bank has been successfully contested by borrowing countries in favour of national sovereignty. Second, the conspiracy thesis, if logically applied, obfuscates the possibility of contestations between the interests of the Bank, on the one hand, and conflicting national interests of

borrowing countries, on the other. Whilst the Bank has a propensity for generalisable and universally applicable policies (in respect of the South), case studies show that the practice of the Bank in specific political contexts is far from uniform. The balance of class forces and the role and nature of the state have a pivotal influence on the outcome of the Bank's involvement in specific contexts. It is therefore much more strategic for an analysis of the Bank to pose questions aimed at uncovering the possibilities and scope for contestation. Whilst the analysis of this paper suggests that there is scope for such contestation, it also suggests this scope is not automatic but contingent, just as the implications of engaging in borrowing from the Bank are not automatic but contingent.

There is no simple and straightforward answer to whether or not it is in the best interest of the masses in South Africa to resort to the Bank's resources (both for finance and technical assistance) in the important task of transforming the country's education system. In the first instance, the answer to this question has wider political and economic implications which go beyond education and therefore beyond the scope of this paper. It resides in a nexus of concerns aimed at reconciling the possible tension between the imperative of upholding national sovereignty, on the one hand, with the demands that transformation will bring to bear on our financial capacity and intellectual resources, on the other. The answer can really only be arrived at through a political process, a process which should be informed by an assessment of the match between realisable resources (financial and human) and the exigencies of transformation. The central point I wish to make in this regard is that the debate on whether or not to engage the World Bank is severely impoverished when posed in a way that assumes an *a priori* trade-off between national sovereignty and economic conditions. The options available are considerably widened if the following questions are incorporated into the debate: What is the possibility for, and what conditions will best favour, upholding national priorities in dealing with the Bank?

As an important dimension of the above debate, it is necessary to problematise the notion of 'national sovereignty'. The concept 'national sovereignty' is an embodiment and a reflection of contestation between different social fractions (and their consequent political interests) within a particular political context. It follows, therefore, that upholding national sovereignty in negotiations with the Bank is not in itself a guarantee that the interests of the masses in South Africa will be upheld, but that this latter consequence is a function of the balance of class forces in so far as it gives content to the interests that would be served in asserting national sovereignty. It also follows that different social fractions in South Africa may well have different orientations to working with the Bank.

The policy landscape in South Africa is by no means homogeneous, but is comprised of varying tendencies rooted in specific political orientations. Tendencies whose overall orientations converge with the Bank's ideological orientation and policy imperatives would welcome the Bank's intervention in shaping future policy

for South Africa. In education, the Bank's policies resonate strongest with those tendencies in the country which subscribe to notions of 'technical neutrality', 'scientific policy investigation' and 'technocratic' solutions. If national sovereignty and policy is a function of class contestation, then the insertion of the Bank (and similar institutions) into the policy process carries the potential (although not inevitable) threat of strengthening the hand of those tendencies with similar ideological orientation. There is therefore an objective basis for reciprocal support between the Bank and such tendencies. The Bank's involvement in education serves to mediate in favour of particular interests in the national class conflict and thus, if uncontested, could potentially strengthen the hand of particular tendencies in the policy debate in South Africa and elevate their role and influence in the policy formulation process. In the opposite direction, these tendencies may serve as ardent local advocates of the Bank's education policies. Like the Bank, the claim to 'technical neutrality' disguises (because it is not rendered explicit) their definite orientation to political issues in South Africa.

In short, contestation in the education policy arena, as a moment (and, consequently, a function) of overall political contestation, has significant implications for the outcome of engagement with the Bank. Further, the extent to which South Africa is able to marshall and use counter-leverage to the Bank's leverage and the political will and wherewithal of the future state will have a decisive impact on this outcome. The possibility for counter-leverage is an important dimension of the debate on the implications of working with the World Bank.

Enhancing local policy research capacity, important whether or not we engage the Bank, has significant implications for mediating the influence of the Bank. Should it be decided to involve the Bank in education, the extent to which we are able to contest its established policies and therefore uphold national sovereignty will depend on the extent to which local capacity has been developed. In this regard, it is critical that we establish the hitherto elusive balance in left research between posing general and theoretical questions about education, and translating the emergent discourse into concrete, sustainable and implementable policies for the transformation of education. The development of this capacity (a matter which has been on the agenda for a long time now) is extremely complex and begs a whole set of questions on how this is best achieved.

Ironically, financial restraint and economic growth – cornerstones of the Bank's macro-economic policy – are crucial to enhancing our counter-leverage and to safeguarding national sovereignty over policy matters. But in striving for economic growth and financial discipline it is the Bank's insistence on its specific conception of development strategies that needs to be contested. Similarly in education, it is important to avoid a reflex response which simply rejects whatever is proposed by the Bank. A debate on the issues raised in this paper is long overdue and should

begin in earnest if the liberation movement is not going to be overtaken by events and forced into an inadequately conceptualised response.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. M. Carnoy, "International Institutions and Educational Policy: A Review of Education-Sector Policy Prospects", *Quarterly Review of Education*, 11, 1 (1980): 294-301.
2. M. Lockheed and A. Verspoor, *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
3. *Daily News*, 14 October 1993.
4. The IBRD is the original component institution of the World Bank. The World Bank is now made up of a group of institutions which, in addition to the IBRD, include the International Finance Corporations (IFC) and the International Development Association (IDA), founded in 1956 and 1960 respectively. Reference to the 'World Bank' in the Bank's terminology and in most of the literature includes the IBRD and the IDA. See C. Payer, *The World Bank: A Critical Analysis*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982).
5. L. Harris in P. Lawrence (ed.), *Conceptions of the IMF's role in Africa, in World Recession and the Food Crisis in Africa,* (London: James Currey, 1986), 86.
6. Although Harris refers specifically here to the IMF, the point applies equally to the World Bank. This will be substantiated later.
7. See for example, B. Onimode, "The IMF and World Bank Programmes in Africa" in B. Onimode (ed.), *The IMF, the World Bank and the Africa Debt: The Economic Impact* (London: IFFAA/Zed, 1989); Payer, *op cit*; and Lawrence, *World Bank Recession and the Food Crisis in Africa*. (London: James Currey, 1994).
8. See for example, Onimode, *ibid.*
9. Payer, 1982.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.,* 33.
12. World Bank, nd.
13. Payer, 1982: 25.
14. World Bank, nd.
15. Payer, 1982.
16. The top five members account for 43.76% of the votes (World Bank, n.d).
17. The other major 'shareholders' have voting powers in the following proportions: Japan, 8.03%; Germany, 6.2%; United Kingdom, 5.95%; and France, 5.95% (see World Bank, nd.).
18. See for example, Payer, 1982.
19. P. Jones, *World Bank Financing of Education: Lending, Learning and Development*, (USA/Canada: Routledge, 1992).
20. M. Fernandez, "The World Bank and the Third World: Reflections of a Sceptic" *Prospects: Quarterly Review of Education*, 11, 1 (1981).
21. T. Shultz, *The Economic Value of Education.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963); M. Woodhall, "Economics of Education" in G. Psacharopoulos (ed.), *Economics of Education: Research and Studies*. (Oxford: Pergamon, 1987).
22. Jones, 1992.
23. Jones, 1992: 105.
24. Jones, 1992.
25. *Ibid.*
26. World Bank, *Education Sector Working Paper*. (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1974).

27. Jones, 1992.
28. *Ibid.*, 93-4.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Onimode, 1989.
31. World Bank, "Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action", *Berg Report*. (Washington DC: World Bank, 1981).
32. J. Loxley, "IMF and World Bank Conditionality and Sub-Saharan Africa" in P. Lawrence (ed.), *World Recession and the Food Crisis in Africa. (London: James Currey, 1986).*
33. *Ibid.*, 101.
34. *Ibid.*, 2.
35. *Ibid.*, 2.
36. *Ibid.*, 3.
37. World Bank, 1981.
38. Payer, 1982.
39. K. King, "The External Agenda of Aid in International Educational Reform", *International Journal of Educational Development*, 12, 4 (1992): 257-263.
40. M. Lockheed, *Initiating Memorandum: Building Educational Research and Assessment Capacity*. (Washington DC: World Bank, 1991), 26-28.
41. K. King and R. Carr-Hill, "Reshaping the Curriculum of the South post Jomtien". Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the British Comparative and International Education Society, York, 11-13 September 1992, 14.
42. *Ibid.*
43. K. King, *Aid and Education in the Developing World: The Role of the Donor Agencies in Educational Analysis*. (England: Longman, 1991).
44. P. Williams, "Education in Developing Countries: Halfway to the Styx", *Comparative Education*, 17, 2: 147-156.
45. King, 1991.
46. King and Carr-Hill, 1992.
47. King, 1991.
48. J. Samoff, "Defining What Is and What Is Not an Issue: An Analysis of Assistance Agency Africa Education Sector Studies". Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society, Anaheim, March,1990
49. Jones, 1992.
50. *Ibid.*, 267.
51. *Ibid.*
52. World Bank, 1981: 141.
53. Samoff, 1990.
54. World Bank, 1981: 141.
55. M. Carnoy, "International Institutions and Educational Policy: A Review of Education-Sector Policy", *Prospects: Quarterly Review of Education*, 10, 1 (1980): 266-267.
56. *Ibid.*, 267.
57. Payer, 1982: 153.
58. King, 1991: 7.
59. For detailed analyses of the World Bank and IMF's structural adjustment programmes and their effects, see P. Mosley, J. Harrigan and J. Toye, "Aid and Power: The World Bank and Policy-based Lending", *Volume 1: Analysis and Policy Proposals*. (London: Routledge, 1991a); P. Mosley *et al*, "Aid and Power: The World Bank and Policy-based Lending", *Volume 2: Case Studies*. (London: Routledge, 1991b); Lawrence (ed.) and Onimode, 1989a and 1989b.
60. V. Padayachee, *The IMF and World Bank in Post-apartheid South Africa: Prospects and Dangers*. (Cape Town: Economic Trends Research Group, nd); T. Mkandawire, *Structural*

Adjustment and Agrarian Crisis in Africa: A Research Agenda. (Dakar/Senegal: Council for the Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa, 1989).

61. B. Campbell, "Indebtedness in Africa: Consequence, Cause or Symptom of the Crisis" in B. Onimode (ed.), *The World Bank and the Africa Debt: The Social and Political Impact*. (London: IFAA/Zed, 1989).
62. Mosley *et al*, 1991a and 1991b.
63. Mosely *et al*, 1991b: 2.
64. *Ibid.*, 3.

The 1995 Matthew Goniwe Education Essay Competition

Perspectives in Education has great pleasure in inviting entries to the 1994 Matthew Goniwe South African Education Essay Competition. Inspired by Matthew Goniwe's name – which symbolises educational and political commitment, courage and enlightenment – the competition is intended to stimulate research and writing on education in Southern Africa from a democratic perspective.

This competition is designed to encourage the publication of research and scholarly writing by historically disadvantaged students. The competition is open to students in the following categories:

1. final year undergraduates,
2. post-graduates up to and including Masters level,

registered at any teacher's college or education faculty at any South African university.

Prizes will be awarded in each category. Promising essays will receive detailed referees' comments for the benefit of the entrants. Winning essays will be published in *Perspectives in Education.*

Prize details	First prize: R1 000-00 Second prize: R500-00 Third prize: R250-00
Due date for submissions	1 December 1995
Submissions to be sent to	Lesley Hudson or Michael Cross *Perspectives in Education*, Private Bag 3 Wits 2050

RULES

1. The Essay Competition will be judged in the two above-mentioned categories.
2. The standing editorial policies of *Perspectives in Education* apply.
3. The essay submitted must be an original piece of work by a single author. All entries must be accompanied by evidence of the entrant's registration for a degree or diploma and a signed declaration that the essay is the entrant's own work.
4. The essay may be conceptual, empirical or both.
5. The length of the essay should not exceed 5 000 (five thousand) words.
6. The referencing format of *Perspectives in Education* must be used (see inside back cover for referencing details).
7. The essay must be related to issues in South African education.
8. An independent panel of judges will adjudicate the essays. The judges decisions are final. The judges reserve the right not to award a prize in cases where no suitable entries are received.
9. Members of the editorial board, regional and associate editors of *Perspectives in Education* are not eligible.

The Status, Constraints and Potential of Primary Teacher Education Reform for Basic Education in Mozambique

KUZVINETSA PETER DZVIMBO
Faculty of Education, University of Zimbabwe, PO Box MP 167, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe and Department of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Private Bag 3, Wits 2050

This article examines the status and limits of reforming Teacher Education for Basic Education in Mozambique. The article is based on field work in primary teacher education institutions and primary schools in the country. The cascading INSET innovation is also critically discussed. This is followed by a discussion of the crisis on Basic Education and both In-service Teacher Education and Training and Pre-Service Teacher Education in Mozambique. The political and economic crisis in the Mozambique post-colonial State is reviewed to contextualise the discussion. An analysis of reforms in Basic Education shows that, with the aid of donor agencies and local communities, the state and civil society can make meaningful changes in the provision of primary education, provided that they maintain their relative independence.

INTRODUCTION

This article[1] examines the status, constraints and potential of educational transformation in Mozambique, with a focus on the role of in-service and pre-service teacher education in reforming the Basic Education system. The article is premised on, and provides further argument and evidence for, the view that educational transformation is a dialectical process which is both politically and economicly based.[2] In this scenario, the crisis in education is both the result of contradictions within the State and the source of new contradictions in the political, economic and, in turn, cultural spheres. Institutionalised education is a terrain of contest over the production and distribution of knowledge; ideological hegemony; resources; and the skills and attitudes required for capital production by the employment sector. An analysis of reforms in teacher education for Basic Education in Mozambique is thus also an inquiry into how educational institutions in a post-colonial State are created and recreated out of cultural, racial, gender, political and economic conflicts and compromises.[3]

Basic Education refers to education offered to children from age seven to thirteen. It also refers to primary and junior secondary education for both illiterate adults and children over the age of thirteen. Additionally, Basic Education refers to out-of-school programmes for both children and adults at an equivalent level. This article is primarily concerned with Basic Education for children from grade one to grade nine in a formal setting in public and private schools.

The Government of Mozambique (GOM) – through the *Ministério da Educação* (MINED) and Department of Primary Education or, *Direcçã Nacional de Ensino Primário* (DNEP) – is now emphasising Basic Education because it is convinced that primary and junior secondary education contributes to economic growth through increased productivity.[4] It is widely recognised that investment in education contributes to decreased child mortality, improved child nutrition, reduced family size and lower population growth, all of which are enabling conditions for economic productivity.[5] However, political and structural changes are also necessary if education is to contribute significantly to economic growth, whether in a planned or market economy.

The GOM emphasises Basic Education because of its immediate benefits to the lives of children, especially girls. Educated mothers have been shown to be more likely to immunize their children, and educated individuals are more likely to adopt effective health and sanitation practices.[6] Educated parents have also been shown to have fewer children than those with little or no education.[7] The consequences of these education-related changes for economic growth are clear. Good health makes a labour force more productive; reductions in fertility lessen the strain on public services and increase the public and private resources that can be invested in each child.

Basic Education is also essential to the exercise of citizenship, to regime change[8] in Sub-Saharan Africa and to the establishment and maintenance of democratic institutions even in a poor post colonial State such as Mozambique. As the war is brought to an end and Mozambique enters an era of multi-party democracy, Mozambican citizens will increasingly be obliged to absorb and evaluate information, to weigh the often difficult political choices that face them and their nation, and to organize and act to protect and advance their own interests in the larger political system. Illiterate and unskilled cititzens will be ill-equipped to fulfil their civic obligations. Simultaneously, they will be handicapped in the political competition for resources and opportunities.[9] Democratic politics may thus compound the economic disadvantages of the poorest and most vulnerable groups unless these groups are assured of access to Basic Education.

Although educational institutions are located within the post-colonial State, they are relatively independent from the State because they are able to resist, mediate, refract and transform ideological hegemony emanating from the State, the economy, the political sphere and civil society. Civil society, as Nyang'oro argues, comprises "the institutional and associational forms which mediate between the state and individuals *qua* economic actors".[10] Furthermore, as Bourdieu[11] so ably demonstrates, educational discourse practices emerge from structures, reproduce structures and have the capacity to transform those structures. In the process, educational institutions are able to produce counter hegemonic imperatives in the true Gramscian notion of hegemony. In post-colonial Africa civil society has an important role to play in creating spaces where individuals are able to expand their

capacity to engage the State and be involved in collective choice and action in participating in the educational arena, despite the State's monopoly of educational provision.[12]

As Apple notes, culture (including education) and politics are relatively autonomous from the economy.[13] In a fragile post-colonial state[14] such as Mozambique these contradictions are highly accentuated. This is because there are limited financial resources and political power which the ruling elites can use to legitimise their regime by expanding Basic Education. Ironically, the weakness of the post colonial Mozambican State dates back to the period when the colonial elites instituted "an open door" phase to support Portuguese colonialism by attracting foreign capital through the provision of services such as labour, transport, energy and tourism.[15]

As Mozambique moves away from a one-party authoritarian rule towards a market economy and some modicum of a decentralised democratic political system, educational institutions will also be caught between two internal contradictions: *the reproductive dynamic,* which will pressurise schools to produce a labour force with the attitudes, values and skills required (even in Mozambique) by the hierarchical division of labour, and *the democratic dynamic*, emphasising participation, equality and individual liberty.[16]

Already, the fiscal crisis of the Mozambican State has heightened the contradictions in the educational sphere by increasing the country's reliance on foreign aid to finance Basic Education and reform pre-service teacher education (PRESET) and in-service teacher education (INSET). Impotent in the face of the fiscal crisis, the GOM has resorted to returning to the Catholic church those schools which the State had nationalised during the climax of FRELIMO socialism in the mid-1970s.

The fiscal crisis goes hand-in-glove with the marginalisation of the Mozambican economy in the international division of labour. This marginalisation can be traced back to the days of Portuguese colonialism when the country produced raw materials for Portugal and its economy depended on revenues from its ports, tourism, railways and workers' remittances from South African gold mines and Rhodesian farms. Even towards the end of colonialism in the mid 1970s, "Mozambique derived 42% of its GDP and between 50 and 60 percent of foreign exchange earnings from the rand zone".[17] As will be shown below, such structural distortions are among the causes of the crisis in the Mozambican political economy. Such distortions are critical in explicating the current financial and political crisis in Mozambique and the consequent ossification of class, racial, gender, ethnic and regional inequalities in the educational arena.

ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS TO BASIC EDUCATION

The crisis in the Mozambican primary education system is also a direct result of the fiscal predicament of the post-colonial State. With a population of 16 million people, and a GNP per capita of US$ 80, Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the Southern African sub-region[18] and in the world (World Bank, 1992). It has a median age of 17 and from 1980-1990 the average annual population growth rate was 2.61%.[19] The population is estimated to increase by more than 50% to over 22 million during the remaining part of this century. The majority of Mozambicans live in rural areas where they try to survive on peasant farming. While 10% of the population was displaced by the civil war to Zimbabwe, Malawi, Tanzania and South Africa, about thirty-percent became urban squatters in cities such as Maputo, Beira and Nampula. In 1993, Mozambique's adult literacy rate was the lowest in the sub-region at 32.9%.

Colonial exploitation, the ten-year war of independence and the post-independence civil war, and near collapse of the State have all been responsible for the political and economic hardships over three decades. In 1983 the GOM turned from large-scale, centrally planned development projects – in both industry and agriculture – to small-scale, more decentralised projects.[20] However, it was not until May 1985 that the country received assistance from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to implement structural adjustment programmes and move from a centralised planned economy towards a market economy, from war towards peace and from emergency towards reconstruction, rehabilitation and development.

Mozambique's debts currently amount to US$ 5 000 million of which almost US$ 4 100 million dollars are owed to bilateral creditors and around US$ 900 million to multilateral institutions,[21] with external debt representing 400% of its GDP. With this amount of debt, Mozambique is one of the most indebted countries in the world. To survive, Nilsson and Abrahamsson[22] estimate that Mozambique needs US $1.5 billion for the 1995 which include some US$ 400 million in debt relief. Furthermore, the Mozambican economy is very weak when one looks at the fact that in 1993, aid financed 75% of the imports, provided 50% of the GOM budget and 70% of the investment program. In fact, in 1993 the official development assistance to Mozambique was US$ 923 million. In this respect, Mozambique was second to Tanzania which received US$ 1 155 million. Bilateral and multilateral aid currently provide 35% of recurrent budget expenditures including education.

Since the peace efforts of 1990, the GOM has concentrated on reconstruction and rehabilitation of the economy. The major implementation policy framework is the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) adopted in 1987 when the GOM joined the IMF and the World Bank. According to the agreement signed with

the IMF, the GOM agreed to adopt a Social and Economic Recovery Program *(Programa de Reabilitação Económica e Social* – PRES) which basically means that, the GOM agreed to a range of economic structural processes or conditionalities of "liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation, and stabilisation".[23]

Critics argue that ESAP hurts the poor whom it is supposed to assist. It does so by removing subsidies on basic commodities, opening local economies to foreign competition and reducing the public sector – the major employer in many developing countries. ESAP is also criticised on the grounds that it destroys indigenous manufacturing industries by removing government protection against foreign competition. Within the educational sector, ESAP is criticised for reducing budgetary allocations to education and introducing cost-recovery methods such as user-fees and privatisation of education through Catholic and Community Schools. Reductions in educational budgets have an immediate deleterious impact on the unit costs of education especially for rural children in many developing countries which also results in the decline of the quality of primary education in particular. This is certainly the case in Mozambique. At a more macro-political level, such measures set the State on a collision course with poor segments of civil society as they demand quality education for their children and other social services.

Despite these economic reform programs, the economic performance of Mozambique has been weak as shown by the following 1993 economic indicators:[24]

Table 1

Basic Economic Indicators (1993)

Annual Economic growth rate	-0.7%
Net exports	-49%
Trade balance (Millions)	US$ 693
Exchange rate per (US$) Meticais	6 038.13
External Debt/GNP	384.5%
Per capita income	US$ 80
Decline in per capita GNP (1980-1988)	6.0

During the period 1980-1988 Mozambique's decline in GNP for that period was the worst compared to twenty-one other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that adjusted their economies.[25] Furthermore, these indicators show that the marginalisation of Mozambique in the global economy intensified with a negative impact on education

especially material inputs, facilities and primary teachers' monthly salaries which now stand at US$ 24.[26] The marginalisation also increased the cost of educational inputs such as teaching and learning materials. Additionally, it resulted in a drop in net enrolments.[27]

Given the severity of the financial crisis, the Mozambican State has to be extremely innovative in devising cost-effective educational reform programmes to increase access to Basic Education and improve the internal efficiency of the primary education system as a whole.

THE MOZAMBICAN STATE AND ITS LIMITATIONS IN EDUCATION

As a site of struggles among and between various class fractions, the State in Mozambique is a major actor in the educational arena. Heavily dependent on foreign capital, the Mozambican post-colonial state nonetheless tries and at times succeeds in making its own educational agendas paramount in its dealings with international capital and donor agencies. Current educational reforms as enunciated in the Master Plan on Basic Education are evidence of the State's resiliency and relative autonomy when faced with powerful donors.

Because of its historical development and the present fiscal crisis, the Mozambican State is best described as a weak and dependent 'soft' post-colonial State. In this formulation, imperialism and the colonial epoch are not epiphenomenal because of the existence – during the colonial era and currently of inter- and intra- class struggles in Mozambique that either support or oppose international capital.[28] Although the Mozambican State has to rely on funding from multilateral and bilateral donors to finance education reform,[29] its dependence on donors in the process of Structural Economic Adjustment ironically gives it some strengths and autonomy in relation to civil society and the economy.

The question of class formation and reproduction is important in Mozambique's schools and education reform efforts because of the scarcity of resources and the competing interests of parents and responsible authorities for well-resourced schools. Right from the colonial period, schooling and education as contested sites were some of the main vehicles for the production and reproduction of classes in Mozambique.

Mozambique has a very large peasant class who eke an arduous existence out of subsistence farming. The middle class in Mozambique is small, as exemplified by the fact that the country now has about 2 500 Mozambicans with higher education and roughly twenty with doctorates.[30] In both the State and the private sector, the ruling class a la Marx is also very weak and just emerging. Kandeh poignantly captures the crisis of the ruling class in the post-colonial State in Sub-Saharan Africa:

> While the soft State may be metaphorically descriptive of the malleability, hegemonic impotence and functional incapacitation of the post-colonial State in Africa, the class functionality of State softness remains ambivalent and problematic. And because the class whose formation is made possible by institutional fragility lacks a hegemonic ideology and is largely parasitic and unproductive in its modes of consumption and accumulation, it is inherently incapable of leading a genuine capitalist or populist or socialist transformation of African society. This incongruent, stultifying duality in the class functionality of the soft State is at the centre of the problem posed by the contemporary political and economic retardation of African societies.[31]

The Mozambican State is characterised by what Kandeh refers to as State 'patrimonialization' of resources and offices. This makes it difficult for the 'soft' State to respond to the needs of civil society and the economy effectively and equitably. Because of political and economic predicaments, the Mozambican State deprives itself of its autonomy: ruling elites are not only parasitic but non-hegemonic, even though they might be authoritarian, patrimonial and un-accountable to their electorates. In a nutshell, this is the nature and problematic of the State which is struggling inelluctably to reform Basic Education in Mozambique.

OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND POST-INDEPENDENCE REFORMS

When Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975 under the leadership of FRELIMO (formed in 1962), it inherited a grossly underdeveloped education system in which European children and those of the *assimiladoes* attended separate schools from African children. The system was made up of the following components:

* Private grammar schools or *Liceus*, catering to the needs of the elite.
* State schools for the education of the less affluent Portuguese (the children of the settlers).
* Mission schools largely run by the Catholic Church in fulfilment of a formal concordat between the Portuguese Colonial State and the Vatican which granted to the Church the responsibility for 'native' education.

The few African primary and secondary schools that existed were under the control of the Catholic missionaries and the main objective of the education system was to "to teach the native the grandeur of the nation that protects him".[32] Educational expansion was only witnessed during the 'open door phase' as the colonial economy was beginning to develop. Once in power, FRELIMO expanded its educational program developed in the liberated zones. In keeping with its socialist ideology, it also nationalised the education system.

The structure of education in Mozambique has not changed significantly since independence in 1975 despite the three major educational reforms of 1983, 1987 and 1990. The duration of primary education is seven years, divided into two periods: Ensino Primàrio do Grau 1º (EP1), which covers Grades 1 to 5, and *Ensino Primàrio do Grau 2º* (EP2), which covers Grades 6 to 7. Pre-school education, largely a private enterprise, is common in urban areas where parents can afford the exorbitant fees. The duration of secondary education is five years, divided into *Ensino secundàrio geral* or General secondary education, which covers Grades 8 to 10, and *Ensino pre-universitàrio or* upper secondary level or pre-university education, which covers Grades 11 to 12).

Primary and secondary education is to a large extent a public enterprise although the move toward privatisation has been heightened by the demands of elites, the Catholic church and the middle classes who have lost faith in the efficacy of the public schools. Even in villages, the 'Community School' movement is gaining momentum. According to the Technical Commission on Privatisation of the Master Plan for Basic Education, private schools in Mozambique belong to churches, companies, humanitarian and social organisations. At the moment there are close to 150 primary and secondary private schools in the country.

Teacher education is offered at the following three levels with different durations:

* The seventeen Primary Teacher Training Colleges or in Portuguese, *Centro de Formação de Professores do Ensino Primário* (CFPP) for candidates with six years of primary education and three years of teacher training to teach at EP1 level.
* The three Middle Pedagogical Institutes or in Portuguese, *Instituto Médio Pedagógico* (IMP) for candidates with 10 years of education and two years of teacher training to teach at the EP2 level.
* The one Higher Pedagogical Institute or in Portuguese, *Instituto Superior de Pedagógico* (ISP) located in Maputo with a branch in Beira for candidates with ten to twelve years of education and up to five years of pre-service teacher education to teach at the secondary level or the IMPs and CFPPs. One of the major problems being faced by the ISP is that its graduates are being attracted to the private sector and the donor agencies instead of the teaching service because of better salaries.

The first set of reforms, introduced from 1975 to 1979, attempted to increase the participation of more children in the system and to re-orient education to the socialist aspirations of FRELIMO. Higher education was de-emphasized in favour of Basic Education and Adult literacy programmes. This orientation towards Basic Education was both ideological and intended to lay the basis for macro-political reforms in the State, economy and civil society.[33]

Between 1979 and 1991 primary enrolments increased as shown in Table 2.[34]

Table 2

Enrolments in EP1 and EP2 (1979-1991)

Year	EP1		EP2	
	Enrolment	**Gross**	**Gross**	**Enrolment**
1979	1 387 017	N/A	N/A	85 401
1982	1 333 050	71.3	49.5	80 700
1985	1 311 014	64.8	47.5	111 283
1988	1 199 669	54.8	37.6	78 380
1991	1 206 278	54.9	37.5	115 885
1992	1 199 476	45.5	N/A	114 800

Due to the fiscal crisis described above and the civil war, similar declining trends were also experienced at the teacher training level as shown in Table 3,[35] especially at the CFPPs.

Table 3

Graduates from CFPPs and IMPs (1985-1992)

YEAR	CFPP (6+3)	IMP (9+3)
1985	947	N/A
1986	673	N/A
1987	427	350
1988	575	300
1989	652	222
1990	673	288
1991	614	359
1992	616	270

Enrolments in the teacher training colleges were very small compared to the demands of the entire primary education system. For instance, if the present gross enrolment ratio of 47.4% is maintained, the country will require close to 30 000 teachers in 1995. Yet the present teacher training institutes are producing a tenth of

the requirements from schools.[36] There is no way in which these institutions can meet the demand with their current capacities and paltry resources.

However, the trends in Table 2 do not show the internal efficiency of the system in terms of promotion rates, and regional and gender disparities that are so endemic in the Mozambican education system especially at the primary level. They also do not say much about the quality and effectiveness of the education being provided in Mozambican primary schools.

The first educational reform was not a success. The quality of education (measured by the internal and external efficiency of the educational system) did not improve. From 1980 to 1990, emphasis within the system was towards micro-technical reforms[37] pertaining to curriculum reform, improvement of school quality and entry levels to teacher education.

In talking about the quality and effectiveness of Basic Education in Mozambique, we are concerned with, *inter alia*, the following key indicators of internal efficiency:

* Drop-out rates
* Transition rates
* Pass rates
* Gross and net enrolment ratios
* Teacher/pupil ratios

In addition to these factors, we are also concerned with the following issues that impact upon school effectiveness:

* School climate which includes students expectations, teacher morale and attitudes which are low in Mozambique due to poor conditions of work, and the form, content and orientation of the curriculum.
* Quality of school leadership and teachers, and time on task.
* The quality of teaching, student assessment and reflective and critical learning processes in terms of the pedagogical styles that teachers use in and outside the classroom.
* The availability of material inputs such as text books and the degree of professional support from the local, provincial and administrative education system. Basic teaching and learning materials are non-existent in most Mozambican primary schools.[38] In some rural schools, pupils do not even have pencils and exercise books.
* Contextual factors such as cultural, political, economic and the influence of donors in shaping the school curriculum are also important in examining school effectiveness.[39]

While the whole field of school effectiveness may be critiqued as North American and Eurocentric, technicist and apolitical, it is still relevant to any discussion of school quality in Sub-Saharan Africa. When society invests in the education of its children, all the major stakeholders (teachers, pupils, parents, school managers and the Ministry of Education) should be able, at some point, to assess the success or failure of their primary education system. This is when it is essential for the beneficiaries and suppliers of primary education to develop localised indicators of school quality and effectiveness that can be measured quantitatively and qualitatively.

The notion that certain paradigms (such as school effectiveness) developed in North America and Europe cannot be applicable to African educational contexts is not only dangerous but negates the reality that African primary schools, whether in the heart of northern Mozambique or in the city of Maputo, are ineluctably becoming part of a global economy. In practice, this means that primary and secondary school graduates will in one way or another have to interact with this economy at some stage of their lives, especially given the definitions and functions of the Nation State embodied in the Economic Structural Adjustment programs.[40]

There are two other reasons why we cannot negate the notion of school effectiveness especially, the centrality of both private and social rates of return to education. Firstly, both rural and urban parents see education as vital for improving their own and their progeny's living standards. Secondly, as mentioned earlier in this article, the State perceives education to be essential to the attainment of skills required for economic productivity and expansion, improved State administrative capacity and national unity.[41] While accepting the necessity for effectiveness indicators in education, we also need to take cognisance of the work of Klees and Eason on the inadequacy of neoclassical economics in explaining the relationship of education to economic growth in developing countries.[42]

In my view, American and European paradigms of school effectiveness and quality will have to be mediated, transformed, de-constructed and re-constructed to suit the Mozambican resource-starved schooling context for them to be meaningful and appropriate. In fact, this process of valorisation,[43] re-contextualisation and de-reification of educational paradigmatic influences from Europe and North America is already happening due to the agency of teachers, educational managers and parents in Mozambican primary schools. This process of valorisation – valuation, evaluation, contestation and contextualisation – is exemplified by the constructive parental participation in the effective rural Community School Program (PRONES) and Community School Linkage Programme (PROLEC) in Mozambique.[44] In these programmes, peasants are actually developing oppositional paradigms and setting up procedures and processes for assessing the effectiveness of their EP1 primary schools.

Mozambican teachers, parents and other stakeholders have to be engaged in a discourse of possibility if they are to gain a fuller understanding of teaching and

learning and of what makes a difference in school achievement in urban and rural classrooms. At a more structural and global level, oppositional discourse offers Mozambican parents, teachers, pupils and educational managers a window of opportunity to take part in the production, reproduction and distribution of knowledge about Basic Education. Such developments of grassroots educational reform have successfully taken place in the Bangladesh Basic Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) educational experiences[45] and the Colombian *Escuela Nueva* or new school programme.[46] For Mozambique, and indeed other developing countries, it is becoming clear that the poorer the nation is, the greater the influence on academic performance of school-quality factors. In richer countries, students' socio-economic status is more important than in-school factors.[47]

THE CRISIS IN BASIC EDUCATION

The current crisis in the Mozambican Basic Education system is indicated by the following facts:[48]

* The net enrolment rate at the EP1 level is currently 40%.
* The drop-out rate and repetition rates are 18% and 25% respectively.
* The number of children completing fifth grade is 34%. The situation is worse in rural areas.
* Approximately 250 000 children of primary school age will be repatriated from Malawi and Zimbabwe thereby exerting a heavy strain on an educational system that is already over stretched in terms of human, financial and material resources.
* By 1995, the primary school age population will be over 3 million and yet the rehabilitation programme of schools is not moving at a pace that will enable the system to absorb all the children who will require Basic Education.[49]
* In the last decade 3 200 schools (almost 50%) were destroyed or abandoned.[50]
* Only thirty-four per cent of the total number of teachers required at the Junior Secondary School level are available and the average student teacher/ratio of 60 plus at the primary level obfuscates the enormous differentials between lower and upper grades, and rural and urban areas. Field observations[50] often reveal a complement of 82 plus pupils per classroom and double or triple shifts taught by the same teacher.

The extent of the crisis can be highlighted by an analysis of failure and transition rates. Failure rates are high considering that few students are enrolled at both the EP1 and EP2 levels. In 1992, the national average was 29.5%, with girls failing at a rate of 31.9% and boys at a rate of 27.8%. Zambezia province had the highest failure rate for girls at 34.8% followed by Nampula at 34.7%. The failure rate at the

EP2 level for girls was equally high at 48.3%. Manica province had the highest failure rate for girls at 51.4% followed by Cabo Delgado at 50.8% and Nampula at 49.1%. These percentages indicate low internal efficiency in the system. The failure rate at EP1 and EP2 levels for the three regions for 1992 were as follows:[51]

Table 4

Failure Rates (Percentages)

Region	GRADE 1 - 5 (EP1)		GRADE 6 - 7 (EP2)	
	BOYS	**GIRLS**	**BOYS**	**GIRLS**
North	26.5	33.6	42.4	49.5
Centre	26.9	32.0	40.0	48.3
South	29.7	30.9	41.8	48.0
Country Average	**27.8**	**31.9**	**41.3**	**48.3**

The transition rates from EP 1 to EP 2 have also come down from a high of 74.8% in 1983 to 64.2% in 1992. According to the Master Plan on Basic Education, GOM hopes to increase the transition rate from 66% in 1996 to 68% in the year 2000. In 1992, Inhambane had the lowest transition rate from EP 1 to EP 2 of 44.1%. In the same year, surprisingly, Nampula had the highest transition rate of 76.4%.

The transition rates for the regions in 1991 were as follows:[52]

Table 5

Transition Rates (Percentages)

GEOGRAPHIC REGION	TRANSITION FROM EP1 TO EP2	
	BOYS	GIRLS
North	71.3	75.3
Centre	65.4	72.3
South	58.4	60.7
Country Average	**63.4**	**65.4**

While the girls appear to be doing better than the boys, their gains are off-set by the fact that their net and gross enrolment ratios are lower than those of the boys, especially in the northern provinces. In general, studies conducted by Palme, Cabral *et. al.* and Zucula[53] show that the major reasons for drop-out and failure rates are due: to early marriage for girls; poor socio-economic backgrounds of children; rising cost of living; poor quality of primary education; repetition; inaccessibility of EP2 and ESG levels; prevalence of unqualified teachers especially in rural areas; use of Portuguese; an irrelevant curriculum and unsuitable classroom pedagogical styles.

The crisis in Basic Education is aggrevated by the financing of education as a whole. For instance, the budgetary allocation for teachers' salaries – which had increased from 73% in 1982 to 79% in 1986 – dropped to 76.4% in 1989 and 74.5% in 1990. In 1990, the amount spent on non-salary inputs per EP1 pupil was US$ .15. cents. This is not even enough to buy two textbooks at current prices. Table 6[54] shows the distribution of recurrent expenditure by level of education in Mozambique. The increase for both EP1 and EP2 are marginal, clearly not enough to cover the costs of reconstruction and rehabilitation of schools destroyed during the war.

Table 6

Distribution of Recurrent Expenditure (a) by Level of Education (%)

LEVEL	1985	1989(b)	1990(c)
EP1	35.6	41.4	41.3
EP2		7.7	8.5
ESG (Lower Secondary	14.4(d)	5.1	5.1
EPU (Upper Secondary)	0.7	1.7	1.6
Vocational and Technical	8.0	6.2	6.2
Higher Education (UEM and ISP)	10.0	9.2	9.9
Teacher Training	3.1	2.7	2.8
Others (Adult and Physical Ed. Lares)	4.4	3.9	4.1
Administration central, provincial)	23.8	22.1	20.5
TOTAL	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Notes: (a) Internal budget
(b) Actual expenditures
(c) Share of EP2 **and** ESG

THE STATUS AND LIMITATIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Improvement of Basic Education is critical because, in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, it is "the only formal education that most of today's African children can hope ever to receive".[55] In a poor country such as Mozambique, in 1993 only 40% of the age-cohort reached the 5th grade compared to Zimbabwe 90%, Botswana 80%, Lesotho 50%, Swaziland 73% and Zambia 84%.[56] Reform of Basic Education in Mozambique is also important when we compare its 1990 illiteracy rate of 67.1% to Zimbabwe 33.1%, Zambia 27.2% and Botswana 26.4%.[57] In fact, from 1980-1990 the mean average number of years of formal schooling for Mozambique was 4.3 compared to Botswana 10, Lesotho 9.4 and Zambia 7.6. Even its second level gross enrolment ratio of 8% for 1990 was among the lowest in the Sub Region compared to Botswana 43%, Lesotho 26%, Zimbabwe 50% and Zambia 20%.[58] In Mozambique, Basic Education reform is therefore pivotal for the entire education system and the future lives of its population especially the 73% who live in rural areas.

The quality of the primary education system, and the educational sector as a whole, is worsened by the acute shortage of qualified teachers. At the primary level alone, teachers have about seven different kinds of qualifications (MINED, 1994) as shown in Table 7.[59] Contrary to the norm elsewhere in the sub-region, it is estimated that only 22.9% of the Mozambican primary school teachers are women. This situation in Mozambique can be explained by the fact that, fewer girls proceed to EP2 and even to secondary and tertiary education due to cultural, political, economic factors[56] and a curriculum that is not gender sensitive.

Table 7

Qualifications of EP1 Teachers (1994)

Province	Grade + 4 years	4th Grade + 1 years	6th Grade + 3 years	6th Other S	No Training	TOTALS
Niassa	159	639	66	3	356	1 223
Cabo Delgado	270	1 014	198	7	672	2 161
Nampula	819	2 627	224	3	832	4 505
Zambezia	464	2 208	216	10	916	3 814
Tete	331	572	116	7	217	1 243
Manica	361	488	45	2	213	1 645
Sofala	439	893	66	4	243	1 645
Inhambane	229	1 042	53	2	42	1 778
Gaza	258	862	38	3	640	1 801
Maputo Province	294	475	35	6	473	1 283
Maputo City	334	717	59	24	653	1 787

The poor quality of teaching in primary and secondary schools is complicated by the following factors:

* Out of a total of 280 teacher trainers, only about 20% of the teacher educators have some teacher education qualifications.[60]
* There is a low teacher morale due to unsatisfactory working conditions such as poor housing, lack of teaching and learning materials, low esteem, heavy work loads, very low and irregular salaries which currently stand at US$ 24 per month.

In any developing nation where curriculum and material inputs to schools are scarce, the quality and supply of teachers, PRESET and INSET training and use of qualified teachers is a *sine qua non* for the improvement of Basic Education and secondary education.[61]

PRESET in Mozambique is also very weak due to the poor qualifications of teacher educators. For instance, only about 20% of primary teacher educators have a recognised teaching qualification.[62] The majority of the teacher trainers in the CFPPs and IMPs do not have experience of teaching at the primary school level.[63] The situation is compounded by the fact that the regions, district and schools do not have qualified manpower to implement the new decentralised INSET programmes that have been suggested in the 1994 Master Plan of Basic Education.

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT PRESET CURRICULUM

The current curriculum in both the CFPPs and the IMPs is greatly influenced by the entry point of the candidates. Three years of secondary education for the IMP students is not enough for them to be effective teachers in resource-starved schools which demand a great deal of innovation and dedication from the teacher. Since the candidates themselves come from resource-starved schools and an inefficient examination system, it becomes a vicious circle where a weak educational system reproduces itself.

At present little time is spent either on education foundation subjects (psychology, sociology, philosophy) or on pedagogy because of the need to concentrate on subjects such as biology, chemistry and history, which should have been done in the secondary schools before student teachers were admitted into the IMPs or CFPPs. Current curricula resemble the secondary school curriculum "and provide little in the way of structural or intellectual coherence".[64] When student teachers are admitted with lower academic qualifications, there is a greater need for supervision and control once they are in schools. This leads to bureaucratization by setting up a plethora of supervisors and 'inspectors' which a country like

Mozambique cannot afford. Bureaucratization of the teaching profession also leads to the proletarianisation and eventually the de-skilling of teachers.

The curriculum in the IMPs and CFPPs needs to dove-tail with the four curriculum areas (Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Fourth area) indicated in the Master Plan of Education and current trends on teacher education and how children learn in Mozambican classrooms. For instance, teacher education needs to focus on pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge and encourage reflective teaching practice, action research and the use of the mother tongue (L1) in the lower grades of primary schools. The importance of L1 is critical especially in the early grades. As Giroux notes:

> Language in all its complexity becomes central not only in the production of meaning and social identities but also as a constitutive condition for human learning.[65]

Therefore, current efforts to introduce L1 in primary schools need to be enhanced to accelerate the research on bilingual education at INDE, ISP and UEM. The whole notion of a multi-lingual approach to schooling needs to be addressed in PRESET as well.[66] The integration of the EP1 and EP2 curriculum in the IMPs should also be a major feature of reforms in teacher education.

Problems in the PRESET curriculum can be traced back to the influence of the East German and Russian teacher education practices during the period of the socialist experiment in Mozambique (1975-1989) with its lack of transparency in the decision-making process. Thus, a closer examination of the curriculum of CFPPs and IMPs seem to mirror what is happening at the ISP where English language constitutes 14.81%, methodology 14.81% practical subjects 8.33% and general subjects 62.04% of the PRESET curriculum. The programmes at the ISP are not only very long (4-5 years) but there is a very high failure rate[64] In my view, pedagogical and professional knowledge[67] are more important than focusing on subject matter especially in a situation where teachers are required to be change agents and innovators in resource-starved schools.

A problem of the PRESET curriculum is that most students in CFPPs and IMPs are unable to participate in Teaching Practice during their period of training because of financial and transport constraints. In urban areas such as Maputo, college lecturers do not have the time to do student supervision on teaching practice because they are busy trying to supplement their meagre incomes by moonlighting.[68]

In some cases, students do practise teaching at the primary schools close to the IMPs and CFPPs. Since such primary schools do not resemble the resource-starved rural schools in which the majority of the students will spend their professional careers. Therefore, the current PRESET programme does not adequately prepare student-teachers for their future roles.

FACILITIES AND TEACHING RESOURCES IN IMPS AND CFPPS

Teaching and learning facilities in all the IMPs and CFPPs are grossly inadequate. For instance, the single IMP in Nampula (meant to service the entire northern region) is small with inadequate classrooms and teaching and learning resources. Like the IMP in Maputo, the Nampula IMP is in the process of being re-acquired by the Catholic Church from the GOM. The new IMP being built in Beira with funding from the World Bank is also very small. Most of the CFPPs are not functioning properly either because they were destroyed or because they do not have enough classrooms and housing facilities for students and staff.

As far as teaching and learning resources are concerned, it is impossible existing institutions can play a critical role in both PRESET and INSET with the current paucity of basic reprographic and teaching equipment in the IMPs and CFPPs. For instance, of the three functioning IMPs, only the Beira IMP has a computer and a printer although it is not being used because the institution does not have money to pay the salary for a clerk! Library facilities are almost non existent in all the IMPS and CFPPs.

The severe shortage of basic teaching, learning and training materials in all the IMPs and CFPPs parallels the situation in the schools, where pupils sit on the floor without adequate teaching and learning materials. In all the IMPs, tutors and students have to scrounge for any old reading materials that are available. If these are inadequate for the less than one thousand student teachers in the IMPs, clearly the same materials can not be used by thousands of practising teachers who need reading materials for upgrading and for use in their classrooms as INSET activities are re-established.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Parallel to the economic recovery program is the introduction of the National Recovery Program or *Programa de Reconstrução Nacional* (PRN), intended to reconstruct, rehabilitate and improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system. Within the educational sector, PRN is specifically intended to:

* Improve teacher quality by focusing on both PRESET and INSET.
* Revitalise the Zones of Pedagogical Influence (ZIPs) and the development of CFPPs into Teachers' Resource Centres to be central in INSET.
* Introduce an improved pattern of teacher education for Community Schools.
* Improve the status of teachers and introduce a career ladder linked to continuing study and up-grading closely associated with their day-to-day work.

* Establish a system of cascading training for trainers, master teachers, teachers and teacher trainees.
* Offer staff development at District, Provincial and National levels and those involved in teacher education in the MINED.
* Improve the quality of teaching and learning materials.
* Improve the methods of data collection in teacher education and the development of indicators.

Such a long list of targets for the PRN will require massive infusions of finance, materials, resources and expertise from government and donors and a re-structuring of the entire educational system.

The reality of the Mozambican situation is that GOM does not have the adequate funds as revealed by the macro-economic indicators shown above. This situation is compounded by the fact that donors are frustrated[69] by the inability of the GOM to restructure teacher education, as evidenced by the duplicity of roles between major institutions in teacher education. The lack of articulation and communication between the ISP, INDE, IMPs and CFPPs is being addressed by donor agencies as an issue which has to be resolved if teacher education is to meet the objectives of the Master Plan on Basic Education.

INSET AND THE ZONES OF PEDAGOGICAL INFLUENCE

As indicated above, the GOM is finding it very difficult to train more teachers for both EP1 and EP2 levels using the college-based model. For instance, in 1991 the were 3 233 males and 1 009 enroled at all the CFPPs in the country. In 1993, there were 1 631 females and 2 316 males enroled in CFPPs. These figures fall well short of the number of teachers required for the primary education system. Hence, it is not surprising that only 53% of the country's primary schools are offering a complete four-year cycle of primary education.[70] Consequently, the government has introduced a system of INSET and PRESET based on the concept of Zones of Pedagogical Influence (ZIP) which will service both government and community primary schools. According to the Master Plan for Basic Education (1994), a ZIP will be made up of one complete primary school (grade 1-7) and four or more satellite Community Schools. Each school will have no more than 800 pupils and the head of a ZIP will be a primary school Director. Each ZIP will eventually have 4 000 pupils.

A group of Master Teachers will also be part of the ZIP. Itinerant tutors from the CFPPs, Teacher Resource Centres and the District and Provincial Directorates of Education will also work closely with the ZIPs. It is estimated that between 1994 and 1999 some 200 ZIPs will be established in all the ten provinces.[71] This means that there will be close to 800 000 children in the ZIPs through out the country by

the year 2000 which is also the target year for Basic Education For All for the Jomtien Conference[72] of which Mozambique is a signatory and ardent supporter.

In this scheme, ZIPs will receive professional support from District and Provincial Pedagogical Teams. The ZIPs together with the DDEs and PDEs will in turn receive professional support from Teacher Resource Centres (TRCs) located at CFPPs. Eventually, the CFPP will be turned into a TRC. The TRCs will receive support from the IMPs which will also act as Regional Resource Centres. In the new Master Plan for Basic Education, the proposal is to remove the distinction between EP1 and EP2. This amalgamation will also be reflected in teacher education programmes at the IMP after the phasing out of the CFPPs. All prospective candidates for teacher training will be admitted after ten years of secondary education, with candidates specialising in either pre-school education or primary education or secondary education.

Within the new scheme of teacher education, community school teachers will be trained at TRCs through a combination of short residential courses and school-based training through distance education modules produced by the Institute of Teacher Upgrading or in Portuguese, the *Instituto de Aperfeicomento de Professores* (IAP). These community teachers and ZIP staff will be trained in schools by Master Teachers. The main responsibility for the professional supervision and evaluation of staff in the TRCs will be the TRCs and the pedagogical teams from the District and Provincial Pedagogical Teams. These will constitute itinerant teams working closely with the ZIPs.

Since school management is also becoming a critical issue in the rehabilitation of Mozambican primary schools, the ZIPs are intended to play a central role in training school managers in organisational development and the management of change. The TRCs will also be pivotal in training District and Provincial educational personnel in educational management and school improvement and in the in-service of staff from the CFPPs and IMPs. For the TRC to succeed, the scheme has to create space for tertiary institutions such as INDE, ISP and IAP to assist with their professional and research capacity in the INSET activities in TRCs and ZIPs.

THE POTENTIAL OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FOR BASIC EDUCATION

If teacher education is to satisfy the increasing demand for qualified Basic Education teachers in Mozambique, a mix of training modes (short, school-based, college-based and distance education) in teacher education will be required. I am arguing for a paradigmatic shift in teacher education that includes Schön's[73] notions of the reflective practitioner and the hermeneutic paradigm. Viewed from a hermeneutic perspective, professional teacher education becomes:

> Becomes largely a matter of facilitating the development of teachers' capacities for situational understandings as a basis for wise judgement and intelligent decisions in complex, ambiguous and dynamic educational situations.[74]

The teaching situation in most urban and rural classrooms cannot be predicted and specified in advance because it is complex, dynamic and fragile. This is especially so in Mozambice where pupils differ on the basis of linguistic backgrounds, gender, class, race, learning readiness, age and even health.

For meaningful reform, policy makers should also be concerned with teacher autonomy so that teachers can make independent and appropriate decisions about themselves, subject matter, pupils, curriculum, pedagogical styles, self-evaluation and testing of what they teach. The roles and responsibilities of teachers have to be seen in a new way so that teachers in resource-starved mud-and-thatched primary schools so ubiquitous in rural Mozambican can initiate and implement change in multifarious and delicate teaching and learning situations.

In short this paper contends that teacher education reform for a democratic Mozambique requires a move from teaching as labour or craft to teaching as a profession. When teaching is viewed as labour, the teacher is responsible for implementing a prescribed instructional program in a prescribed manner. Common in highly centralised education systems, this conception of teaching takes initiative away from the teacher. According to Palme[75] this is the most common form of teaching in Mozambican schools.

When teaching is viewed as a craft it consists of a repertoire of specialised techniques developed by teachers over time and maintained because of their effectiveness in the classroom. Here the teacher continues to follow the rules and regulations as laid out in the curriculum, teachers' guides or even in the basic textbooks. In this schema, the teacher is still reproducing knowledge and legitimating certain forms of knowledge that perpetuate inequalities in a society such as Mozambique. Furthermore, the teacher is not questioning the fundamental categories or symbolic forms of all disciplines to create room for a language of hope and possibilities which can bring about meaningful reform in teacher education for Basic Education in Mozambique. This form of teacher education is germane to an apolitical and ahistorical rationalist philosophy of PRESET which lays undue emphasis on the efficacy of applying educational theory to teacher education practices.

A move towards teaching as a profession entails an emphasis on the professional and pedagogical knowledge of teachers. The aim is to develop teachers capable of making independent judgements without reference to prescribed routines or general rules of teaching. Such forms of teacher development emphasise that teachers should be able to study and understand the *ecology* of the classroom in order to discern what is happening and then consider contextualised potential solutions or improvements to meaning, teaching and learning. The teacher as professional

becomes an organic transformative intellectual able to act as a change agent to enhance Basic Education for all.

This view is sharply opposed to the concept of Master Teachers in the 'Cascading' model of teacher *training* underpinning the proposed ZIPs and TRCs. The Master Teacher concept is germane to the 'social market' perspective predicated on behaviouralism. Emphasis in this model is more on teacher training rather than on teacher education. The envisaged role of the Master Teacher is to identify training needs of unqualified teachers and teacher trainees and to act as a mentor in schools, ZIPs and TRCs. The Master Teacher also has bureaucratic control of INSET activities in schools and TRCs, thereby negating the concept of developing a teacher who is an autonomous and transformative intellectual.

If teachers are to play a critical role in improving the quality of Basic Education for all, it is important that they participate in developing instructional materials. To ensure that these materials are relevant to pupils' experiences, student-teachers should be introduced to a range of methods for developing instructional materials, even from stories and experiences of their pupils. Pre-packaged teaching and learning materials should be discouraged because they de-skill the teacher and are not sufficiently attentive to the particularities of pupils' experience.

Additionally, as I have already argued, the question of language needs to be addressed. If pupils are to understand what they are doing, there is a need to introduce the *local* vernacular language (L1) before they can be exposed to Portuguese (L2).

TEACHER EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

An understanding of curriculum development is crucial for teacher trainees adn practising teachers. Curriculum refers to the planned and unplanned content of the instructional programme, which includes all the learning experiences provided formally and informally in schools. Because of the contested and ideological nature of curriculum, schools are characterised by contradiction and conflict through their very function of enhancing ESAP and a burgeoning democratic system in Mozambique. As Carnoy and Levin argue:

> These democratic and class-reproductive dynamics are conditioned by the larger social conflict outside schools. To the extent that the democratic dynamic gains ground, the educational system diverges in certain respects from the structural exigencies of reproducing capitalist relations of production and the division of labour [which was the antithesis of socialism].[76]

Teacher education for Basic Education will have to prepare students to operate in schools located in a post-colonial State that has to change its political and economic orientation as peace prevails and as the Sub-region takes on a new political outlook because of the emergence of a democratic South Africa. Primary school teachers

and student teachers need to be exposed to ways in which they can also be involved in curriculum reform and improvement in their schools.

If teacher education for Basic Education is to be meaningful in different provinces or regions, National Curricula will need to be flexible enough for teachers to include content that reflects the realities of local communities. The issue of the gender sensitivity of curricula and textbooks also needs to be addressed concurrently if the participation of girls in primary education is to be enhanced.

Finally public examinations are the norm in Mozambique. Although flexibility is crucial for responding to local needs, it is vital that curriculum development be linked to the examination system of the country.

TEACHER EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT

For the empowered and transformative teacher to take root in Mozambican classrooms, PRESET and INSET teacher education needs to introduce students to methods of managing change and innovation in schools geared towards classroom and school improvement and renewal. In other words, student teachers should be exposed to methods of initiating, stimulating and managing innovation in schools.

Equally important are skills on how to pass on information about innovations to other teachers and schools even in different districts or provinces. As Fullan[77] argues, key themes in school improvement include vision building; initiative-taking and empowerment; staff development/resource assistance; restructuring of schools; monitoring and problem-coping; and evolutionary planning in schools. Phrased differently, transformative and empowered teachers need exposure and commitment to conduct school-based action research in schools which is triggered by practical problems. Teacher education programs should also be concerned with an examination of educational, moral and political commitments which can guide PRESET and INSET activities rather than focusing on procedural and organisational aspects of teaching.[78]

If Mozambican teachers are to play a central role in the development of teacher education, they will have to engage in school-based participatory research. The ultimate goal of such research is fundamental structural change and the improvement of the lives of those involved in the schools and teachers' colleges. It is not aimed just at getting improvement but at a much wider socio-economic and political transformation of schools and society. In the Mozambican scenario, self study should also be part and parcel of the action research processes in the teachers colleges and schools.

DONOR AGENCIES AND BASIC EDUCATION REFORM

This discussion would be incomplete without a brief discussion of the role of donor agencies in financing and reforming education in Mozambique. As Mozambique becomes part of the global economy mentioned earlier, it is essential for it to continue asserting its own priorities even when faced with a large onslaught from donors with different political and commercial agendas. The Master Plan For Basic Education represents GOMs commitment to maintaining its autonomy from donors and charting an autochthonous development path in Basic Education.

Currently, a large number of international donors contribute to the financing of the education sector in Mozambique. In 1990, for example, ten different countries contributed a combined total of over US$ 14 million to MINED through bi-lateral agreements, while multi-lateral organizations, including the World Bank, gave approximately US$9 million. MINED also received financing of nearly US$ 2 million in 1990 from 25 international NGOs.[79] If the total educational sector is considered, as opposed to just MINED, about 40% of the total expenditure allocation is donor contributed. These massive infusions of aid also increase the autonomy and authority of the State *vis-a-vis* civil society in social services such as education.

The problematic of bilateral and multilateral aid evokes questions and concerns of neocolonialism and dependency which once raged in the 1970s and 1980s in development literature. Carnoy provides an excellent historical account and analysis of the arguments on the nature of the dependent State and how the debate has been shaped over the years. Mozambique, like many dependent states,[80] does not have the human resources and financial capacity to 'jump-start' its educational reform process. This situation is partly due to the weakness of the State and to its past political and economic problems some of which were a direct result of de-stabilisation activities of RENAMO and its international backers.

Faced with a crisis in Basic Education, the GOM of Mozambique has very few options but to be practical and accept foreign aid. In this respect, the GOM is being pragmatic when Mozambican children have no teachers, classrooms, books or even pencils and exercise books. What is significant is the extent to which the GOM is able to re-orient aid policies to suit its own agendas and priorities. In some cases, the agendas of some donor agencies (such as the Swedish International Development Agency [SIDA], UNICEF and the Dutch agencies) dove-tail with broad development goals of Mozambique. Although Swedish development assistance constituted 1.0% of its gross national income, its "goals of economic growth, economic and social equality and political independence, development of democracy and environmental protection"[81] are in no way aimed at ossifying a dependency relationship with Mozambique. The concurrence of SIDA's agenda with the development goals of Mozambique is evident in the activities of SIDA in

the long term financing of INDE and its research activities in Science, Languages and Mathematics. UNICEF, as Jolly[82] shows, focuses on children and issues such as Basic Education, health, nutrition and rural development. Similary, the Dutch are playing a critical role in teacher education reform. Without their assistance, it would be impossible even to think of teacher education reform within the near foreseeable future because the State is in a serious financial crisis as we tried to show above.[83]

Hence, in our criticism of foreign aid we need to transcend deterministic and universalistic interpretations of the effect of donor financing of education in a poor country such as Mozambique. No one paradigm or theory has sole legitimacy or can adequately explain social phenomena in the educational arena. A postmodern approach, along the lines suggested by Paulson,[84] may be more appropriate in the context under discussion because it opens up new vistas of examining the merits and de-merits of donor financing of education in Mozambique.

Recipient countries and their ruling elites are not passive actors in the global economy. Even poor countries such as Mozambique are able to permeate, mediate, refract, resist and transform hegemony in the process of affirming their own independence in terms of the form, structure and orientation of educational reform. After all, as Gramsci teaches us, even international hegemony is contested.

In fact, in the PRONES project, UNICEF and the GOM have found out that parents in rural Mozambique are able to successfully infuse their own views of educational reform into the Community School projects.[85] Officials in the MINED faced with a barrage of donors have shown a resiliency that enables them to put their own educational agendas first before those of donors.[86] In these situations, we should also not forget the fact that most multilateral and bilateral donors are now more interested in "the incorporation of social dimensions and human concerns into their approaches to the making of economic policies".[87] For instance, in Mozambique the SIDA, the World Food Programme, the Dutch government, and the UN agencies to name a few, have all been concentrating their activities on mesopolicies. These are policies and interventions "which deal with the consequences of macro-policies on special target groups"[88] such as the rural poor, children, girls, marginalised youths and women. In such circumstances, aid can adopt a human and non-exploitative face intended to keep people alive, empower them and build local capacities at the micro technical levels where initially there was no local capacity for development.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined the status, limits and potentialities of Basic Education reform in Mozambique. The political and financial crisis of the post colonial State were used to explicate the limits of educational reform in a country that is also structurally located in a global economy. Despite these problems, Mozambique

seems to be on the threshold of addressing issues of access, equity and quality in its primary and teacher education reforms. I have also argued that a developing nation that is adjusting its economy can be in a position to use donor financing to its advantage especially where donors are re-focusing on the poor segments of society and the micro-level.

At least four requirements will have to be met if Basic Education and the teacher education system in Mozambique are to be effective. Firstly, both teacher education and Basic Education focus on the development of self-sustaining systems with multiplier effects in schools and other sectors. The decentralisation already taking place needs to be supported to involve the participation of provincial and local authorities and communities in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of educational programmes. For Mozambique to sustain its reform efforts, it should continue to experiment and research on existing and proposed pilot experiences to acquire contextualised educational methodologies for introducing new curricula contents in schools and its classrooms. Secondly, reform efforts need to focus on administrative capacity building and management information systems at the national, provincial and local levels. This should also be linked to the development of local capacities in the production of school equipment and materials to eventually reduce dependency on donors and imports. Thirdly, MINED and institutions of higher learning might need to focus on the development of teaching methodologies to attend to the psychological and social rehabilitation of war affected children and primary school teachers. Finally, there is a need for local and national advocacy programmes to enhance community education and the education of girls and women in particular. Within this framework, it is essential to focus on training and upgrading primary school teachers, strengthening school community linkages and for promoting adult education in local languages so as to be able to universalise Basic Education. The discussion has shown that the GOM has the wherewithal to succeed in reforming education as enunciated in the Master Plan on Basic Education for All if it continues to emphasise its own agendas when dealing with donors and other bi-lateral and multilateral agencies.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This is a revised version of a paper presented at a seminar organised by the Education Policy Unit – University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg on August 17, 1994. It is also based on my visits to Mozambique in 1992, 1993 and in May, July and September 1994.
2. M. Carnoy and H. Levin, *Schooling and Work in the Democratic State*. (Standford California: Stanford University Press, 1985); M. Carnoy and J. Samoff, *Education and Social Transition in the Third World*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990); H. Giroux, *Teachers as Intellectuals: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Learning*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); H. Giroux and P. McLaren (eds.), *Critical Pedagogy, the State and Cultural Struggle*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989); M. Apple, *Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age*, (New York: Routledge and Kegan

Paul, 1993); B. Fuller, *Growing Up Modern: The Western State Builds Third World Schools*. (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1991).

3. L. Roman and M. Apple, "Is Naturalism a Move Away from Positivism? Materialist and Feminist Approaches to Subjectivity in Ethnographic Research", in W. Elliot and A. Peshkin (eds.), *Qualitative Inquiry in Education: The Continuing Debate*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990), 41.
4. Master Plan on Basic Education, 1994; UNESCO, 1993; World Bank, 1988).
5. M. Carnoy, *The Case for Investing in Basic Education*. (New York: UNICEF, 1992); K. Lewin, "British Assistance to Education: How Much, To Whom, and Why?" *International Journal of Educational Development*, 14, 2, (1994): 159.
6. UNESCO, *Education for All: An Expanded Vision. Round Tables Themes I, II and III*. (Paris: UNESCO, 1992).
7. P. Maguire, *Women in Development: An Alternative Analysis*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, Centre for International Education, 1984).
8. T. Robinson, "Democratization: Understanding the Relationship Between Change and the Culture of Politics". *African Studies Review*, 37, 1 (1994).
9. L. Ilon, "Structural Adjustment and Education: Adapting to a Growing Global Market", *International Journal of Educational Development*, 14, 2, (1994): 95-108.
10. J. Nyang'oro, "Reform Politics and the Democratization Process in Africa", *African Studies Review, 37, 1, (1994): 139.*
11. P. Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*. (London: Polity Press, 1990).
12. T. Robinson, "Democratisation: Understanding the Relationship Between Change and the Culture of Politics" *African Studies Review*, 37, 1, (April 1994).
13. M. Apple, *Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age*. (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1993).
14. B. Fuller, *Growing Up Modern: The Western State Builds Third World Schools*. (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1991).
15. A. Johnston, "The Mozambican State and Education", in M. Carnoy and J. Samoff, *Education and Social Transition in the Third World*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990).
16. M. Carnoy and H. Levin, *Schooling and Work in the Democratic State*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 145.
17. J. Mittelman, "Marginalization and the International Division of Labour: Mozamique's Strategy of Opening the Market", *African Studies Review*, 34, 3, (December 1991): 93.
18. For comparative purposes, the countries in the sub-region being used in the article are: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
19. *Proodder Newsletter, Southern Africa*, Volume 6, (June 1994): 2.
20. L. Bowen, "Beyond Reform: Adjustment and Political Power in Contemporary Mozambique". *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30, 2 (1993): 256
21. A. Abrahamson and A. Nilsson, "Mozambique: Macro-Economic Developments and Political Challenges in the Nineties", the Scandianvian Institute of African Studies working paper number4, 1994: 11-12.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Ilon, 1994: 96.
24. *Proodder Newsletter 'Southern Africa: The Dawn of a New Era'*, 6, 2 (1994): 4.
25. J. Samoff, "The Reconstruction of Schooling in Africa", *Comparative Education Review*, 37, 2 (1993): 181-122; Fuller, 1991.
26. F. Reimers, "Education and Structural Adjustment in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa", *International Journal of Educational Development*, 14, 2 (1994): 119-129.

27. MINED Directorate of Planning and UNICEF, "Indicadores Educacionais e Efectivos Escolares, Ensino Primario 1983-1992" (Maputo: MINED, 1994).
28. K. Dzvimbo, D. Phank, C. Torres and R. Verhine, "Mozambique: Education Sector Assessment", (Washington DC: USAID, 1992).
29. For an excellent discussion of the nature and development of the 'Dependent State' see M. Carnoy, *The State and Political Theory*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 172-207.
30. The major donors within the primary educational sector are UNICEF, The Swedish International Development Agency, the African Development Bank, the British Council and The Netherlands Embassy.
31. MINED/DNEP, "Initial Programme Proposal on Teacher Education and Professional Support" (Maputo: MINED/DNEP, 1994).
32. J. Kandeh, "Sierra-Leone: Contradictory Class Functionality of the 'Soft State'", *Review of African Political Economy*, 55, (1992): 30.
33. A. Johnstone, "The Mozambican State and Education" in . Carnoy and J. Samoff, *Education and Social Transition in the Third World* (Princeton, New Jersey: Pinceton University Press), 278.
34. H. Daun, *Neo-Liberalism, Structuralism and Primary Education in Mozambique*. (Stockholm: Swedish Interactional Development Agency, 1992), 13; MINED, Directorate of Planning and UNICEF, *Indicadores Educacionais e Efectivos Escolares, Ensino Primario, 1983-1992*. (Maputo: INED, 1994), 11; D. Woodward *et al*, *Rehabilitation, Refugees, Resources: Aspects of Basic Education Planning in Mozambique*, (England: World University Servie, 1994): 22.
35. Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and UNICEF, *Indicadores Educacionais e Efectivos Escolares, Ensino Primarios, 1983-1992*. (Maputo: MINED, 1994), 82.
36. Woodward, 1994: 95.
37. Carnoy and Levin, 1985: 183.
38. Dzvimbo and Lima, 1994.
39. Linde, 1994.
40. L. Ilon, "Structural Adjustment and Education: Adapting to a Growing Global Market" *International Journal of Educational Development*, 15, 2 (1994): 96.
41. J. Samoff *et al.*, "Education and Development: Deconstructing a Myth to Construct Reality" in A. Siedman and F. Anang, *Towards a New Vision of Self Sustainable Development*. (New York: Africa World Press, 1992), 101
42. S. Klees and P. Easton, "Conceptualising the Role of Education in the Economy" in R. Arnove *et al* (eds.), *Emergent Issues in Education: Comparative Perspective*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992).
43. J. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990). 154-162.
44. E. Golias, "Relatorio Semestral de Balanco dos Planos Pronciais de Accao 1994 do Prones" MINED/UNICEF: Maputo, 1994; R. Simbane, *et al, Relatorios Provincias de Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Tete, Zambezia and Nampula* (Maputo: MINED, 1994).
45. T. Manjate, "Proposta de Metodologia de Trabalho do PRONES: O Papel do Diretor Provincial de Educacao". paper presented at a MINED and UNICEF workshop to review provincial plans on community schools, June 26-29, 1994, Bileni, Gaza Provinice, Mozambique; R. Simbane "PRONES vs PROLEC: Deferencia de conceitos ou simplesemnte de nomes". Paper presented at a MINED and UNICEF workshop to review provincial plans on community schools, June 26-29, 1994, Bilen, Gaza Province, Mozambique.
46. C. Prather (ed.), *Primary Education for All: Learning from the BRAC Experience: A Case Study*. (Washington DC: Advanced Basic Education and Literacy, 1993).
47. E. Schiefelbeing, *In Search of the School of the XXI Century: Is the Colombian Escuela Nueva the Right Pathfinder"*. (Santiago, Chile: UNESCO/UNICEF, 1991).

48. J. Farrell and J. Oliveira, "Teachers in Developing Countries: Improving Effectiveness and Managing Costs", World Bank: Washing DC, 29-32.
49. MINED/UNICEF, *A Master Plan for Basic Education in Mozambique*. (Maputo: MINED, 1994).
50. Woodward *et al*, 1994.
51. M. Palme, *Repetition and Drop Out in Mozambican Primary Schools*. (Maputo: MINED, 1991).
52. Ministry of Education, Directorate of Planning and UNICEF, *Indicadores Educacionais e Efectivos Escolares, Ensino Primario, 1983-1992*. (Maputo: MINED, 1994).
53. Ministry of Education Statistics for 1994, Planning Section, Maputo, July 1994.
54. Z. Cabral *et al*, *Educational Opportunities and Disparities for the Girl Child in Mozambique*. (Maputo: INDE, 1992); C. Zacula, "Socio Cultural Aspects of School Attendance of Girls at Primary Level in Mozambique", UNESCO/UNICEF, Maputo, 1991.
55. World Bank, *Mozambique: Education Sector Expenditure, Management and Financing Review*. (Washington DC, Southern Africa Department, 1992), 11.
56. MINED, 1994.
57. Zacula, 1991.
58. MINED, 1994: 3.
59. *Ibid.*
60. Farrell and Oliveira.
61. World Bank, *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalisation and Expansion*. (Washington DC, 1988), 39.
62. UNESCO, *World Education Report*. (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 1993), 132-133.
63. *Ibid.*, 120.
64. *Ibid.*, 136-137.
65. MINED, 1994.
66. Dzvimbo and Lima, 1994; MINED, 1994.
67. H. Giroux, *Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1992), 19.
68. Dzvimbo and Lima, 1994.
69. G. Linde, "Adequacy of External Financial Support to the Education Sector in Mozambique", MINED, Maputo, 1994.
71. MINED/DNEP, "Initial Programme Proposal on Teacher Education and Professional Support", MINED/DNEP: Maputo, 1994.
72. UNESCO, *Education for All: An Expanded Vision, Round Tables Themes I, II and III*, (Paris: UNESCO, 1992).
73. D. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. (London: Jossey Bassey, 1987).
74. MINED/UNICEF, "A Master Plan for Basic Education in Mozambique", MINED: Maputo, 1994: 26.
75. M. Palme, "Repetition and Drop Out in Mozambican Primary Schools" MINED: Maputo, 1991.
76. Carnoy and Levin: 1985: 144-145.
77. Fullan, 1993.
78. J. Elliott (ed.), *Reconstructing Teacher Education*. (London: The Falmer Press, 1993), 18-20.
79. Smith and Zantiotis, 1989.
80. Linde, 1994.
81. Carnoy, 1984: 172-207.
82. R. Jolly, "Adjustment with a Human Face: A UNICEF Record and Perspective on the 1980s", *World Development*, 19, 12, (1991): 1807-1821.

83. L. Buchert, "Education and Development: A Study of Donor Agency Policies on Education in Sweden, Holland and Denmark", *International Journal of Educational Development*, 14, 2, (1994): 143-157.
84. R. Paulston and M. Liebman, "An Invitation to Postmodern Social Cartography", *Comparative Education Review*, 38, 2, (1994): 215-232.
85. Z. Ahmed, "Revisao dos PPAs". Paper presented at a MINED and UNICEF workshop to review provincial plans on Community Schools. June 26-29 1994. Bileni, Gaza Provinice.
86. Jolly, 1991: 1817.
87. Van der Hoeven, 1991: 1839.
88. K. Dzvimbo, D. Plank, A. Torres and R. Verhine, *op cit*.n

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 63-82

Transforming Pedagogy in South Africa: The Insertion of the Teacher as Subject

CATRIONA MACLEOD
Wits Rural Facility, Private Bag X400, Klaserie 1381

As is widely recognised, teachers will play a vital role in the transformation of education in South Africa. Concern has been expressed, however, with regard to the theoretical training that teachers have received. Using a post-structuralist framework, this paper argues that making a direct link between theory and practice is simplistic. The teacher as a contradictory subject inserted in many non-uniform discourses stands in the middle ground between theory and practice. It is argued that (1) post-structuralist theory provides a useful framework from which to re-examine current pedagogical theory and (2) the insertion of the teacher as a subject into the conceptualisation of the theory/practice process has implications in terms of teacher training, particularly In-Service Education and Training (INSET). Data from interviews with seven remedial advisors employed in the old homeland departments of education are presented. The conscious and unconscious discursive pedagogical and personal realities of the advisors are analysed. This analysis shows how teachers invoke contradictory pedagogical and personal discourses in their attempts to make sense of the process of learning and teaching.

INTRODUCTION

> A teaching corps of quality and substance is ... a necessary condition for educational transformation.[1]

> For those who recognise the role which teachers can play in the struggle to liberate South Africa from the present order, the brand of theoretical discourse available to teachers should be of some interest.[2]

These quotations indicate a recognition of the fundamental role that teachers will play in educational transformation in South Africa. But what does it mean to have a teaching corps of 'quality and substance' and what does this imply in terms of In-Service Education and Training (INSET)? Does 'quality and substance' refer to the qualifications that a teacher has on paper? Surely not. The phrase 'quality and substance' probably refers to various concerns, one of which is the theoretical model of education to which the teacher (consciously or unconsciously) subscribes. Concern has been expressed with respect to the theoretical training that teachers in South Africa have received.[3] Those who have been through the system of Colleges of Education[4] or the more conservative universities[5] have been exposed almost exclusively to fundamental pedagogics (FP). FP, the supposedly neutral science of educational theory, has been linked to the practice and ideology of Christian National Education (CNE).[6] Those teachers who have attended the more liberal

universities or have been part of the broader liberation struggle have been exposed to theories that set themselves up in opposition to Bantu Education and CNE, and what is referred to as 'traditional' education. Most notable of these theories are the child-centred movement, and critical pedagogy.

Two sets of questions arise when one views the notion of theoretical training and the possibility of 'remedial' INSET.[7] First: Are the dominant educational theories adequate? Do they provide the teacher (or educational researcher or student) with the theoretical tools with which to make sufficiently incisive analyses of education, and of the process of learning and teaching? Second: To what extent has exposure to the dominant theories affected the practice of our teachers? For example, have those exposed only to fundamental pedagogics in fact been practising Christian National Education? And if so, is this solely owing to their exposure to this theory?

In response to these questions, this paper presents two arguments. The first is that post-structuralist theory provides a useful framework from which to re-examine the current theories of pedagogy. Any theory of education depends on a theory or assumption of personhood and society. While some theories of education attempt to examine their underlying concept of the person and society, others unproblematically assume the nature of the person and society, and proceed to construct whole edifices of theory based on their assumptions. Post-structuralism challenges both the assumption that the individual is unified and the assumption that society and its effects are monolithic.

The second argument is that making a direct link between theory and practice is simplistic. It is the notion of unitary subjectivity that allows theories to position the teacher as unproblematically putting into practice the tenets of the theory. When this does not happen, 'environmental' forces are somehow brought in to explain the discrepancy. However, I argue that in the middle ground between theory and practice stands the teacher as a contradictory subject, invested in many, often diverse discourses, only one of which will be a theory of education. And even then the teacher may unconsciously subscribe to contradictory aspects of various theories.

This re-examination of theory, and the insertion of the teacher as a contradictory subject in our conceptualisation of theory and practice issues has, I argue, implications in terms of INSET programmes aimed at addressing issues surrounding theory and practice of education. In this paper, I shall review the three main theories of education that have been and are utilised in South Africa, namely fundamental pedagogy, child-centred pedagogy, and critical pedagogy. Each will be discussed and critiqued from a post-structuralist framework. After this, data from interviews with seven teachers employed as remedial advisors will be presented. The pedagogical discursive realities of these teachers will be analysed. This study indicates that educational theory forms just one aspect of these realities, and furthermore that these teachers' investment in educational theory is in and of itself contradictory.

THEORIES OF PEDAGOGY

The post-structuralist understanding of the person as subject

It is necessary to begin the discussion with an outline of some of the tenets of post-structuralism that will be utilised to critique these frameworks. This brief description cannot hope to illustrate the full richness and depth of post-structuralist theory, and readers are referred to other references for a better understanding.[8]

Most psychological and educational theories are beleaguered on one side or other of the individual\society divide. Either the individual is reduced to some essentialist notion such as biology, personality or the mind, or society or the context is seen as monolithic in its effects. The proposal of a 'complex interaction' leaves the dualism in place as there is a failure to theorise exactly how this interaction happens. Consider, for example, socialisation theory in which society somehow gets inside the individual.

Post-structuralist writers emphasise the *social* and *historical production* of subjectivity through discursive and signifying practices. Language, therefore, is of pivotal importance in post-structuralist theorising. It is viewed as a social achievement through which meanings are attained. These meanings get taken up in scientific, educational and everyday discourse, and take on the aspect of common-sense or unquestioned reality. A discourse, in post-structuralist terms, is a field of statements (used at disciplinary, political, cultural or small group level), while discursive practices are the rules and institutional arrangements through which discourse statements are produced and communicated. Discourse has a dual character. On the one hand it is the mode through which the world of meaning and reality emerges, and on the other hand it restricts what can be known, said or experienced at any particular socio-historical moment. It is this dual character that links knowledge with power in the knowledge/power axis that is so fundamental to Foucault's work. Foucault's genealogies[9] demonstrate the linkages between power, knowledge and the production of subjectivity. Discourse and discursive practices are seen as constitutive in that they allow certain subject positionings to be taken up within them. There are many, non-uniform discourses within which a person may reflexively position him/herself, or be interactively positioned by others.[10] People reflexively take up positions (consciously or unconsciously) within discourses according to the emotional investment that this affords them. Subjectivity is thus multiple and contradictory.

Fundamental pedagogics

Fundamental pedagogics (FP) presents itself as a science that sets out (a) to describe what is universally characteristic of education (which it defines as the process of the child being accompanied into adulthood by the adult or educator), and (b) to evaluate educational "doctrines" in the light of these "fundamental pedagogic essences".[11] Those doctrines which do not match up to these "universal" standards will have harmful effects on the child: "children educated in this manner will have their adulthood impaired".[12]

FP's claim to the status of a neutral science is achieved by attempting to separate form from content. Yonge, for example, sees FP as transcending any particular philosophy of life in that it investigates education "in terms of identifiable, describable necessary structures".[13] In other words, he views FP as describing the essential *form* of education. It is within the *content* of education that an educator's philosophy of life is inserted. In order to create such a science that is devoid of any 'philosophy of life' whatsoever, the FP scientist employs a methodological technique known as 'bracketing'. This requires the person to put aside (bracket) any personal interpretations, beliefs, prejudices or opinions in order to observe the educative event as it 'really' is.

FP has had many detractors. Segal[14] points out the basic contradiction between the first stage of analysis which is an etymological analysis of the term education or pedagogy, and the second stage which is a so-called[15] phenomenological analysis (using the method of 'bracketing'). This etymological analysis frames education within the narrow confines of the adult leading the child into adulthood. Segal's comment is:

> It seems futile to introduce a criterion of objectivity at the second stage of analysis .. when the first stage is subjective and arbitrary.[16]

Using FP's own definition of ideology Segal further adds that FP, far from being neutral, is ideological in character.[17] Kallaway[18] accuses FP of naivete and irrelevance because it does not locate educational issues within the broader framework of economic and political change. Furthermore the identification of education with schooling "conceals the power relations embodied in the schooling system".[19]

There are a number of levels of entry for a post-structuralist critique of FP. These relate to:

(1) the definition of education;
(2) the separation of the person as subject from the method;
(3) the underlying assumption of the nature of the person and of the child;

(4) the individual/society divide.

Each of these will be dealt with below.

(1) The definition of education

In seeking for a Greek or Latin root of the word education, FP writers assume that there is a direct association between the signifier (sound or written word) and the signified (meaning). Saussure[20] indicated that language goes beyond a simple word/object association. There are shifts and slippages in the relationship between the signifier and the signified. The signified world may thus be divided up and labelled in various ways by the signifier. Thus, giving a precise definition of education or pedagogy cannot capture the essentials thereof, or even serve as a starting point from which to describe the essentials.

(2) The separation of the person as subject from the method

Concerning methodology, Yonge admits that "fundamental pedagogic findings almost always are intermingled with pronouncements stemming from the author's philosophy of life".[21] While he finds this to be a "serious annoyance"[22], post-structuralists would say that this is precisely the point. Attempting to extract the worldview from the process is an attempt to extract the human, as if human were not the central point of human activity. Wilkinson puts it very aptly when she says: "the knower is part of the matrix of what is known".[23]

(3) The underlying assumption of the nature of the person and of the child

The underlying view of the nature of the child within FP is of somebody who is "dependent, in need of help ... incompetent, ignorant, unskilful, irresponsible and undisciplined".[24] In unpicking FP's and other educational theories' underlying assumptions concerning the nature of the child, we must be careful. As Walkerdine puts it:

> we are not faced with an 'ideology of childhood' which distorts what children are 'really like', so much as a 'truth' which regulates what 'should be'[25]

In other words, by defining the child as dependent and incompetent, FP creates the discursive pedagogical practices which allow the child to take on the discursive position of "dependent/incompetent". The nature of the child is produced and reproduced through discursive and signifying practices.

The above definition of the child draws heavily on the Calvinistic notion of the child as born in original sin and thus deficient.[26] The child therefore 'needs' to be guided by an adult who has overcome such a state so that s/he (the child) can also achieve 'normal' adulthood. This state of adulthood, it is to be presumed, is the

opposite of the state of childhood, viz. independent, competent, wise, skilful, responsible, and disciplined. The main point here, however, is that the educational needs of the child as espoused by FP are a social construction based on the latent assumption of the child as deficient.

(4) The individual/society divide

Higgs[27] tries to rescue FP from its critics by suggesting that FP should undergo a "paradigm shift" in scientific orientation. This, he believes, should be achieved by viewing FP as a human rather than a social science. He argues this on the basis that FP

> is concerned with fundamental human values rather than with social and cultural values, for these values are particular, transient and ideologically syncratic by nature.[28]

Higgs sees "fundamental human values" as perennial, and the domain of the human sciences, while the transient social and cultural values are the domain of the social sciences. In his argument Higgs creates an artificial divide between the individual and society, as if one could exist without the other. The caveat that he adds "This is not to deny the significance of social and cultural values in human existence"[29] does not save him from this gaping divide. The separation he creates is already theoretically constituted. His caveat becomes a platitude, as he lacks the theoretical tools with which to indicate exactly *how* the social and the cultural are linked to human existence.

Child-centred pedagogy

Child-centred pedagogy emerged as an attempt at humanising education, probably from the grips of Gradgrind. The central idea is that teaching should start from the child. It is posited that the child is the ultimate agent of his/her own learning; s/he is actively involved in constructing and arranging his/her knowledge. The teacher's role is to act as facilitator to that process; s/he must stimulate the child to learn. Various notions have been associated with child-centred pedagogy, such as relevance, discovery, understanding, process, creativity, problem-solving, freedom.[30]

The child-centred movement gained much of its impetus from the liberal democratic political tradition.[31] In this tradition individual differences and treating the individual as an end in and of her/himself, rather than merely as a means are important. The extension of this into education is that the child has a right to consideration as an intrinsically valuable human being.

Given the centrality of the child in this approach, its proponents quite naturally spend a lot of time debating the nature of the child, and its developmental patterns. To quote Entwistle:

> .. child-centred educationists might well retort [to 'traditional' educationists] that the continuing impoverished standards of mass education stem from our failure to apply, with sufficient insight or enthusiasm, those discoveries about the child and his [sic] nature which have been the product of developmental psychology.[32]

Much of developmental psychology is based on the notion of the child as 'organismic', ie. as following a natural developmental blueprint, given the correct environment. This, of course, has implications for teaching. For example, it is seen as detrimental to the child to move to abstract and symbolic representations too soon. This implies, in Piagetian terms, expecting the child to operate in the formal-operational stage of cognitive development, while s/he has not yet mastered all the tasks required in the concrete-operational stage.

It is assumed thus that the nature of the child, and therefore his/her educational needs, can be gleaned from the theory and 'empirical' findings of developmental psychology. These needs are legitimated by the fact that they have 'scientific' backing. Knowing the 'real' nature of the child allows the teacher to arrange the teaching environment in such a way as to stimulate the child's natural curiosity, and thus activate the learning process.

While child-centred pedagogy has gained popularity in some of the teacher-education institutions in South Africa, others have been critical of its manifestations. Maree, for example, believes that it was used by some of the proponents of Bantu Education to mask the ideological intentions of that system.[33] By this I believe she means that the "separate, but equal" rhetoric can be hidden behind an appeal to community- and child-centredness.

Post-structuralism would critique child-centred pedagogy in terms of its construction of the nature of the child and its (the child's) needs, and the regulative function that this plays. Walkerdine, for instance, views the shift from the 'authoritarian chalk-and-talk' method to the child-centred approach as a shift from overt to covert regulation.[34]

Within the child-centred paradigm it is assumed that the child will develop naturally (given the 'correct' environment). The child thus becomes the object of the pedagogical and scientific gaze, and is monitored to establish whether the correct mental and emotional strategies are unfolding. This process corresponds to what Foucault calls "disciplinary technology".[35] This is the power utilized in present-day institutions which aims at regulating and normalizing subjects. Measurement and observation produce knowledges/discourses concerning the child/person/subject. These discourses (which may be contradictory) are interiorised by the person to form part of his/her subjectivity. In this way discourse links power and knowledge, in that discourses and discursive practices are actually *productive* of subjectivity. Thus, by defining the "nature of the child" certain behaviours are produced and regulated.

Let us examine, for example, the concept of need that underlies much of child-centred pedagogy, and which defines to a large extent the 'nature of the child'.

In their pursuit of scientificism, child-centred educationists would say that in looking at needs one is looking at more than the 'felt needs' or 'wants' of the child (Jack may, for example, want to kick his sister rather than do a Mathematics puzzle). Need statements (especially in the 'scientific' sense) are norm statements. These norm statements, according to Hamm, conceal values;

> To say that a family needs x amount of income is to say that they ought not to have less than a certain amount considered the accepted standard. Such a standard is a judgment of value. Even to say that a child needs food is to appeal to the value judgment that children ought not to die of starvation.[36]

The norm-based nature of need statements allows for monitoring of whether the child has attained the norm or not. It is assumed that there will be deleterious effects should the child not attain these standards. The important point is, however, that norms are constructed entities, and are not absolute. Even the 'normal' distribution of height is historically and situationally situated . Need statements thus form a powerful discourse around the production and reproduction of nature of the child.

Critical education

Critical education as espoused by radical theorists serves two purposes. The first is to expose the current situation in education as it 'really' is, and the second is to provide an alternative model which links education to the broader political and social realities. The 'popular' version of this theory in South Africa is in the notion of 'People's Education for People's Power', which emerged in the time of generalized challenge to Apartheid state structures. This concept, together with the more theoretical writings in the area of liberatory education, draws largely (although not exclusively) on the work of the Brazilian educational theorist, Paulo Freire.[37]

Freire's approach rests on a combination of Marxist, Hegelian and Existential philosophy.[38] He contrasts education for domestication with education for liberation. The former is characterised by the 'banking' concept of education. In this "the teacher issues communiques and 'makes deposits' which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat".[39] This is the action of the oppressor who fears freedom, and wishes only to serve his/her own class interests. Reality is presented by the teacher as motionless, static and compartmentalized. Education for liberation, on the other hand, engages the teacher-as-learner and learner-as-teacher in a process of dialogue. This dialogue means that the learner and teacher are creating and re-creating knowledge. Learners perceive in this way that "they can 'write' their life, and 'read' their reality".[40] Thus, underlying the educative process is the notion of praxis, which is the dialectical unity of theory and practice, reflection and action. Using dialogue and praxis the student will undergo a process of 'conscientization', which means to develop a 'critical consciousness'.

This critical consciousness comprehends the dialectical relationship between humans and the world, and is able to rid itself of the consciousness that 'houses' the oppressor. Freire's method involves the use of significant or generative themes, and the process of coding and de-coding.[41]

Critical theory is reflected in the writing of some South African authors.[42] However, there are radical writers who are critical of the "People's education for People's Power" concept, as well as of the usefulness of Freire's theory of pedagogy. Levin points out that "the people" and "the community" are theoretically imprecise terms.[43] They (the terms) have been constituted in antagonism with respect to the Apartheid state. These sets of humans ("people" and "community") can never be homogenous units. People's Education in its opposition to Apartheid education may not be able to overcome the capitalist forms of education once (now that) the Apartheid state has disappeared.

Prinsloo is sceptical of the potential of the Freirian effort. In practice most of the programmes have taken place outside of the state schooling systems, offering "compensatory" or "second-chance" education. The point, however, according to Prinsloo, is not

> how to evade the power of the state, nor even how to best use what is available in the state system, nor how to resist state power in education; it is ultimately, how to take control of the education system.[44]

Freire's conception of the nature of the person is interesting. He does not distinguish between the nature of the child and of the adult – they are both learners. Humans are existential in nature, because, unlike animals, their existence is historical. Humans, because they are aware of their activity and of themselves in the world, are able to "infuse the world with their creative presence by means of the transformation they effect upon it".[45] A human's ontological and historical vocation is always to become more fully human. This involves, to a large extent, resolving the oppressor-oppressed contradiction. This is seen as a continual process, as humans are always in the process of becoming.

While critical theory is an improvement on the theories of FP and child-centred pedagogy,[46] in post-structuralist terms there are a number of problems. In theorizing about a dialectical relationship, the theory slips into dichotomising. Thus education is either domesticating or liberating; humans are caught up in the oppressor/oppressed relationship, or are free.[47] This bipolar reading of power is problematic. There is power and powerlessness, full stop. With this dichotomous theorising of power the theory is in danger of slipping into functionalism. In other words, the state, or oppressor, uses power in a functional way to achieve the aims of the capital economy. The oppressed, on the other hand, uses a different type of power to gain 'freedom', and more 'authentic' human-ness. Foucault points out that power should rather be viewed as a "force of field relations"[48] in which discourses/knowledges are elements or blocks. Thus power/knowledge exists in a system of relations. This allows for the theorising of the contradictory nature of

subjectivity in which the person may be invested in many different discourses. Finally, critical theory attempts to overcome the individual/society divide by postulating the dialectical: "men [sic] produce social reality (which in the 'inversion of the praxis' turns back upon them and conditions them)".[49] Yet, without a theory of discourse and power/knowledge relations, critical theorists are unable to theorise *how* this dialectical process happens.

Implications in terms of transforming pedagogy

This brief analysis of the three main theories of pedagogy currently espoused in South Africa indicates that the process of transforming pedagogy is not a simple one. It is not a matter of merely re-educating existing teachers, or educating prospective teachers in the theory of pedagogy that is proven to provide the most incisive account of the educative process. As has been seen, each of the theories is theoretically problematic in its own way.

Of concern, too, is that all these theories treat the teacher unproblematically as a unified being, who, once having taken on the premises of the particular theory will use the theory to inform her/his practice. That there is sometimes a disparity between theory and practice is recognised by some authors.[50] However, the hypotheses as to why this happens once again do not manage to cross the individual/society divide. This paper argues for an account in which the teacher as a contradictory subject invested in many discursive realities surrounding pedagogy takes more of a centre-stage. The study described below highlights just some of the discursive realities within which teachers in South Africa are situated.

STUDY: THE DISCURSIVE REALITIES OF SEVEN REMEDIAL ADVISORS

Background

In this study, seven remedial advisors (four women and three men) were interviewed. All are employed at circuit office level in two of the old homeland departments of education. Part of their job description is to give advice to teachers on how to cope with children who have learning problems. For example, each year they organise sessions in which Sub A and B teachers are informed of 'good' teaching methods with respect to the teaching of reading, spelling and mathematics. The researcher has an ongoing relationship with the remedial advisors, and the interviews were framed in this context. The interviews were semi-structured. They were conducted individually and the questions asked were open-ended. The advisors were not asked directly about theory as such. Rather, the questions centred around their own experience of schooling and studying, the meaning of learning, the obstacles to learning, the meaning of teaching (good and bad), the meaning of being

a good or bad teacher. In this way it was hoped to access the underlying pedagogical and personal discourses in which the advisors are invested. The personal and theoretical were both sought as discursively these will be closely linked.

The interview schedules were analysed using the method of discourse analysis.[51] In the analysis, I attempted to code the responses in terms of discourses that could be associated with the pedagogical theories discussed above. This proved to be difficult in some instances as much of the rubric used in child-centred pedagogy is the same as that used in critical education (for example words such as 'participation', 'critical thinking', 'open learning' can be common to both). In these cases, I had to use my discretion. Mostly, I assumed that when the advisors used these words they were invoking the child-centred discourse, as there were few other instances in the interviews in which the uniquely critical theory rhetoric was used. It is important to note that the data presented here is in no way an attempt to "prove" theoretical points made earlier. It should rather be seen as illustrative in nature.

Analysis

The remedial advisors were asked to briefly describe their educational backgrounds. This information was obtained in recognition of the view that exposure to a theory of education will influence a teacher's way of viewing education, and, in the final analysis, his/her practice. The reader may judge for her/himself to which theories of education the subjects of this research were exposed.

Six of the seven advisors have gone to Colleges of Education controlled by the Department of Education and Training. Two have completed Bachelors' degrees at the University of the North. One started a Bachelors' degree at the University of the North but had his studies disrupted. Five have completed remedial education diplomas, two at the University of Natal, two at the University of Cape Town and one at the University of the Western Cape. One is currently studying through the University of South Africa.

In the interviews the dominant discourses seemed to be those that could be aligned with child-centred pedagogy and fundamental pedagogy. These were unconsciously mixed by individuals in their responses to the questions. One of the advisors admitted consciously to this contradiction when she said: "In the books we say we are child-centred, but practically we don't do that". In the analysis the reader will note that the advisors will sometimes use theory and sometimes personal examples to illustrate something. That these two levels are closely linked is evident.

1. Fundamental pedagogics

Learning as emerging from a state of deficit: This discourse was invoked by the subjects, as indicated in the following statements: "you are acquiring something from teachers"; "learning means giving information to someone and that person assimilates it". The notion of the child being led into adulthood is reflected in "you have to learn in order to be a responsible somebody in future." Learning, in this discourse, always has a measurable outcome: we know a child has learnt "when she or he still remembers what she or he learnt – when we do some testing."

Two distinct trends seemed to emerge in the interviews with respect to the theory as espoused by fundamental pedagogy. The first was a general rejection of the actual process, the second an acceptance of the teacher as a responsible adult who must lead the child. That these are inherently contradictory was not recognised.

For most of the advisors the process involved in the adult leading the child to adulthood was seen as negative. Some of this seemed to relate to painful personal experience while some of it was based on a more philosophical argument that it was wrong. Lecturing by the teacher was seen as negative as it leads to boredom and passivity. One advisor put in this way:

> Students are the ones who are learning and they must do the job. If the teacher just talks and talks, then he is teaching himself.

It was recognised that the control that the teacher has over the learning process can lead to rote learning. One advisor said:

> we were using memorising method. We had to absorb. We had to study exactly what we were told. If you wrote something not in the notes, you got it wrong. We were memorising and reproducing.

Later she said "Even up to today, we are dead. You always need someone to support you". The effects of corporal punishment that the teacher or principal as authoritarian could mete out were equally painfully felt. The worst is

> if the teachers shout and use a sjambok .. It made me feel nervous and not thinking right. My thinking ability was disturbed.

In fundamental pedagogics it is the teacher who takes final responsibility as it is her/his task to lead the child to adulthood. The "responsible teacher" was invoked in the interviews in positive terms. This teacher is efficient: s/he gets the books back to the students soon, after marking them; s/he wants to the see the notes that you made in class; s/he prepares for lessons, and has a scheme of work for the whole year. Dedication is important: "if you have no equipment and teaching aids, you must be able to persevere and endure the situation". The teacher must be a role model: s/he must be of sober habits, must dress professionally, must not drink in

public, must be a hard-worker, and must be the first to arrive and the last to leave. S/he is the keeper of knowledge, and must guide the child with 'parental love'.

The responsible teacher discourse seems to be immersed in a semi-religious discourse. Teaching is seen as a 'calling'. The unsaid corollary is that if you have been 'called' to teaching, then you will behave in the fashion of the 'responsible teacher'. This semi-religious aspect of the discourse allows for moral recrimination of the teachers who do not behave in the 'responsible teacher' way. However, it allows simultaneously for absolution because after all it is not their calling. The following statements by one of the advisors illustrates this contradiction:

> Some teachers don't think for the child; they only think for themselves. They have not been called for that; they are just working for money. Sometimes they didn't get guidance to do their own choice. Even if you try to motivate them, because it is not their calling, they will reject it.

The advisor is initially scathing about the teachers working purely for monetary gain, but then absolves them as they probably did not receive guidance to take a different career path. Their lack of 'motivation' is legitimated by the fact that teaching is not their 'calling'.

It appears that the responsible teacher discourse has a historical aspect to it. Consider for example the statement: "In the old days it was the duty of the teachers to see to education .. But nowadays teachers don't care". This statement legitimises the "responsible teacher" discourse as it is historically grounded. It also allows for the contradiction of teachers often not acting in the "responsible teacher" manner, because, after all, this is today and that was then.

2. Child-centred pedagogy

Mixed in with the discourses discussed above (sometimes in the same sentence) were discourses that matched with the theory of child-centred pedagogy. These discourses centred around 'learning as discovery' and the 'understanding teacher'.

Learning as discovery: This discourse is summarised in a statement by one of the advisors: "learning is discovering ways of doing something, not correctly or wrongly." Learning, thus, is self-activated ("you search through the library and compare with others"); participatory ("the one who must participate the most is the child - the teacher must just monitor"); active ("you must make the children active by getting from the pupils what they know"); experiential ("you must bring reality to the students"); co-operative ("people have to share ideas; this makes learning easier"). Learning is measured through process: it is a "way of doing things". You know that a child has learnt something when "you can see that he has insight. Go out with the child. Can he bridge what he learnt in class? Can he apply it outside?" This discourse, as opposed to the *state of deficit discourse*, situates the child as organismic (see earlier discussion).

The understanding teacher: This teacher is a person who:

> understands that a child may be suffering from this and this. He understands that human nature changes. He accepting of the short-comings of the pupils.

S/he 'knows the child in totality' and tries to "improve the self-concept of the child". The teacher must be at the level of the child ("you must even dress for the level of the children"). His/her job is to pose questions that encourage the children to think, and to motivate the children to participate in the class through the use of group work.

3. Critical pedagogy

Discourses that could be associated with critical pedagogy were invoked only in isolated incidences. The notion of learning as a process of democracy is inherent in the statements "one day you will have to be accountable to the community", and "teacher, parents must join hands - everybody must be involved". Linking education to the broader political and social arena was done twice. In the one instance, an advisor said:

> In the past I thought the government should change. Now the government has changed and these things are going on. Teaching History in the past, students knew they didn't want Apartheid; they still think that education makes them into slaves and workers.

This speaker seems ambivalent about the anti-apartheid rhetoric. It has somehow let him down. Nevertheless, these statements indicate at least an awareness of critical theory. Ambivalence is apparent in the second instance as well. The speaker initially rejects the invoking of critical theory:

> Most of our teachers are lazy. They are hiding behind the political issue of black and white. They are saying "We have Bantu education, so what is the use?"

And later he invokes 'political' issues:

> Most of us cannot teach in front of white children because of our training. We are not good in English.

4. Obstacles to learning

Obstacles to learning were mainly seen as structural or environmental. These could not be coded under critical pedagogy as the statements did not link the structural or environmental problems to political or social realities. For example, under structural barriers over-crowded classrooms, lack of teaching aids and laboratories, teacher-pupil ratio, poverty and the resultant hunger were named. These were classified as structural as there was an implicit message that if these were solved, there would be few further problems with learning. Environmental factors centred mainly around the parents. They were seen to be uninvolved in their children's

education or alternatively lacking 'knowledge of schooling', and therefore unable to check on their children's homework.

Within the school, two things were seen as barriers to learning. One was a lack of planning. There may be "unplanned special occasions, for example a soccer match or a party for a retiring teacher held during school hours". The other was 'bad' teachers, as exemplified by those teachers who had fallen from the pedestal of the 'responsible teacher'. Interestingly, language and knowledge seemed to be tied into this. Consider, for example the following statements:

> Our teachers used to use the mother-tongue to teach, even in English. Now we cannot express ourselves in English clearly. Teachers are not well-trained – they do not have enough knowledge

These statements are very powerful. Because knowledge is linked to power and knowledge is discursive, the teacher who does not have sufficient knowledge and is not able to use English is a "bad" teacher. The implications for black teachers are enormous.

5. Personal discourses concerning learning

The following are discourses, invoked by the advisors, that cannot be strictly placed under any of the pedagogical discourses. Nevertheless, they have profound implications in terms of the process of learning and teaching. Each of them are in some way linked to power, and were invoked in a personal way. The discourses are the feminist discourse, the wealth-schooling discourse, and the schooling-freedom discourse.

Feminist discourse: Two of the advisors related how they had used schooling to overcome the sexist discourse that was invoked by their parents. In one case, the advisor's father had said that "it was a waste of money to send a girl to school". The issue of money, clearly linked to power, is used to depower the female. This advisor insisted on continuing with school, which she viewed as enabling. Interestingly, money continued to play a role in the rest of this advisor's experience of education. She related that her best experience of learning was when she studied at university, as she had managed to obtain a bursary. In the second case, the advisor's parents wanted her to stay at home after Std 6 as she would now be able to write a letter to her husband, and therefore needed no further schooling. But, she said "I didn't want to stay as a house-wife, so I thought of a simple profession like teaching so that I can get money home". Once again, money is linked to power, which can be used to overcome the gender discrimination. Interestingly, this advisor chose a "simple" profession which is traditionally associated with the female role (if it is female dominated, it must be simple). This highlights the contradictory nature of subjectivity. In countering a certain aspect of sexist discourse, the advisor unconsciously invokes another aspect thereof.

Wealth-schooling discourse: One of the advisors related: "When I was at university, I couldn't get bursaries, so I had to cram work so that I could get out to start work." When he had sufficient money (during secondary school when he funded himself by doing part-time work) he "achieved well". Money and schooling are clearly reciprocally linked in a very powerful way. Money allows for schooling, and schooling enables earning. This discursive reciprocity allows teachers to denigrate poor (in the wealth sense of the word) parents or care-takers, who have not had "enough" schooling, to the position of not having enough "knowledge" concerning schooling, or as not caring about their children's education (see above).

Schooling-freedom discourse: One advisor stated that he performed best in the years of schooling in which he was living with relatives (as opposed to his grandparents) who were 'sufficiently literate'. These people allowed him freedom, and 'didn't ask a lot of questions'. It appears thus that some kind of schooling had allowed these relatives to understand the nature of the child, which needs freedom.

CONCLUSION

This study has indicated that the discursive realities that surround the pedagogical practices of teachers in South Africa are complex and often contradictory. We have seen how learning is simultaneously seen as a process of emerging from a state of deficit, and as a process of discovery. There is a simultaneous acceptance of the 'responsible teacher' who leads children to adulthood, and a rejection of the process that may accompany this. The teacher may be seen as responsible and a role model in society (dressing professionally) and at the same time as understanding (dressing to the level of the children). The 'responsible' teacher is 'called' to the teaching profession. Those who are not responsible are disdained, but also excused because it seems that teaching was not their calling (they must have gone into it for other reasons, possibly financial).

The more personal discourses that were invoked centred quite significantly around issues of power. Knowledge, schooling, learning are constituted as powerful. These are reciprocally linked with access to wealth, a powerful place in the gendered hierarchy, and personal freedom. It could be postulated that there is a link between these discourses and the discourse of the 'responsible teacher'. This implies that the personal is inserting itself into the theoretical, a process which post-structural theory would say is inevitable, as discursive realities are not things that can be neatly compartmentalised.

The advisors represented teachers, and therefore themselves, as simultaneously powerful and powerless. Vis-a-vis the parents they are powerful, as they are knowledgeable and the parents are not. And yet, they (the teachers) do not have sufficient knowledge to teach properly. This production of the teacher as powerless is especially insidious around the issue of language. Black teachers "cannot express [them]selves clearly in English" and "cannot teach white children". This situates

the powerlessness squarely within the racial history of South Africa. Yet these teachers' conception of it is clearly a lot more complex than pure racism.

What does this contradictory intermingling of theoretical and personal discourses imply in terms of INSET?. Most importantly, I would argue, that INSET is not unproblematically about replacing one 'bad' theoretical model with another 'better' model, or as Hofmeyer and Jaff put it about remediating the initial weak training of the pre-service training.[52] We have seen in this article that the models currently used in South Africa firstly are not theoretically unproblematic in and of themselves, and secondly are unable to bridge the gap between the individual/society as well as the theory/practice divide. It is in this vein that an argument for an account that allows for an insertion of the teacher as contradictory subject is made. If INSET which deals with theory (which almost all INSET must do even if this not explicitly stated) is to successful in terms of the transformation of education in South Africa, the insertion of the teacher needs to be taken seriously. Education needs take on a relexive and self-reflective aspect. Teachers should be lead through a process which allows them (1) to re-examine current theories of education using a framework that steps outside of main-stream theorising and (2) to view themselves as contradictory beings, and from this perspective to examine the discursive realities within which they frame their pedagogy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the seven remedial advisors who agreed to be interviewed, as well as John Gear, Judy McKenzie and John Reynolds for commenting on an earlier draft of this paper.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. National Education Policy Investigation, *Teacher Education* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press/NECC, 1992), 1.
2. P. Enslin, "Review Essay: The State of Pedagogics", *Perspectives in Education*, 10, 1 (1988): 73.
3. P. Enslin, "Science and doctrine: Theoretical discourse in South African Teacher Education", in M. Nkomo (ed.), *Pedagogy of Domination: Toward a Democratic Education in South Africa* (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1990).
4. R. Siebörger and A. Kenyon, "Initial Teacher Education" in R. McGregor and A. McGregor (eds.), *Education Alternatives* (Kenwyn: Juta & Co., 1992), 48, state that colleges "have been seen as tertiary divisions of the education departments [and] have been treated as little more than high schools".
5. Enslin, in Nkomo, enumerates the Afrikaans-language universities, the University of South Africa and the black universities established in accordance with the Extension of University Education Act of 1959 as those whose courses have almost exclusively focused on Fundamental Pedagogics.

6. Y. Eshak, "'Authority' in Christian National Education and Fundamental Pedagogics" (M.Ed. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1987). K. Hartshorne, *Crisis and challenge: Black education 1910-1990* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992). Sieborger and Kenyon, 151.
7. J. Hofmeyr and R. Jaff, "The challenge of INSET in the 1990s", in R. McGregor and A. McGregor, 167 -206.
8. See for example B. Davies and R, Harr/, "Positioning: The discursive production of selves", *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20, 1 (1990): 43 - 63. M. Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Pantheon, 1965). M. Foucault, *A History of Sexuality. Vol 1: An introduction* (London: Allen Lane, 1979). M. Foucault, *Power/knowledge. Selected interviews and other writings 1972 - 1977* Edited by C. Gordon (New York: pantheon, 1980). K. Gergen and K. Davis, *The Social Construction of the Person* (New York: Springer Verlag, 1985). J. Henriques, W. Hollway, C. Urwin, C. Venn and V. Walkerdine, *Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity* (London: Methuen & Co., 1984). I. Parker *Discourse dynamics: Critical Analysis for Social and Individual Psychology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992). J. Shotter and K. Gergen (eds.), *Texts of Identity* (London: Sage, 1989). C. Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Post-structuralist Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).
9. M. Foucault, 1965. M. Foucault, 1979.
10. Davies and Harr/.
11. C. de Vries, *Orientation in Fundamental Education Theory* (Stellenbosch: University Publisher & Book-sellers, 1986), 121.
12. *Ibid.* It is hardly surprising that of the "doctrines" reviewed by de Vries, Christian education is the only one that seems to satisfy all the criteria required.
13. G. Yonge, "Fundamental Pedagogics is a Philosophy of Education in the Service of the Foundations of Education: A Response to T. Reagan", *South African Journal of Education*, 10, 5/6 (1990): 532.
14. S. Segal, "The Arbitrariness of Fundamental Pedagogics", *Perspectives in Education*, 14, 2 (1993): 181-190.
15. Whether the approach used by FP can truly be termed phenomenological is a matter for discussion.
16. Segal, 184.
17. Segal uses the concept of projection in a rather unsophisticated manner in his article, the meaning of which, it appears, he obtained from Rycroft's *A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*. Nevertheless, this does not detract from his argument concerning the ideological nature of FP.
18. P. Kallaway (ed.), *Apartheid and Education* (Braamfontein: Ravan Press, 1984).
19. *Ibid.*, 5.
20. See W. Hollway, *Subjectivity and method in Psychology: Gender, Meaning and Science* (London: Sage PuMlications, 1989) for a very clear discussion on Saussure's theorising.
21. Yonge, 532.
22. *Ibid.*
23. S. Wilkinson, *Feminist Social Psychology: Developing Theory and Practice* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), 13.
24. de Vries, 204.
25. V. Walkerdine, "Post-structuralist Theory and Everyday Social Practices: The Family and the School" in S. Wilkinson, 58.
26. See Eshak.
27. P. Higgs, "Towards a Paradigm Shift in Fundamental Pedagogics", *South African Journal of Education*, 14, 1 (1994): 13-21.
28. *Ibid.*, 14.
29. *Ibid.*

30. C. Hamm, *Philosophical Issues in Education: An Introduction* (Lewes: Falmer Press, 1989).
31. H. Entwistle, *Child-centred Education* (London: Methuen & Co., 1970).
32. *Ibid.*, 15.
33. L. Maree, "The Heart and Minds of the People" in P. Kallaway, 149-159.
34. V. Walkerdine, *Counting Girls Out* (London: Virago Press, 1989).
35. See, for example, Foucault, 1980.
36. Hamm, 79.
37. M. Prinsloo, "Thinking Strategies in Education: The Political Limits of Paulo Freire's Perspective" in C. Millar, S. Raynham and A. Schaffer (eds.), *Breaking the Formal Frame: Readings in South African Education in the 80s* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1991).
38. See in particular P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1972). His later work, for example P. Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1974), seems to move away from a more Marxist analysis.
39. Freire, 1972, 45/46.
40. Freire, 1977 cited in B. Andreola, "Action, Knowledge and Reality in the Education Work of Paulo Freire" *Educational Action Research*, 1, 2 (1993): 221-234.
41. See Freire, 1974, for a detailed account and illustrations of examples of his method.
42. M. Nkomo, "Post-apartheid Education: Preliminary Reflections" in M. Nkomo (ed.), 294. M. Mzamane, "Towards a Pedagogy for Liberation: Education for a National Culture in South Africa" in M. Nkomo, 370.
43. R. Levin, "People's Education and the Politics of Negotiations in South Africa", *Perspectives in Education*, 12, 2 (1991): 1-18.
44. Prinsloo, 372.
45. Freire, 1972, 71.
46. Critical theory has provided theorists and activists with the theoretical tools with which to counter the Apartheid state structures.
47. Saying that the dialectical process is a continual one only serves to obscure the dichotomy.
48. Weedon, 110.
49. Freire, 1972, 27.
50. See, for example, M. Metcalfe, "Perceptions of Theory and Practice in a College of Education" (M.Ed. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1990).
51. See J. Potter and M. Wetherell, *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour* (London: Sage, 1987).
52. J. Hofmeyr and R. Jaff, 185.

that may accompany this. The teacher may be seen as responsible and a role model in society (dressing professionally) and at the same time as understanding (dressing to the level of the children). The 'responsible' teacher is 'called' to the teaching profession. Those who are not responsible are disdained, but also excused because it seems that teaching was not their calling (they must have gone into it for other reasons, possibly financial).

The more personal discourses that were invoked centred quite significantly around issues of power. Knowledge, schooling, learning are constituted as powerful. These are reciprocally linked with access to wealth, a powerful place in the gendered hierarchy, and personal freedom. It could be postulated that there is a link between these discourses and the discourse of the 'responsible teacher'. This implies that the personal is inserting itself into the theoretical, a process which post-structural theory would say is inevitable, as discursive realities are not things that can be neatly compartmentalised.

The advisors represented teachers, and therefore themselves, as simultaneously powerful and powerless. *Vis-a-vis* the parents they are powerful, as they are knowledgeable and the parents are not. And yet, they (the teachers) do not have sufficient knowledge to teach properly. This production of the teacher as powerless is especially insidious around the issue of language. Black teachers "cannot express [them]selves clearly in English" and "cannot teach white children". This situates the powerlessness squarely within the racial history of South Africa. Yet these teachers' conception of it is clearly a lot more complex than pure racism.

What does this contradictory intermingling of theoretical and personal discourses imply in terms of INSET? Most importantly, I would argue that INSET is not unproblematically about replacing one 'bad' theoretical model with another 'better' model, or, as Hofmeyer and Jaff put it, about remediating the initial weak training of the pre-service training.[52] We have seen in this article that the models currently used in South Africa firstly are not theoretically unproblematic in and of themselves, and secondly are unable to bridge the gap between the individual/society as well as the theory/practice divide. It is in this vein that an argument for an account that allows for an insertion of the teacher as contradictory subject is made. If INSET which deals with theory (which almost all INSET must do even if this not explicitly stated) is to, successful in terms of the transformation of education in South Africa, the insertion of the teacher needs, to be taken seriously. Educatio

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 83-104

Democratising the Matric Biology Curriculum

BOTLHALE TEMA
PROTEC, PO Box 52657, Saxonwold, 2132

An analysis of the DET matric biology syllabus reveals that the syllabus lacks a clear rationale for the selection of both aims and content. There is also no clear relationship between the recommended teaching approaches and the aims and content. This lack of rationale is ascribed to the nature of the curriculum development committee and to the fact that it does not reflect anything of the context in which it is applied. This critique proceeds on the assumption that the intention and rationale of a curriculum is embedded in its structure, i.e. the selection and organization of its aims, content and approaches.[1] It thus analyses the DET matric biology syllabus to reveal its rationale. Finally, the article presents an approach towards the formulation of a curriculum which is suited to a democratic situation.

INTRODUCTION

This article has a two-fold purpose: first, to provide a critical analysis of the DET matric syllabus with the aim of revealing its rationale and hence its suitability to the context in which it is applied; second, to point the way towards a democratic curriculum.

The term curriculum is used here to in its narrow sense to denote "a body of subject matter logically arranged to facilitate exposition".[2] The term is, however, also used in recognition of the fact that subject-specific curriculum development attempts to answer the same questions of what is worth teaching and how teaching is to proceed that curriculum development in the broader sense attempts to do.

To reveal the reasoning behind the development of this biology curriculum, the analysis focuses on the following questions:

a. What considerations appear to have been involved in the formulation of syllabus aims?
b. What approaches are recommended for the achievement of the aims?
c. How are the aims justified – what is the rationale for the aims?
d. What approaches are recommended for practical work?
e. How is the content organised – does it reflect the aims?
g. How can the syllabus be characterised?

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Curriculum, especially one built on the objectives model as is the present one, is commonly evaluated by determining its effectiveness in changing student behaviour or achieving its objectives. This paper, however, evaluates the present curriculum through an examination of its construction and intended meaning. It follows an approach first suggested by Mann.[3] He suggested that the curriculum can be considered as a 'literary object' and can be treated in the same way that a literary critic treats a literary work. Mann[4] maintains that the commonly used scientific method of curriculum evaluation, i.e. measuring its effect on students, cannot yield all the information that is regarded as important in the educational situation. He suggests that scientific constructs do not lend themselves to self-reflection and criticism, both of which are necessary to reveal the non-technological aspects of curriculum. Mann[5] suggests that, just as a literary critic may focus analysis on the 'literary object' itself, or on the author, or the reader, so the curriculum critic may focus on the curriculum document, or the author/s of the curriculum or on its recipients, the student. Curriculum criticism also has the same intentions as literary criticism. When the focus is on the text, the aim of criticism, according to Mann, is to disclose the meaning of the text:

> to help the beholder come closer to, or even touch or enter into the object, to know its meanings well.[6]

Mann contends that the formulation of a curriculum involves selection from "a universe of possibilities". This selection is backed up by assumptions which help in answering the question 'what is to be known?'. Such assumptions may, for example, be based on theories of learning, conceptions of knowledge and teacher student relationships. These assumptions are thus used in ordering and designing the curriculum. Mann concludes that the meaning embedded in the curriculum is intimately associated with its design. He states:

> Meaning, then, abides in the design of selections ... the critic discloses meaning by explaining its design. To explain something is to account for it, to point to something at a higher level of abstraction in terms of which the thing to be explained can be seen to make sense.[7]

Ross also argues that:

> the function of the curriculum critic, like that of a literary or art critic, is to describe the essential qualities of the phenomenon studied, to interpret the meanings of and the relationships among these qualities, and to provide reasoned judgement about the significance and value of the phenomenon.[8]

The curriculum documents which were analysed were the standard nine and ten biology syllabus (Code 302/9/1/1/88 and Code 302/0/1/1/89 resp.). The documents

were, as Mann (1969) suggested, approached as literary objects and, as such, the purpose of analysis was to disclose the meaning which is embedded in their design and to examine the assumptions which inform the design.

The present matriculation syllabus appears in two documents, viz.

i. the National Examinations Syllabus for Biology for standards 9 and 10 (Code 302/9/1/1/88 and Code 302/0/1/1/89, resp.), which was issued by the Department of National Education and Culture and implemented from January 1988 and 1989 by the Department of Education and Training.
ii. The Subject Policy Document for Biology (Code: 302/-/4/3/88) which is issued by the Department of Education and Training. This document backs the first document by elaborating on the aims and approaches to the syllabus. It also lays down specific policies for the teaching of the subject in black schools.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SYLLABUS AIMS AND RECOMMENDED APPROACHES

The syllabus document (hereafter referred to simply as the Syllabus), presents the aims of the syllabus, the recommended teaching approaches, and a full outline of the content. The following are the declared aims of this syllabus:

a. to develop understanding of the facts, concepts, and principles of the subject;

b. to develop inquiry skills, sometimes referred to as science processes;

c. to develop affective skills such as the love and appreciation of the South African flora and fauna;

d. to develop values such as critical thought, suspended judgement, objectivity etc;

e. to develop ability to make critical and accurate observations of biological material and to record them accurately and meaningfully;

f. to develop ability to analyze and evaluate biological information, to formulate hypotheses and suggest ways of testing them;

g. to develop awareness of man's role in nature conservation;

h. to expose pupils to the historical foundations of biological science;

i. to develop an awareness of the significance of biology in man's everyday life.[9]

These objectives appear to reflect an approval of the following aspects underlying their formulation:

a. the development of critical thinking and other cognitive and manipulative skills needed for learning the subject;
b. the development of positive attitudes towards living organisms and an awareness of the importance of nature conservation;
c. the history of biology and the importance of biology in everyday life.

The document proceeds from this list of objectives to a presentation of recommended teaching and learning approaches. The following are the recommended approaches:

a. Pupils should make their own observations.

b. Pupils should learn to handle and set up apparatus correctly.

c. Organisms should be observed in their natural environments.[10]

These aims and recommended approaches appear in the document, without any further discussion or justification. There is no indication, for example, of the rationale for the selection of these aims, or how the recommended approaches would help their attainment. These approaches are also not clear enough to guide practice. For example, what does it mean to say that 'pupils must make their own observations'? Does it mean that a hands-on approach is recommended instead of the teacher only demonstrating the experiments? Does it mean that students should be allowed to say what they observe rather than what they are expected to observe? What does handling apparatus correctly, mean and why is it necessary to specify this? Does the setting up of apparatus not depend on what is being tested? Is it possible to observe all organisms in their natural environments? Does this perhaps mean that wherever possible students should be taken to see organisms in their natural environment? How would such observation help achieve the aims of the syllabus?

The relationship between the aims and the recommended teaching approach is also not very clear. According to the Objectives Model that this syllabus is apparently based on, the recommended teaching approaches and the content should provide means of achieving the set aims.[11] However, in this case, the approaches do not seem to flow from the aims and there is therefore no logical relationship between them. These approaches would, for example, be expected to show how they would facilitate the learning of biological principles and relationships, the acquisition of inquiry skills, and the development of critical thinking for the purpose of analyzing biological information etc.

Since the Syllabus presents only lists of aims and approaches, the Subject Policy Document (hereinafter the Subject Policy) was analysed to establish further detail.

In its introduction, the Subject Policy presents the following rationale for the teaching of biology:

> Biology is one of the subjects at school which have to contribute to the general education of the child. The study of Biology makes the pupil conscious of his marvellous environment and the kingdom of organisms as well as man's importance as part of his environment. It also stresses his dependence on his environment. He becomes aware that his actions have an influence on the ecosystem and that at the same time he is also brought to the realization that he, too, is responsible for the conservation of the ecosystem for his own benefit. Not only does he become acquainted with the objects of interest in his environment, but he also becomes conscious of the fact that he himself, through his own knowledge and skills, can radically change the habitat and community for either better or worse.[12]

From this statement, the syllabus can be said to be driven by the need to raise consciousness among students about conservation of the environment and to propagate the idea that the learning of biological concepts, principles and skills is ultimately tied to nature conservation.

The Subject Policy also presents the same list of aims as appeared in the Syllabus but explains the importance of these aims by stating that

> It cannot be overemphasized that these are the aims that must be borne in mind throughout our teaching. Furthermore, these are the aims we wish to assess in tests and examinations. Remember, the contents prescribed in the aims are vehicles through which aims are achieved.[13]

The document elaborates on the aims by stating that the knowledge to be acquired consists of

> facts, concepts, principles and unifying themes of the biological world which fall within the scope of the child's comprehension and experience.[14]

It then goes on to state that:

> [There should be] a constant emphasis on the understanding and application of the above aspects of knowledge rather than mere memorization.[15]

The underlying view seems to be that the learning of biology will be achieved when students have mastered/understood these concepts and principles. There seems to be no room for students to critique the knowledge offered to them. There is also no indication of the procedural principles required for the mastery of these concepts and principles.

The Subject Policy also provides a list of cognitive and psychomotor skills which students should acquire. The cognitive skills listed are similar to those usually referred to as 'science process skills' such as observation, and classifying, while the recommended psychomotor skills include skills involving the use of equipment, e.g using and reading a thermometer, setting up and using a microscope, etc. It also presents a list of attitudes to be developed, e.g. respect for living things, critical thought, suspended judgement, respect for evidence, honesty, etc. As in the

Syllabus, the skills and attitudes that are to be developed are merely listed. There is no discussion about why they are regarded as important or how they are related to the aims of the syllabus or the prescribed content. In this document too, there is the same mismatch between the recommended approaches and the aims of the syllabus that was observed in the Syllabus. The following recommendations are presented for the interpretation of the syllabus and the translation of stated aims into practice:

a. Teachers must study the syllabus intensively and they must adhere to the subject matter prescribed.

b. Work programmes must be consulted for the correct interpretation of prescribed learning themes.

c. Throughout teachers must bring the pupils into close contact with nature. The teacher's attitude must always be to instil in the pupil a sense of reverence and responsibility.

d. Teachers teach certain facts. They must, however, bear in mind that they also want the pupils to know certain methods and techniques of scientific investigation.[16]

It is very difficult to see how these four statements can be of help to any teacher who wants to achieve the stated aims of the syllabus. For example, how would teachers know whether they have studied the syllabus 'intensively' or not; what measure is to be used to judge the intensity of study? What is meant by 'a correct interpretation' of the syllabus? and what is 'close contact' with nature? How is the closeness of contact to be determined? How are the prescribed attitudes, laudable as they may be, to be achieved? The approaches do not seem related to any of the aims of the syllabus. Of note too, is the tone of the language that has now changed from recommendations to instructions – "teachers must ..." This document not only fails to produce a rationale for the decisions taken and provide appropriate advice for practice, but it also instructs the teachers to do as it says. This seems to indicate the authoritarian attitude of the Department and is one of the ways by which teachers are disempowered.

Some of the recommended approaches also contradict one another and the syllabus aims. For example, the following contradictory approaches to practical work are recommended:

A. All practical work must be completed with the aid of a copy of the instructions and questions handed to the pupil. Instructions could include the following

   i. State the problem, what must be investigated?

   ii. The step by step procedure of the work

   iii. Observations should be applied in answering short questions, completing tables, etc.

iv. Diagrams

v. Conclusions resulting from observations may be asked for.[17]

B Teachers teach pupils certain facts. They must, however, bear in mind that they also want the pupils to know certain methods and techniques of investigation.

Therefore this of course implies that the pupil must Do – he/she must be a participant in the learning process. The pupils must be given ample practice in:

i. recognising and formulating problems;

ii. carefully planning any investigation in advance;

iii. assembling relevant data in connection with the problem;

iv. handling apparatus and material;

v. keeping accurate records of observations;

vi. evaluating and selecting data and arranging them in a logical sequence;

vii. evaluating all the relevant data critically before making any deductions.[18]

Recommendation (A) gives a cook-book approach to practical work which contradicts recommendation (B), which seems more inquiry oriented. Which approach are teachers actually expected to take? The syllabus does not indicate if these two approaches are perhaps to be used in different sections of the subject. The contradiction between them seems to be unrecognised.

ANALYSIS OF THE SYLLABUS CONTENT AND RATIONALE

The syllabus content covers most of the areas of traditional school biology but it is loosely arranged in topics which do not reflect the 'unifying themes of biology' that were supposed to be pursued as part of the aims of the syllabus. The Standard 9 syllabus is largely a survey of the main phyla of the plant and animal kingdom. It also includes cell division and the reproduction of man. The latter two topics seem to have been simply added on, perhaps to have a particular number of topics for the year. In other words, there seems to be no rational basis for including them in this syllabus. The Standard 10 syllabus includes the rest of the biology topics, viz human physiology, biochemistry, and population dynamics. Although nature conservation was presented as an important focus of the syllabus, it does not receive any special attention. It also appears at the end of the syllabus which means that it stands a chance of being left out by a teacher who has followed the sequence of topics in the syllabus and cannot finish the syllabus through lack of time. (Most

teachers follow the sequence of topics laid down in the syllabus even though they are not specifically told to do so.) This organization of content is unlike the thematic organization of content in the Revised Nuffield Advanced Science, wherein the biology content is organized according to the following major themes: "maintenance of the organism, the developing organism, organisms and populations and finally control and co-ordination in organisms". This thematic organization of content lends structure to the course and puts related topics together. Loosely organized content as seen in the syllabus under study has been found to encourage rote learning and discourage transfer and retention. Bruner, for example, argues that

> teaching specific topics or skills without making clear their context in the broader fundamental structure of a field of knowledge is uneconomical in several deep senses. In the first place, such teaching makes it exceedingly difficult for the student to generalise from what he has learned to what he will encounter later. In the second place, learning that has fallen short of a grasp of general principles has little reward in terms of intellectual excitement...Third, knowledge one has acquired without sufficient structure to tie it together is knowledge that is likely to be forgotten. An unconnected sets of facts has a pitiably short half-life in memory.[19]

Knowledge of the historical foundations of biology and an awareness of the influence of biology to everyday life are included as some of the aims of the syllabus however, there is nothing in the content which reflects these aims.

Because neither of the two curriculum documents disclose the reasoning involved in their formulation, the author approached a member of the curriculum committee to determine this missing rationale. The author phoned the Department of Education and Training to request an interview with any member of the biology curriculum committee and she was put in touch with this interviewee who was willing to talk to her. The interviewee was asked to explain how the aims were arrived at and how they were justified. The following are the points which emerged from this interview and the interviewee's statements:

a. The syllabus is not constructed within the department which caters for the schools which use it. It is produced by a committee of experts in which very few of the stakeholders e.g. teachers and parents, are represented.

b. The curriculum is never evaluated and changed on the basis of its effects in schools.

c. The curriculum has grown by accretion with bits that are interesting to the committee members added *ad hoc*.

The interviewee stated that:

> We have never had curriculum development in this department i.e. the Department of Education and Training[DET] (which caters only for African pupils). The Transvaal Education and Department [TED](which caters for white pupils living in the province of the Transvaal) develop curriculum and we adopt what they have developed and make adjustments where we think necessary. Even in the TED, it is

> not really curriculum development in the true sense, i.e., the curriculum is not developed and tested in a scientific manner as should happen. What happens is that they call together people/experts/professors from the four provinces to come and develop a curriculum. They were supposed to include teachers but they have never really been part of the curriculum committee. A few years ago, 3 or 4 years ago they invited people from the DET to the curriculum committee but they were to attend as observers only. After 3 or 4 meetings the curriculum committee realised that we from the DET could contribute constructively and we were allowed to participate fully although the minutes still referred to us as observers. Although we put together a curriculum, we never went out and tested it and refined it on the basis of the test. New things seemed to be put in on an ad hoc basis. We made room in the syllabus for new things as they occurred to us with the result that our curriculum ended up looking like a patchwork blanket.

d. Because of the *ad hoc* manner in which it was constructed, the syllabus has no clear rationale. However, it is justified on the basis that it contains all the sections of biology. The interviewee explains this lack of rationale as follows:

> I can't really tell you why these objectives were decided upon because most of that was done before I joined the curriculum committee, but I think that these objectives were set by academics who based them on educational principles and not for instance on the needs of this country. They do not really concern themselves with issues on the ground. So the syllabus is very academic but not really nonsense. The essential parts of biology were always there in the syllabus but I would not say that it was well thought out. If you asked why is there this or that, you would not get a clear answer. But I wouldn't say it was nonsense, or a total mess. It lacks a rationale and logic.

e. Even though the syllabus states that objectives should be kept in mind throughout all the teaching, the committee is aware that teachers do not read the objectives. It was indeed, found in the course of a research project on classroom interaction in some schools in Bophuthatswana, that classroom activity is not based the prescribed syllabus aims.[20] None of the teachers who were interviewed ever discusses the syllabus aims or receives orientation towards them when they start teaching. These aims are simply ignored. Teachers do not regard them as a guide to their teaching and they apparently have never found it necessary to refer to them. As one teacher explains, the syllabus is referred to only for the purpose of checking the prescribed content. He said that

> we basically use the syllabus to check what we have to teach or what we have to include in the scheme of work. Students also ask for copies of the syllabus to check the prescribed content.

When asked for the reason why they did not refer to these aims which are supposed to provide the basis of teaching, this teacher said:

> ...these things are only explained to us in college but when you enter the teaching fraternity they are never referred to. Most of us don't consider these aims because

most of them are prescribed in such a way that they are impossible to achieve in a real life situation, e.g. there are no facilities for experiments etc.

Another teacher said:

> You may read the aims for your own benefit if you like but I don't think I think about them for my daily teaching. In other words, they don't influence my teaching.

These syllabus aims are seen to be irrelevant to the daily task of teaching.

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE SYLLABUS

So far the syllabus has been analyzed on its own terms, i.e. as an example of the Objectives Curriculum Model and not in comparison to other models. Its appropriateness as a model for curriculum development in the South African context and for the development of critical thinking will be evaluated later. The attempt in the above analysis has been to reveal the structural features of this syllabus and to evaluate its potential efficiency in carrying out what it purports to do. The objectives model of curriculum was developed to increase effectiveness in the management of school activities. Its underlying rationality is of the means-ends variety, i.e. pre-determined problems are to be solved by specific pre-determined means. The aligning of means and ends is expected to

> provide precision and control over the otherwise disorderly nature of curriculum and teaching.[21]

However, as the above analysis indicates, it seems that this biology syllabus does not live up to the standards of the model for the following reasons:

a. The objectives are not followed by direct practical advice to ensure their achievement.
b. The practical advice that is proffered is sometimes contradictory and inconsistent with the aims.
c. The relationship between the syllabus content and the syllabus aims is unclear, i.e. it is not clear how this particular content would ensure the achievement of the syllabus aims.
d. The rationale and basis for the selection of the syllabus objectives have not been made clear.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VALUES AND CONTEXT IN DETERMINING SYLLABUS OBJECTIVES

As pointed out above, the present syllabus does not give an indication of the values which underpin it and this has resulted in the lack of clear rationale for its formulation. This absence of underlying values is perhaps due to the fact that the present biology syllabus is modelled on the objectives model of curriculum. Many writers argue that it is inherent of the objectives model not to have an in-depth rationale which indicates its value base, or that the objectives model assumes value-neutrality.[22] However, the objectives model is based on the scientific management model, in which task analysis provides the basis of planning. This means that while the values might not be disclosed in the formulation of objectives, the rationale for the objectives model is provided by the analysis of needs. The present syllabus does not provide evidence of being based on a needs analysis. It can therefore not be said to have been designed meet the needs of a particular context. It states objectives without their justification. However, as Kelley states,

> criteria by which one selects one's objectives must logically be a prior consideration...[23]

Kelley warns that

> To offer them [curriculum prescriptions] without offering some justification is to risk being totally ignored; to use a position of power without justification is to stand convicted of indoctrination and abuse of authority.[24]

It is also important to note that while the objectives model may feign value-neutrality, the selection of objectives ultimately reflects the values which underpin decision-making in this regard. Particular objectives are selected from a range of possibilities. Thus as Kelley[25] states, curriculum "prescriptions will reflect nothing more that the preferences, the values, the ideology of those offering them".

The fact that this syllabus was borrowed from another Department further contributes to its inefficiency. It was not formulated with the context of the black student in mind. Such decontextualization of the syllabus has led to the treatment of syllabus content as academic and not related to the life experiences of the students. For example, the syllabus does not reflect the real environmental problems experienced by black South Africans in the chapter dealing with nature conservation: it does not deal with environmental problems such as soil erosion and the destruction of trees which occur as a result of overgrazing and lack of fuel. Considerations of the context would not only improve the relevance of the syllabus but would also lead to the formulation of more meaningful objectives.

Changes that have occurred to the syllabus were in the opinion of the member of the curriculum who was interviewed, introduced piece-meal at the discretion of the members of syllabus committee. This means that instead of planned changes which

usually occur in response to changes in the values of the society and developments in technology, we have an 'unplanned drift' of the curriculum.[26] It would be interesting to speculate on why such an important undertaking as curriculum development should be carried out in such a cavalier manner. The reasons seem to be embedded in the fact that the curriculum committee itself is not representative of the total community it serves; it excludes most of the stakeholders, i.e. the people who have vested interest in education such as parents, teachers and students. Kirst and Walker argue that

> ...the determination of the public school curriculum is not just influenced by political events; it is a political process in important ways...Throughout curriculum policy-making, political conflict is generated by the existence of competing values concerning the proper basis of deciding what to teach.[27]

In the situation under study, however, this conflict has been eliminated by the exclusion of those members of the community who would present competing values. The responsibility for deciding what to teach has been left to a committee of experts. Kirst and Walker state that such committees usually adopt decision-making procedures which Lindblom and Baybrooke28 refer to as 'disjointed incrementalism'. Disjointed incrementalism is defined as

> a collection of relatively simple, crude, almost wholly conscious, and public strategies for decision-making which taken together as a mutually reinforcing set ... constitute a systematic and defensible strategy.[29]

These features seem to characterize decision-making procedures described by the member of the curriculum committee who was interviewed in the present study.

TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC CURRICULUM

This section addresses the changes that are required to engender support and conviction in the aims and approaches of the curriculum among teachers, students and all those who have vested interest in education.

Reconstituting the Curriculum Development Committee

The present paper postulates that syllabus aims and approaches are likely to influence classroom practice if teachers, students and all those interested in educational outcomes are convinced about their importance and have also contributed to their formulation. This means that there is a need to reverse the practice of imposed curriculum and to democratize the process of curriculum development.

The democratization of the curriculum committee requires the inclusion of all the people who have a vested interest in education, i.e. all those people whose lives

will be affected by curriculum decisions and all those who are interested in the outcomes of education. Orpwood[29] refers to these people as 'stakeholders'. He states that

> stakes in the science curriculum are held by teachers, teachers, parents, school trustees, the scientific community, industry, the labour movement, and many other groups and institutions.[30]

Orpwood offers the following justification for the need to include stakeholders in curriculum decisions:

i. ...as a matter of democratic principle, they have a right to do so, since the outcome affects them all.

ii. The absence of key stakeholders can bias results...

iii. The involvement of a broad range of stakeholders leads to broader consensus and correspondingly broader support.[31]

Schwab[32] on the other hand identifies people who should be involved in curriculum development according to the requisite knowledge they possess and he refers to the "five bodies experience" which should be represented. These are subject matter, learners, the milieux, teachers and curriculum-making. Schwab does not specify that the teachers and learners themselves should be members of this committee. However, it seems that the particular individuals whose interests are at stake e.g. the teachers and the students (depending on their age), are better placed to represent themselves in the committee. The exact constitution of the committee will depend on the context, i.e. the constitution of the South African curriculum committee will reflect the nature of the interest groups in the country. Representatives of the various interest groups would be elected democratically by the members of the groups. Presently students have national student organizations from which they can elect their representatives. However, for better effectiveness there is a need for subject-specific representation rather than representation drawn from the broad student organization. Teachers would also elect their representatives to the curriculum committee from subject-specific organization so that ability to articulate subject-specific problems and issues is assured.

The curriculum-making process which involves all the stakeholders would have to be deliberative rather than prescriptive.[33] This means that decisions on the nature of the new curriculum would entail compromise and accommodation of each of the representative's views. Although such a process is likely to be more cumbersome and long-winded than would be the case if curriculum was designed by a homogenous group of experts, the product of such deliberation is, as Orpwood points out above, likely to have greater support and engender greater commitment to its success. Efforts at curriculum development are likely to flounder as long as its recipients feel it is imposed.

This paper suggests that the deliberative model of curriculum development is likely to have an added value of institutionalizing critical thinking which the author has identified as an important means of eradicating rote learning in our schools.[34] The process of deliberating about the curriculum would provide an illustration of critical thinking in action. Participants are likely to appreciate its value in such a process. It would therefore not be too difficult to convince them of its value in life in general and in education.

Cornbleth is sceptical that improvements to the curriculum can be brought about by merely using the deliberative approach:

> Proponents of this approach retain a relatively decontextualized, product conception of curriculum. Their curriculum product is to be created by a more representative group than would be the case with a technocratic approach and by more democratic or consensual means, but curriculum is still a product. Values and social setting are considered but typically little explicit attention is given to either social critique or broader context. Deliberation is seen as desirable if not necessary, but insufficient to the position taken here.[35]

The paper agrees on the importance of context and social values in curriculum-making. Since one of the main criticisms made against the biology syllabus which was analyzed in the present study was its decontextualized nature, and its lack of rationale, it seems necessary that a deliberate attempt be made to enunciate a clear rationale for the curriculum rather than hope that it will emerge in the course of deliberation. The next section will thus develop ways of bringing the context and social values into the curriculum-making process.

Developing a rationale for the curriculum

This section explores the ways by which the newly constituted curriculum committee would go about the process of deciding on the nature of the curriculum i.e. participating in a rational basis of curriculum development. Such a reasoned basis serves not only to clarify the thinking process of those involved in deliberation, but it also provides justification for the curriculum so that its users may act with conviction. As Kelley states

> ...any definition, if it [the curriculum] is to be practically effective and productive, must offer more than a statement about knowledge content ... It must go far beyond this to an explanation, and indeed a justification, of the purposes of such transmission and an exploration of the effects that such knowledge and such subjects is likely to have, or is intended to have, on its recipients...[36]

Providing a rationale for the curriculum also has a moral value in that it indicates some respect for its recipients. Respect here implies recognizing the users' right to exercise independent judgement on the value of what they are expected to act upon. This means that rather than presenting finished decisions which are likely to sound like instructions, users are indirectly brought into the process of decision-making.

The present study proposes that the process of developing a rationale for the curriculum should be based on the method of practical reasoning as formulated by Gauthier[37] and adapted for curriculum development by Orpwood.[38] Its adoption is based on the assumption that curriculum problems are practical problems in that they demand solutions which indicate what is to be done rather thatn what is the case as in theoretical problems.[39]

Briefly, practical reasoning proceeds on the following three premises:

a. *A premise having practical force* – it characterizes the state of affairs wanted/ worth wanting and embodies values of the author.
b. *A premise characterizing the context of activity* – it consists of showing how action to be taken fits into a context.
c. *A conclusion* – specifying what to do.

If we applied this mode of thinking to curriculum development our thinking about curriculum would proceed in the following manner:

a. We would start by describing and justifying "those states of mind or other attributes considered to be desirable outcomes of an educational program".[40] Participants of the deliberative process would lay bare what each values as an educational outcome and negotiate to reach consensus about what the country has to aimed for. In the South African situation this would mean, among others, identifying critical thinking as a desirable educational outcome and justifying it on the basis of democratic values which espouse the development of autonomy in students and which is essential for life in a democratic society. As pointed out above, the value of critical thinking emerges in the process of deliberation and the participants are likely to accept it as a worthwhile educational aim in a democratic situation.

   This step of the reasoning process outlines what it is we desire as an educational outcome and exposes the values implicit in these desires. Our educational outcomes are therefore not presumed to have been derived by value-free, scientific means as is the case with the use of the technocratic objectives model. Disclosing values which underlie a proposed curriculum has an added importance in that it exposes alternative approaches to the curriculum based on the different values of the participants. The curriculum ultimately agreed upon will therefore be the one which is considered the best among the different possible ones.

b. The next step would involve an analysis of the nature of the context of the curriculum and establishing the validity or reasonableness of the educational outcomes agreed upon in the previous step. In the South African situation, this would mean analyzing the demands of the new democratic context with view to healing the rifts and dispelling the myths of Apartheid education. This analysis would also take into account the dual nature of the South African society. The South African society consists of developed and developing sectors. The curriculum would therefore, among others, have to cater for the developmental needs of the developing sector.

Consideration of the context would also have to take into account the nature of the students for whom the curriculum is intended. This would involve the consideration of information emanating from research on learning and teaching.[41] As Schwab points out above, there is need to consider what students are capable of learning, what it is they would find difficult, etc. The formulation of a suitable curriculum would therefore have to be guided by this kind of information. Presently, the syllabus documents are silent on the nature of the learner.

c. Having decided on the desired educational outcomes, and considered the nature and demands of the educational milieu, conclusions would now have to be reached about how we can realize the educational outcomes we desire. This step involves the selection of content and pedagogical approaches that will help us reach our goals.

The selection of content and pedagogical approaches would be guided by principles related to relevance, intellectual development and the structure of knowledge.

Relevance

The present biology syllabus was criticized for the fact that it does not reflect much of the students' life experiences; in other words, it is irrelevant to the students' lives and students are alienated from it. The concept of relevance refers to the need to match the curriculum with the students' lived experiences and their personal characteristics such as age, intellectual abilities, interests, temperament and aspirations.[42] The relevance of content is said to have a variety of psychological benefits such as developing motivation, and interest. It also allows for the anchoring of new concepts to students' existing knowledge.[43]

Many writers on curriculum development in various parts of Africa have shown that it is possible to incorporate traditional concepts and practices in science curricula. For example, Cole states that

> ...there has always been a rich collection of cultural objects and beliefs with scientific bases in all African societies. The scientific bases may be very elementary but could serve as valuable links between what is familiar and new knowledge and understanding that is to be acquired.[44]

This view is, however, not shared by some influential educators in South Africa. The De Lange Report, which was commissioned in 1981 to investigate among others, the learning of science and mathematics in South Africa, dismisses the idea that science concepts can be related to concepts from traditional African culture. It maintains that no science related concepts exist in the culture. As pointed out above, such concepts and practices do exist. The need therefore seems to be for a change in attitude on the part of educators in South Africa to allow African students to bring their cultural experience to the learning situation.

Bruner suggests that to cater for the learner's needs

> what is taught should be self-rewarding by some existential criterion.[45]

This means that what is taught should also answer some of the learner's existential questions and refer to some of his/her aspirations. In other words, relevance should be related to personal as well as social concerns. The present biology syllabus content is sanitized of all socio-political problems that impinge on it. For example, the controversy associated with teaching nature conservation in a country that has not upheld the conservation of human habitat is not reflected in the syllabus.[46] If students are to learn meaningfully and with conviction, content to be learned should reflect all associated problems. Relevance handled in this way, as Bruner concludes, "brings knowledge and conviction together".[47]

Yoloye proposes that socially relevant curricula in Africa should provide opportunities for

- learning for the society, i.e. towards the fulfilment of the needs of the society;
- learning about the society, i.e. becoming thoroughly familiar with the characteristics of the society;
- learning from the society, i.e. utilizing the available resources in society for the promotion of learning.[48]

These aspects of social relevance raise the following question:

- How might the environment change and can we prepare for 'predictive relevance' – relevance for the 21st century?[49]

Or as Hawes asks

> Is education to prepare for life now or the after-life to come? Does it preserve tradition or encourage change?[50]

This brings two points into focus: first, relevance is a value concept, like beauty it is in the eyes of the beholders; second, relevance is a temporal concept, what is

relevant today may not be relevant tomorrow. The first point endorses the need for a deliberative model of curriculum development to take account of the views of various stakeholders on what is relevant. The second endorses the need to educate for the future.

Intellectual development

Relevance, as described above, would allow the student to learn meaningfully by relating new knowledge to prior knowledge. It also allows for the characteristics of the learner to be used to his/her advantage in the learning situation. This means that rather than ignoring or rejecting the knowledge that the student brings to school, and his or her personal characteristics, as has been the case in South African education, the students' prior knowledge and personal characteristics would be used as a springboard from which to tackle new knowledge. For the African student whose traditional knowledge has often been seen as incompatible with school knowledge, accepting his/her lived experience in the learning situation would result in the integration of him/herself as whole person in the learning process. The African student has had to compartmentalize his/her lived experience away from school knowledge.[51] An integration of both these aspects seems essential for learning and change, i.e. cognitive and conceptual change. As Rogers declares

> We cannot change, we cannot move away from what we are, until we thoroughly accept what we are.[52]

Once lived experience has been legitimately accepted into the learning and teaching situation, it can then be turned into an object of reflection to move students beyond everyday life experiences. Floden *et al* suggest that

> Everyday life is not set up for learning that transcends its own boundaries and suspends its immediate purposes. Immersion in everyday experience is what Shutz and other phenomenologist describe as 'natural attitude'. The world seems centred in time and space around oneself, and objects seem important only for achieving personal ends. The organization and reality of this egocentric world is taken for granted and not made the object of reflection.[53]

In science education, the 'natural attitude' of students is reflected in the literature on alternative conceptions. Writers such as Hewson[54] have shown just how resilient students' alternative conceptions are to traditional methods of teaching, so much so that finding ways of making students break from everyday experience remains a challenge in this field. A break from alternative conceptions is likely to be promoted by a curriculum which allows for the consideration of students, prior knowledge and also deals with everyday reality. If our concern is to provide knowledge and skills that can be applied to everyday life, then we should take cognisance of the fact that such transfer will not take place spontaneously. It should be encouraged by, for example, allowing consideration of everyday situations in the classroom.[55] In

other words, to provide useful knowledge, the curriculum should contextualize most of the prescribed topics.

Finally, curriculum should encourage development by not only providing knowledge that is of immediate relevance but also knowledge that points to future possibilities of careers and employment. In this way, curriculum would open up vistas that might not be visible from all the students' everyday experience and thus promote equality.

Structure of knowledge

The analysis of the present biology syllabus revealed that it consists of a loose collection of topics which cover most of the main areas of biology. These topics are divided for convenience into groups that are handled in different years. For example, the standard nine syllabus is mainly a survey of the plant and animal kingdom while the standard ten syllabus covers human and plant physiology. These topics are presented and handled independently from one another with the result that the structure of the subject is obscured. The present study suggests that this organization of content encourages rote learning because it does not locate the topics in the broader framework of the field of study.[56] It also does not reveal the conceptions and concerns that make the topics worth studying. These topics are presented as finished products of science. Schwab[57] argues that scientific knowledge is not merely a collection of facts accumulated through observation of nature.

He maintains that scientific inquiry, a process through which scientific knowledge develops, is guided by conceptions, "deliberative constructions of the mind".[58] These conceptions determine the facts to be looked for and the interpretation to be made on the facts. If science is to be meaningfully studied, such conceptions should be exposed. In other words, the curriculum finally agreed upon should be presented in such a way that it reveals the conceptual framework which structures it.

The structure of biology is, for example, revealed in the thematic organization of the Revised Nuffield biology syllabus. Content in this syllabus is divided into themes such as maintenance of the organism, the developing organisms etc. Through such an organization, students are able to see the conceptions that guide the study – the idea, for example, that organisms are maintained. However, organizing content according to topics (e.g. phyla), as is the case with the present biology syllabus, highlights the topic rather than what is of interest about the topic. It also emphasizes, as pointed out, the discreteness of each topic and does not encourage generalization about the concerns involved in the topic. Indeed the author found in a study that students were unable to generalize about concepts such as nutrition as they occur in plants and animals.[59] Such inability to generalize might in part stem from the fact that, according to the syllabus, nutrition in animals is to be

studied separately form nutrition in plants. A thematic approach to content organization similar to that used in the Nuffield biology is therefore recommended because it exposes the structure of the subject and opens up the concerns of the subject for critical scrutiny by the students. It also provides entry points from which traditional conceptions may be considered.

The present biology syllabus was also criticised for the fact that, even though it has knowledge of the historical foundations of biology as one of the syllabus aims, it does not reflect this aim in the content selected. The present study suggests that failure to reflect the history of the subject may be due the manner in which content is organized. This means that because content is arranged in topics it is difficult to find points at which the historical foundations of the subject may be introduced. A syllabus which is thematically organized is more likely to bring out the history of the themes. A thematic organization highlights the concerns of the study and the history of these concerns may be easily pursued.

By revealing the history of these conceptions students are also able to appreciate the fact that conceptions and principles of scientific enquiry are constantly refined and revised, and that scientific knowledge is therefore tentative and mutable. This is particularly important for students from traditional African backgrounds where, as Baimba[60] points out, knowledge is viewed as a static commodity to be transmitted from one generation to another. Perceiving these conceptual changes in the history of the subjects may also encourage students to change their own conceptions.

Finally, this paper suggests that a well designed and thought out curriculum which respects and reflects an understanding of the context in which it is to be applied will ultimately contribute to the solution of seemingly unrelated school management problems.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. J. Mann, "Curriculum Criticism, *Teachers College Record*, 71 (September 1969): 27-40.
2. W. Richmond, *The School Curriculum*. (London: Methuen & Co., 1971), 6.
3. Mann, 1969.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, 28.
7. *Ibid.*, 35.
8. D. Ross, "An Introduction to Curriculum Criticism" in R. Sherman and R. Webb (eds.), *Qualitative Research in Education: Focus and Methods* (London: The Falmer Press, 1990), 162.
9. *National Examinations Syllabus for Biology* – Standard Nine and Ten (1988/89), 1.
10. *Ibid.*, 2.
11. A. Kelley, *Curriculum Theory and Practice*. (London: PCP Ltd, 1989).
12. Subject Policy Code: 302/4/3/88, 4.
13. Ibid., 8.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*, 10-11.
17. *Ibid.*, 22.
18. *Ibid.*, 11.
19. J. Bruner. *The Process of Education*. (Cambridge: 1960), 31-32.
20. B. Tema, *Critical Thinking in Biology among Some South African Matriculation Students*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis (1993): University of Reading.
21. C. Combleth, *Curriculum in Context*. (London: The Falmer Press, 1990), 14.
22. Kelley, 1989.
23. *Ibid.* 16.
24. *Ibid.*, 5.
25. *Ibid.*
26. E. Hoyle, "How Does the Curriculum Change? A Proposal for Enquiries", *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Volume 1 (1969a): 132-141.
27. M. Kirst and D. Walker, "An Analysis of Curriculum Policy-Making", *Review of Educational Research*, 4, 5 (1971): 479-506.
28. C. Lindblom and D. Baybrooke, *A Strategy of Decision*. (New York: Free Press, 1963).
29. G. Orpwood, "Toward the Renewal of Canadian Science Education: Deliverative Inquiry Model", *Science Education*, 69, 4 (1985): 477-489.
30. *Ibid.*, 480.
31. *Ibid.*
32. J. Schwab, "The Practical: Arts of the Eclectic", *School Review*, 81, 4 (1973): 493-543.
33. Orpwood and Schwab.
34. B. Tema, "Adopting Critical Thinking in the Learning and Teaching of Science", *South African Journal of Science*, in press, (1994).
35. Combleth, 7.
36. Kelley, 10.
37. D. Gauthier, *Practical Reason*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).
38. Orpwood.
39. Schwab.
40. Orpwood.
41. G. Fenstermacher, "The Place of Science and Epistemology in Schon's Conception of Reflective Practice" in P. Grimmet and G. Erickson (eds.), *Reflections in Teacher Education*. (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1988).
42. A. Yoloye, "The Relevance of Educational Content to National Needs in Africa", *International Review of Education*, 32, 2 (1986): 149-172.
43. Ausubel, *The Psychology of Meaningful Verbal Learning*. (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1968).
44. J. Cole, "Science Teaching and Science Curriculum Development in a Supposedly Non-Scientific Culture", *West African Journal of Education*, 19, 20 (1975): 318.
45. J. Bruner, *The Relevance of Education*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Education, 1972), 130.
46. J. Jansen, "Curriculum Policy in a Post-Apartheid Dispensation" in M. Nkomo (ed.), *Pedagogy of Domination*. (New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1990).
47. Bruner, 131.
48. Yoloye, 152.
49. R. Smith, "Quality in Education – The Impossible Dream?" (Inaugural Lecture, University of Bophuthatswana, 1983).
50. K. Hawes, "Understanding Critical Thinking", in H. Gardner (ed.), *Varieties of Thinking*. (New York: Routledge, 1990), 1.

51. A. Baimba, "Science and Culture: Implications of the Teaching and Learning of Science in Non-Western Societies, in B. Bell, A. Begg, F. Biddulph, M. Carr, J. McChesney, K. Lovebridge, (eds.), *Some Papers*. (Hamilton: Longman Paul, 1992).
52. C. Rogers, *Becoming a Person*. (London: Constable & Co. Ltd, 1980), 17.
53. R. Floden, M. Buchman and J. Schwille, "Breaking with Everyday Experience", *Teachers College Record*, 88, 4 (1987):485-506.
54. P. Hewson, "Learning and Teaching Science", *South African Journal of Science*, 76 (1980): 397-403.
55. D. Perkins and G. Salomon, "Cognitive Skills Context-Bound?" *Educational Researcher*, January-February (1989): 16-25.
56. Bruner, 1972.
57. J. Schwab, "The Concept of the Structure of a Discipline", *Educational Record*, 15 (1962): 197-205.
58. *Ibid.*, 198.
59. B. Tema, "Rural and Urban African Pupils' Alternative Conceptions of 'Animal'", *Journal of Biological Education*, 23, 3 (1989): 199-207.
60. Baimba, 1992.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Volume 16 No 1, 105-130

A Critique of the History Curriculum Debate in South Africa: Some Signposts for the Future

STEPHEN LOWRY
Sacred Heart College, PO Box 93243, Yeoville 2143

A new history curriculum is needed for South African schools. To date much of the debate on this matter has failed to take account of three crucial considerations: the education system as a whole, the curriculum as a whole, and the nature of history as a discipline at school level. On the basis of these three considerations, the author proposes a set of principles for analysing and evaluating history curriculum debate. The principles are applied to debates in the period 1988-1993, with particular attention to the HSRC Investigation into the Teaching of History and the History Curriculum Conferences of 1992. An analysis of the debates helps to reveal some of the central issues at stake in developing a new history curriculum. These include the relationship between history teaching and citizenship; the notion of a national as opposed to a Nationalist history; the place of skills and concepts in historical understanding; and the process of curriculum construction.

INTRODUCTION

Any informed discussion about a new history curriculum must start with a critique of the curriculum currently being used in our schools. Secondly, it must be rooted in a broader context that includes a discussion about the whole school curriculum and indeed the system of education itself. Thirdly, it must take cognisance of the latest scholarship on the nature of the discipline itself, especially at a pre-tertiary level. While this might sound obvious, to date it appears that this overall perspective has been absent from the debate in South Africa. These three domains of discussion provide sources for developing a set of principles for a new history curriculum, principles which may also be used to analyse and evaluate recent debate on the history curriculum for South African schools.

In this article I propose such a set of principles and then apply them in an evaluative analysis of the history curriculum debate in the period 1988-1993.

THE PRINCIPLES OF A NEW HISTORY CURRICULULM

Sources

There are three main sources of principles for a new history curriculum in South African schools:

The history curriculum currently in use in South African schools. Over the years a number of writers have examined how history has been used at school level to explain and defend the system of Apartheid. By examining the decision-making processes and control of the curriculum, the aims and objectives of the curriculum, the content of the syllabi, the textbooks required, the examination system, the teaching methodologies used, and the skills to be imparted, it is clear that history at school level is designed to perpetuate an Afrikaner Nationalist interpretation of South African history. Any new curriculum design exercise must take this practice into account and make sure that the current approach is avoided.[1]

The broader educational and curriculum debate in South Africa. There are a number of determinants that affect any curriculum planning process. These include:

* The ideological and political principles upon which a new education system is based.
* The administrative structures available for implementation.
* The financial and economic context will also determine the extent and nature of change.
* The language policy of the country.
* Levels of teacher training will determine the pace and extent of change.
* The nature of assessment structures is an integral part of the process.
* The model of curriculum planning adopted will also fundamentally determine what the curriculum will look like.

There has been some debate around these determinants in South Africa. In 1991 the Committee of Heads of Education Departments (CHED) as part of the Educational Renewal Strategy released a document *A Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa* (CUMSA) which outlined the Nationalist Party Government's approach to the curriculum. In opposition to this many people and organisations identified with the progressive movement participated in the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), which included a research group examining the curriculum. This resulted in an analysis of possible policy options regarding a post-apartheid curriculum. A review of the literature around this debate and these curriculum determinants is essential, as they will fundamentally determine the nature of history within the curriculum.[2]

The nature of the discipline at school level. A reading of the literature around this debate is important because it enables one to start to formulate a rationale for the teaching of history. This is important given the abuse of the discipline in schools in the past. Such a rationale should focus on three issues: the content, the concepts and the skills of history. It is important to discuss these ideas, furthermore, in the context of the developmental stages of the child. Such a discussion is a further source for developing a set of principles upon which a new curriculum can be built.[3]

Principles

The first principle arising from the general curriculum debate in South Africa deals with the *education system as a whole*. The way this is structured and the principles upon which it is based will obviously have a bearing on the history curriculum.

1. There must be a single unitary system of education based on a commitment to equality, where race, colour, creed or sex does not feature. Consideration must be given to policies aimed at addressing the historical legacy of inequality. Decision-making within education must be democratized with a fundamental commitment to the inclusion of all relevant interest groups. The level of decentralization allowed, however, will be affected by other factors such as the skills level of the teaching profession.

The next three principles are relevant to the *overall curriculum*, which will also impact on the history curriculum.

2. Situational analysis: Curriculum planning must take into account the social, political, ideological, economic, historical and linguistic forces that influence the curriculum. Some form of horizontal differentiation may be necessary to overcome regional, language or historical inequalities in the curriculum. The model of planning which is adopted must be based on a sound understanding of curriculum planning and must be clear to all those involved in its implementation.
3. The developmental stages of growth: Planning principles must also be based on an understanding of the developmental stages of the child. The curriculum must aim at the all-round development of the child, so a narrow instrumentalist curriculum should be avoided. Some form of vertical differentiation will be necessary to deal with differently-abled students within specific classes or schools or within particular regions.
4. The resources available: Planning must consider the available financial and other resources, particularly personnel. It must also take cognisance of the level of training of the personnel.[4]

The last five principles deal with the *history curriculum* itself.

5. Content: History should not be used to serve the narrow ideological aims of a particular interest group (party or community). The content of history should be seen as open to different interpretations, and therefore open to revision. The content chosen must reflect the past of all segments of the South African population and not just those of a minority group. This needs to be reflected in the textbooks chosen.
6. Concepts: The concepts of history need greater emphasis and must be taught using content appropriate to each concept.
7. Skills: The skills of history, too, need greater consideration. These must empower students to see history as a process that needs to be debated rather than a product that needs to be learnt. Apart from cognitive skills, history is particularly useful for the teaching of affective skills.
8. Assessment: Methods of assessment should reflect a new approach to the discipline, aiming at assessing the broad range of concepts and skills as well as the content of the history curriculum. The curriculum and methods of assessment should form an integrated whole.
9. Teaching: The teaching of history needs change. It should be based on the idea that the teacher facilitate the acquisition of skills rather than merely pass on a single and uncritical version of past events. The implications of this for teacher training must be assessed and the necessary changes implemented.

These principles are referred to throughout this article. The number of the paragraph in which they are explained will be given in brackets.

THE DEBATE CONCERNING A NEW HISTORY CURRICULUM

The HSRC Investigation into the Teaching of History

Two elements of the HSRC investigation are germane to the present study: the composition and work of the committee, and the recommendations of the committee.

Given its history and the way it is constituted, the most important shortcoming of the investigation is with the HSRC itself. There are also major problems with the composition of the history committee. It was established in 1988, three years into the five-year-long National State of Emergency. Consequently no members of the ANC or other liberation movements participated, and many researchers, teachers and academics aligned with the anti-apartheid movement would not participate in such an initiative. Membership of the committee was 75% white, predominantly male and Afrikaans speaking.[5] Such a committee is unlikely to develop a history curriculum that will reflect the history of all the people of South Africa.

The committee itself recognised that it "was not, and could not be, representative of all interest groups", and so attempted wider consultations on its findings.[6] These consultations, however, were limited and did not come close to being representative of all South Africans. Furthermore this method of research is based on a model where the experts draw up the findings arising from their own questions and ideological assumptions and present it to others for comment.[7] The experts are then free to accept or reject the feedback they receive after their 'consultation'. This is not the model of democratic decision-making identified as an important pre-requisite for the curriculum planning process [Principle 1].

This raises perhaps the most important criticism of the work of the committee: either it conducted its research with no understanding of the context within which it was operating, or it chose to ignore this context. While it recognised that groups such as the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) were not prepared to negotiate with it "given *the state of the political process at the time*" (emphasis added), it failed to find ways to rectify this.[8] Possibly a naive mistake but one that put a question mark over the legitimacy of the whole exercise. The failure to undertake a thorough analysis of the situation within which history is taught is a major shortcoming of the research [Principle 2].

Related to this is the failure of the committee to conduct an analysis of the current practice of history at school. Notwithstanding its recognition that history teaching in South Africa has been used "as an instrument of indoctrination", the Work Committee fails to analyze how this has happened.[9] One aspect of the research is an extensive survey of the attitudes to history, but it neglects to investigate the reasons for, or context of, the responses, and merely reports its findings in an 'objective' and detached manner. Failure to undertake a critical review of the current curriculum and practice of history teaching results in a failure to break decisively with the apartheid past.

Three other shortcomings in the HSRC study are worth mentioning. Firstly, no consideration has been given to the country's financial and economic constraints [Principle 4]. Secondly, the question of language policy has not been discussed [Principle 2]. Finally, there is no attempt to evaluate the effect of wide discrepancies in the training levels of the teachers or to suggest guidelines for overcoming such discrepancies [Principle 4]. Under the heading 'Qualifications', the report simply states that "there was a great disparity among teachers in the various education departments with the white group being the best qualified in history".[10] The report is conspicuously silent on the need for a principled commitment to redress.

HSRC report makes six recommendations for the construction of a new history curriculum in South Africa. These concern six aspects of curriculum construction: curriculum development procedures; modular syllabus; criteria for history curriculum; aims of teaching history; assessment; and research.

> Curriculum development procedures: ...curriculum development in history should be based on established curriculum development principles and with maximum involvement of interested parties.[11]

Given the committee's inability to achieve "maximum involvement of interested parties", it is heartening to see it recognising this as an important principle, even though it is not based on a thorough understanding of, or commitment to, democratic principles. The committee does not mention or commit itself to other important principles, such as a commitment to a single unitary system of education and a commitment to equality, where race, colour, creed or sex are immaterial [Principle 1].

> Modular syllabuses: ...curriculum developers should consider the development of modular curriculums for school history.

A modular curriculum might be a successful way of addressing the imbalances in the current curriculum. Is this, however, the intention of the HSRC? In a discussion of criteria for the teaching of history, the report describes "community-oriented criteria".[12] It asserts the necessity for a child to learn about his/her own community and its cultural life and contribution to historical development, based on the idea that "(e)ach community has its own distinctive historical roots and identity and can rightly demand that this be recognized and respected in the education of its children". Likewise, the community, "through its teachers, ... should be able to help decide on the choice of content".[13] The report does maintain that "(s)yllabi should be balanced, true and accountable", that "derogatory, hurtful or hostile references and depictions" should be avoided, and "the cultural history of other cultural groups or communities" should be taught.[14] This language seems to assert the idea of differences between communities rather than make a commitment to the development of a common culture and sense of citizenship. It is premised on the idea of homogenous communities with homogenous schools who are able to determine to some extent the content of the history curriculum on the basis of a modular approach to curriculum development. It suggests the maintenance of separate communities, perhaps not as strongly as in the days of grand apartheid, but perhaps not too differently from that ideology. Such a conception of modular syllabi must be avoided.

> Criteria for history curricula: ... the identified criteria (should) be further researched, ... agreement (should) be reached on the criteria – also in terms of interpretation – and ... these criteria (should) then be used in the development of new curriculums.

The criteria agreed upon in the report include "subject-, child-, community-, and teaching/instruction-oriented criteria". Apart from the problems with the community-oriented criteria, these categories are very useful in the development of a new curriculum. The subject- and child-oriented criteria incorporate the need for appropriate content [Principle 5], and the need to ensure that the curriculum

corresponds with the developmental stages of the child [Principle 3]. The report fails to mention the need for greater emphasis on the concepts of history and its teaching/instruction-oriented criteria are not based on a different conception of the role of the teacher, which has been identified as an important consideration [Principle 3].

> Aims of the teaching of history: ... in future a skills-based approach (should) be encouraged.

This is all the report recommends as far as the aims of history are concerned. It is in line with the desired commitment to a more skills-based curriculum [Principle 7]. Its section, however, on the rationale for the teaching of history incorporates many ideas that can be understood to be the aims of history.[15] These include:

* preparation for a career;
* the intellectual development of the child;
* illumination of present-day problems;
* preparation for responsible citizenship;
* education for life, based on the examination of values, views and attitudes;
* the development of an historical sense and reflective attitude;
* inculcating a critical openness towards life;
* imparting the methodological skills specific to history.

These are all important aims to be incorporated in the construction of a new curriculum and many of them need more of a skills-based curriculum to achieve them. The aim concerning responsible citizenship does need to be a little more clearly explained, given the abuse of this concept within the current syllabus.

> Assessment: ... the role of assessment should be taken into account in the process of curriculum development.

The recommendation says very little about assessment although it is covered in more depth elsewhere in the final report.[16] The principle of needing to avoid a disjuncture between the curriculum and the assessment structures decided upon [Principle 8], and the need for new methods of assessment and examinations aimed at assessing the broad range of concepts and skills as well as the content of the history curriculum, are incorporated in the sub-report. This section of the HSRC report is perhaps the most useful element and the findings could serve as the basis of a new assessment system in a new curriculum.

> International research and experience: ... any curriculum development (should) be supported by research and relevant developments in other countries (should) be taken into account.

Perhaps this is an educational truism, but given past experience and lack of comparative research and international co-operation, it is as well to make a definite commitment in this regard.

The History Curriculum Conferences

At the same time as the HSRC was conducting its research, the Department of National Education's Core Syllabus Committees were starting a review of the core syllabi in operation in the country. These two developments stimulated a number of groups around the country to initiate conferences on the history curriculum. The most important concern of those organising the conferences was that since there were negotiations concerning a new constitution, any changes to the history curriculum should reflect the changes happening in the rest of society. A range of different people – teachers, academics and organisations holding different political and educational perspectives – participated in the conferences, held in February, March and May 1992. Although a single report, attempting to synthesize the views of all participants, was drawn up, one must remember that the participants at the conferences did represent a range of different perspectives.[17]

The aims of the conferences were:

> ... to give teachers and interested academics the opportunity to contribute in a democratic way to the process of forming a new history curriculum in South Africa, ... to inform teachers about developments in the area of curriculum development, to provide a platform for the views of teachers, to promote teacher and broader public debate about a new history curriculum, and to ensure that those involved in present and future curriculum reform take note of the views of the teachers.[18]

To a large extent these aims were met, although it is important to note that despite widescale participation, particularly from teachers, these conferences were by no means representative democratic curriculum development conferences. Encompassing a far broader constituency of interest groups than the HSRC working group, it would still be a mistake to see this initiative as a properly-constituted curriculum planning process.

The conference reports examine the problems in the current practice of history teaching and start developing criteria for alternatives. The focus tends to be, therefore, on the sort of content a new syllabus should incorporate. The report does not follow rigorous curriculum planning procedures based on a clear model of curriculum development. The proposals, therefore, do not incorporate in any systematic way many of the principles outlined in section two above:

* There is no thorough situational analysis of the context of the curriculum including a consideration of language policy or the possible need for some form of horizontal differentiation to redress inequalities in provision [Principle 2].
* There is no sound strategy to deal with differently-abled students even though one of the proposals does favour a modular approach to the syllabus [Principle 3].
* No cognisance is taken of the constraints imposed by a lack of financial resources and by the levels of training of teachers [Principle 4].
* The pedagogical implications for teachers are not evaluated [Principle 9].

The conferences have made important contributions to the debate around history teaching in South Africa. This contribution is perhaps a lot more significant than the HSRC contribution because it incorporates the views and ideas of a much wider audience, covering the progressive movement as well as some of the more conservative participants in the HSRC research. Both contributions to the debate, however, are lacking in a number of respects.

THE ISSUES AT STAKE

History under threat

Both the HSRC research and many speakers at the different conferences attest to the fact that history at school level is under threat. It is common knowledge that candidate numbers are falling, and that history does not compete with the more utilitarian subjects such as mathematics and science. Loud and dynamic defence is necessary to ensure the survival of the subject. In the UK the widespread public debate that accompanied the investigation into history for the national curriculum was an essential element in ensuring the place of history in the national curriculum. This was aided, no doubt, by the very direct involvement of two successive Ministers of State for Education as well as the active participation in the debate by the Prime Minister.[19] In South Africa the debate needs to be both broadened and carefully directed. The question of the content of a new syllabus clearly has the most potential to generate public interest.

The content of a new history curriculum

Before looking at the content of a new curriculum it might be useful to point out some of the problems associated with a content approach to history.

An approach that sees the product as the most important function of history can be used to legitimise a particular view of the past and therefore to vindicate a particular view of the present. As Tosh writes:

> ...historical knowledge has to be produced... Who produces that knowledge, and who validates it for general consumption, are therefore important questions ... [Historians'] work can be manipulated to promote desired forms of social consciousness ...[20]

The production of historical knowledge that claims to be the only or even the most important record of particular historical events is dangerous, even if used for 'desired' ends. Ferro describes this history as institutional history because "it expresses or promotes a policy, an ideology or a government".[21] The use of history to oppose the official version, although called anti-history, is still institutional history because it is no more critical than the other form of institutional history. To use history in these ways is, in Ferro's view, an "act of imposture and tyranny".[22] Echoing this critique, Jenkins and Brickley argue that the past (actual events that took place) is distinct from history (the choosing of events from the past by a narrator/historian), and that the past can be used to sustain a range of different histories or interpretations of that past. There is no single history that is a reflection of the past, but only a number of different stories that interpret the past from different perspectives, be they "whig, tory, marxist, feminist...".[23] Institutional history has been the practice in South African schools under Apartheid education. Any curriculum planner charged with the task of developing a new history curriculum must keep this problem in mind.

Having noted some of the pitfalls of the content approach, what can be said about content selection for a new history curriculum for South African schools? Of course, as has been pointed out earlier in this article, it would be premature to propose new content without undergoing a thorough curriculum planning process. Instead I offer a brief examination of some issues raised in the responses to the HSRC's 'illustrative' syllabus and in various contributions to the history curriculum conferences.

The 'illustrative' syllabus is included as an appendix to two of the sub-reports of the HSRC research as the committee reached no agreement about the usefulness of embarking on such an exercise. According to one view "the committee did not have the legitimacy to take this task upon itself, neither was it an opportune time to tackle such an exercise".[24] In a curriculum planning model based on democratic decision-making, this view should have prevailed given the composition of the HSRC committee. Two members wished to dissociate themselves from this exercise for this very reason. Another criticism of the syllabus is that it is based on the idea that communities have a right to preserve their own culture and values. This was strongly challenged at the conferences.[25]

Contributions from the conferences are more useful for the present purposes. One set of proposals suggests that South Africa be seen as an integral part of Africa, that pre-colonial African history be given more prominence, and that a more

Afrocentric perspective be developed so that world and European events can be viewed from an African perspective.[26] These suggestions must be seen in the light of other proposals made about the content. Under the same section (Africanisation), it was also proposed that "world citizenship should be promoted".[27] Previously neglected topics such as "the history of ordinary people and pre-colonial and early human history" should be included.[28] "Broad national values" must be promoted and yet not to the detriment of "regional values and distinctions", allowing "community and regional history ... a prominent place in the syllabus".[29] Topics such as peace studies, women's history and human rights can be useful in promoting "reconciliation within the nation".[30] Furthermore it states that "the history curriculum would not be a vehicle for propaganda and there should not be a new set of heroes created in the place of discarded ones".[31]

While there is a strong drive towards a more Africanist perspective, and rightly so, conference contributors clearly reject a narrow nationalist version of history.[32] Yet nationhood and citizenship are acknowledged as key components of a history curriculum, as are the development of critical thinking history skills.[33]

Any debate on the content of a new history curriculum needs to address the question of education for citizenship. In the conferences it was proposed that the curriculum be "designed to promote an appreciation of broad national values", that it "should not be a vehicle for propaganda and there should not be a new set of heroes created in the place of discarded ones".[34] Other views stated that "history should not serve state or party".[35] It was suggested that "(a) new history syllabus should be based on a broad philosophy resting on three goals: national reconstruction, reconciliation, and the recognition of cultural and geographical diversity".[36] Kros and Vadi draw a distinction between national and nationalist history, arguing:

> ... 'national history' should acknowledge that South Africa should be a non-racial, non-sexist, multi-cultural, political democracy. In this sense 'national history' is not equivalent to an exclusivist, nationalistic history of the Afrikaner, Inkatha or the post independent African brands, but is a history of the nation as a whole.[37]

They propose three pillars upon which curriculum content could rest:

* National, as opposed to nationalist, history that incorporates 'People's History', focusing on the history of all the people of South Africa and their contribution to the country;
* African history;
* World history that is not just about "European governments and their dominant classes" but also about minorities and "their struggles in Europe and elsewhere in the world".[38]

The HSRC report claims that history must prepare a student for responsible citizenship, although it does not attempt to explain what this means. The issue is

highly sensitive particularly given the propagandistic use of the current syllabus. While ideas about the role of history in development of responsible citizenship are important, they need to be based on a clear conception of 'citizenship'.

Porter distinguishes three conceptions of citizenship: citizenship as status, citizenship as volition, and citizenship as competence. The first is based on the legal rights, duties and responsibilities of the citizen. This conception of citizenship confers and ascribes identity on the citizen, but it "also evokes feelings of identity and belonging". This form of citizenship is the basis of the current history curriculum in South African schools. The second conception highlights not only

> ... feelings, attitudes and dispositions ... (b)ut it goes on to include a sense of responsibility and obligation resulting in a willingness to engage in service for the community; to take up causes, to seek the welfare of others, to protest when rights are infringed, and to care for others – including wildlife and the environment.[39]

Porter claims that if education for citizenship is based on only these two conceptions, "then it is wholly inadequate and a clear case of indoctrination".[40] In addition to these two forms of citizenship there should be the third conception, that of citizenship as competence:

> Citizenship as competence recognises that to be an effective, active citizen involves much more than knowledge of legal rights or the appreciation of ones's social obligations. Competence as a citizen must involve a minimal level of understanding, a set of appropriate skills and ... a shared set of values or dispositions.[41]

For him the term 'understanding' includes a knowledge of power and decision-making structures in society, as well as of the alternatives to the *status quo.* Appropriate skills embrace many of those found in the discipline of history. By 'dispositions' he means such ideas as an openness to alternative viewpoints, a willingness to change one's viewpoint, the tolerance of other ideas and a willingness to be sceptical and questioning.

Such a model of citizenship opens the way for a history curriculum which could teach students to be critical citizens. They will be loyal, but not of the version, "My country right or wrong". Rather they will develop a critical version of loyalty where they are not scared or too apathetic to engage in discussion about the community, region or country and the roles of each of these in international affairs. They may feel empowered, too, to participate in activities aimed at changing the policies and philosophies of the governing party.

The concepts of history

The debate has hardly mentioned the area of historical concepts. The term 'concept' is used extensively in history and any discussion of the term requires some clarification of the definition one uses. In various writings about history different authors mean different things in the use of the term. There are four main

applications of the term. Any curriculum construction must bear these four applications in mind. I shall use the term 'concept' as a generic term that refers interchangeably to all four types described below.

Gunning makes a useful distinction between three types of concept and illustrates these differences using an example from the English Civil War.[42] A concept of the first type has a concrete referent. Words such as 'spear', 'pike', 'tank' and 'gun' can be clearly explained by showing the class a picture or giving them a detailed description. These I shall call concrete words. Identifying them might not always be that easy. Some terms might appear to be simple concrete words, in that they may have a simple meaning, but might also have a deeper meaning. For example, the term 'AK 47' is a type of gun, but also instantly linked with some ideology or another.

The second type of concept Gunning identifies is abstractions. These are the words that are usually identified as historical concepts. They include terms such as 'parliament', 'constitution', 'civil war', 'revolution' and so on. I shall call these historical abstractions, although one might not identify many of the terms as exclusively historical. Many of the terms might be very complicated. For example, terms such as 'capitalism' or 'socialism' have a range of connected and related abstractions attached to them.

The third type of word he calls 'weasel words'. These are ordinary English words that appear to be simple and straightforward, but the way they are used, indicates a deeper historical concept. He uses the term 'won' in the sentence "In the end Parliament won (the civil war)" to illustrate this idea. This appears to be a simply understood word and many a teacher would not stop to investigate this word in the classroom. However, 'won' could mean a range of different things and Gunning proceeds to give three possible meanings. The important thing to notice about weasel words is that they appear to be simple words and yet occur throughout a discussion of any part of history.

The fourth type of concept I have taken from the HMI view of concepts.[43] The HMI distinguishes between historical 'concepts' and 'ideas'. The distinction is not discriminating enough (it does not define clearly enough the above three types of concept), but it does provide a usable idea. What I have called 'historical abstractions' above the HMI calls 'ideas'. 'Concepts' in the HMI view relate to those concepts that are specifically related to history, for example, cause and effect, continuity and change, evidence, anachronism, chronology, and the like. I shall call these historical processes as they are the key ideas history is aimed at investigating. These concepts are not exclusive to history, although history is particularly well suited to teaching many of them.

There is also a close relationship between the concepts of history and the content of history. Many of the concepts can only be developed in the mind of the child through an appreciation of the idea in its historical context. The concept 'revolution' grows in meaning as the Industrial Revolution conveys the idea of industrial change

and development, as a study of the French Revolution introduces the ideas upon which the modern liberal democratic state is founded, as the Russian Revolution conveys the idea of class conflict and as an examination of the technological and communications revolution conveys ideas of development and progress. Concepts are important criteria for the selection of the content of a history curriculum.

Perhaps the above typology develops artificial distinctions between these concepts, and indeed the practice of the classroom might make such distinctions difficult to maintain. Nevertheless, it is important that a curriculum is based on a firm understanding of the different types of concept and that it is clear what is meant by the term.

The skills of history

Given the problems with a content-based approach to history, the skills of history need greater emphasis. Both the HSRC study and the conferences recognised this, but neither addressed the question systematically or in any real depth. In order to focus on the skills of history more, the process of historical writing needs more careful scrutiny.

Historical judgements should be more tentative as history is the product of a historian who has his/her own ideas, values, beliefs and assumptions about him/herself, the past and the audience for whom s/he writes. The actual process of writing must be opened to much more vigorous enquiry. School-level history should be seen in this light, as is academic history. Children need to be taught that "it is the heart of liberty to allow several historical traditions to co-exist ...", and that the story of history is the product of debate and discussion and is limited by the available evidence, so that its conclusions should be treated with a healthy dose of scepticism and doubt.[44] Burke believes that the true value of history will be uncovered in this way:

> ...whatever group you take as the hero of your epic – bourgeoisie or proletariat, or the blacks or womanhood – the result is always mystification. A history constructed around heroes and villains makes it impossible to understand how the past happened as it did. The value of the study of history is surely that it reminds us of awkward truths, such as the truth that not every one on our side – whatever that side is – is necessarily good or intelligent, and that not everyone on the other side is necessarily bad or stupid. We need to place ourselves in historical context, just as we need to place the Romantic historians and Tacitus in historical context. That means that we ought to spend some time looking at our own prejudices.[45]

What skills are involved? There are different ways of typifying historical skills. The model developed by Bloom and his associates differentiates between the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.[46] This is a useful distinction to make although the psychomotor domain is not particularly relevant to history. Their taxonomy, however, tends to be too vague as it is developed as a theoretical model. They need to be more specifically applied to history, and indeed many scholars have done just

that.[47] Such taxonomies indicate that history can be used to teach particular intellectual skills, such as critical reading, analysis, synthesis, detection of bias, etc. It is also useful in teaching certain values and attitudes; that is, for developing the affective domain of the child. Perhaps it is not altogether accurate to call these 'skills', but as they deal with the child's ability to interact and understand the world around him/her, to make judgements about that world, and to help inform his/her decisions within that world, it is still appropriate to look at them as historical skills.[48]

It is this role of history that opens it to the most criticism and to the most abuse. The uncritical teaching of values and attitudes can lead to uncritical socialisation, that is, indoctrination. A content-led curriculum can more easily be used for this purpose because it fails to expose the value assumptions of the content chosen. The result is a so-called 'objective' rendering of facts without a discussion of the ideology, philosophy, values or attitudes upon which that particular interpretation is based. This is dangerous, because it teaches values, while claiming not to. It is also intellectually dishonest. The teaching of values and attitudes happens, whether or not they are specified, because history is not neutral and never can be. Teaching must stress the tentative nature of history and historical judgements. The curriculum must be based on an intellectual honesty that specifies the affective aims it intends to attain and then proceeds to reach them, while imparting intellectual skills that give the child the ability to dissect, examine, pick and choose, reject, or internalise the values and attitudes being tossed about in his/her classroom. As Slater comments:

> [History] not only helps us to understand the identity of our communities, cultures, nations, by knowing something of their past, but also enables our loyalties to them to be moderated by informed and responsible scepticism ... It cannot guarantee tolerance, though it can give it some intellectual weapons. It cannot keep open closed minds, although it may, sometimes, leave a nagging grain of doubt in them. Historical thinking is *primarily* mind-opening not socializing.[49]

Having outlined the kind of conditions within which attitudes and values can be taught, perhaps it would be useful to examine some of these in a little more detail – in both personal and societal terms.

Tosh maintains that a sense of history is essential for understanding one's personal identity.[50] At an individual level, every human being needs to understand him or herself in the context of his or her past. A knowledge of our family roots, our past, is essential for our sense of identity. Likewise we continually judge the world around us and our relationship to it in the light of experience; that is, in the light of past events. Our own values and principles are formed by our reading of the past and our interpretation of various historical figures or situations. Lee calls this exposure to other experience through a study of history, "vicarious experience".[51] Supposedly, this exposure to other experiences helps to develop our own experience and deepen our understanding of life.

History can help us understand our society. An honest history of our society and country gives us a window through which to view the current economic, political, social, cultural and other concerns of our society. A critical view of our past, one that exposes the warts as much as the beauty spots, empowers us to be critical judges of the present policies and concerns of those that wield the most influence and power. It enables us to try and avoid past mistakes and look for lessons in past achievements. It can help in developing tolerance of other people (a necessary ingredient in a diverse society such as ours), in detecting bias, prejudice or indoctrination, and can give us the ideas and courage necessary to change that which is the antithesis of such ideas and values.

In conclusion, perhaps a word needs to be said about the relationship between skills and content. Critics of 'history as product' in the UK argue for a skills- or process-led curriculum. They suggest a syllabus constructed around a set of skills, which could be formulated as a set of objectives to be taught. This model forms the basis of the 'new history' developed through the Schools History Project and aimed at encouraging children to practise history, to discover for themselves, and to construct their own version of past events. This approach, in turn, also came under critical scrutiny. Critically focusing on particular events in the past means sacrificing a sense of the interconnectedness of those events and an overall view of human development. Focusing on specific events makes it more difficult to cover large areas of content in history and so a sense of chronology is sometimes sacrificed. Students might be developing sound intellectual skills, but are not coming to terms with history as the story of humanity. Slater argues, however, that the approach is still useful:

> A greater emphasis on skills and conceptual understanding has meant, in my view, gains in depth and in intellectual demands at the expense of breadth ... Young people using their reasons as well as memories, ... developing disciplined imaginations, doing field work, visiting museums, reading documents and books, all contribute to the excitement and richness of history. But, of course, it is not cost-free in terms of content coverage.[52]

Perhaps we can note one lesson from the debate in the UK: the skills approach and the content approach are not mutually exclusive but have a dialectical relationship. In South Africa we need to construct a curriculum that covers content appropriate to our schools, together with the skills needed to develop an intellectual capacity that is able to appreciate that content critically.

Organizing historical skills in the curriculum

There have been three main influences in theorizing on how skills should be organized in the curriculum: Piaget, Bruner, and Bloom and his associates. Piaget's classification of abstract thinking into his fourth developmental stage of formal operational thinking has led a number of writers to conclude that abstract historical

thinking is not possible under the age of 16.[53] Garvey and Krug argue that this has resulted in the chronological sequencing of historical ideas:

> The understanding of the past, the development of concepts such as historical causality, and the awakening of a controlled historical imagination was left to the senior secondary forms. Critical understanding was the objective of undergraduate college studies, while research was usually restricted to the post-graduate years.[54]

As Hodgkinson comments, to assume "that the average child is incapable of abstract thought in history until the age of 16 is not only defeatist but also a self-fulfilling prophecy".[55] He therefore advises against a rigid application of Piaget's stages of learning.

Jerome Bruner's notion of the spiral curriculum embodies his opposition to the idea of subjects as bodies of knowledge that must be passed on from teacher to learner:

> ... the main concern of a learner should be to learn what Bruner calls the 'structures of subjects', i.e. the characteristic concepts, skills, and mode of enquiry of a given subject. This, in turn, leads on to the idea that the central goal of a learner who is 'doing' history is to learn the characteristic procedures of a professional historian and to master the central concepts of the historical discipline like 'evidence', 'source' and the notion of the tentative, provisional, nature of historical judgements.[56]

Bruner further believes that the spiral curriculum can build upon these ideas and procedures from a very young age and develop in complexity as the child grows up. He claims that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development".[57]

The third main influence has been from the behavioral objective school of curriculum theory. Bloom and his associates have developed the idea that skills can be clearly identified, classified and organized into a hierarchical order from the less to the more difficult. The difficulty with such a model is that some historical skills and ideas might not fit neatly into Bloom's affective, cognitive or psychomotor domains. For example the historical skill of empathy involves a number of cognitive abilities as well as some affective skills.

In developing a curriculum, these ideas would have to be carefully scrutinized, in conjunction with other elements of the curriculum planning process. Perhaps the best way of organizing the curriculum is to combine the Brunerian idea of a curriculum that embodies the essential characteristics of the historian's craft and develops in complexity as the child him/herself develops, with Bloom's idea of specifying the skills to be attained at different levels of schooling.

The process of curriculum construction

One of the key weaknesses with the discussion of the history curriculum in South Africa is that until now it has not been rooted in the debate concerning the whole curriculum. The history curriculum is only a part of the overall curriculum, which

latter needs to be planned before the former is decided upon. It is unnecessary to wait for more clarity concerning the overall curriculum before embarking on a history curriculum, but the history debate needs to keep abreast of developments in the broader debate. This has been difficult to date, as discussions around the curriculum are only really getting started now, but in future as a new curriculum unfolds the history debate will become sharper as the parameters are more clearly defined by the broader curriculum.

Related to this point is the need for a fresh approach to the debate. It has tended to focus narrowly on the ideology and content of history. These issues are crucial, but they are not the only issues that need to be addressed in the curriculum. We need a professional approach – not a detached approach – but one that follows accepted curriculum procedures and comes up with a curriculum that is the result of sound analysis and based on sound theoretical principles of curriculum design. Such a model is suggested in the next section.

What then will be the future direction of curriculum planning? Vadi argues that just as a new constitution is to be the result of national negotiations, so, too, will a new history curriculum:

> ... curriculum development must involve all the major participants before one starts the process of scientific investigation. Who are the major players in the education context? All the education departments – those in the homelands and the tricameral parliament – can be on one side of the table. But then, on the other side, the mass formations of the democratic movement must have equal representation.[58]

Can the process of curriculum development be negotiated the way a national constitution can? Vadi seems to suggest that the process of curriculum construction happens in a vacuum, that those with different ideas will come to a table and will then trade ideas and suggestions so that accommodation can be reached. Many of the ideas currently circulating cannot accommodate one another – they are mutually exclusive. This 'negotiation approach' is a problematic conception of the process in curriculum construction. Curriculum planning is rooted in a particular reality. The analysis of that reality will throw up certain principles that must serve as the basis of a curriculum. I have suggested at the beginning of this article what those principles are likely to be, given the current state of the debate. These principles are more representative of the reality of society as a whole and reflective of the democratic will of the vast majority in society. There does need to be a representative structure which embarks on scientific procedures. I would argue that those procedures would come up with similar principles to those mentioned earlier in this article, but, because of their scientific nature, would be unable to unify some mutually exclusive beliefs, and would have to exclude certain ideas or approaches. For example, if such a committee, drawing upon the idea of identifying elements from a common culture, identified non-racialism, democracy and some of the other principles discussed previously, these would contradict the idea of a community-oriented curriculum as proposed by the HSRC investigation.

A model of curriculum planning

In the early 1990s a fundamental conceptual question underlying the debate between the state and the progressive movement concerning a new curriculum was the question of the type of curriculum model that should be adopted. This continues to be an issue, despite changes in the position of the state as a result of the democratic elections of 1994.

There are essentially two approaches to the question of curriculum construction. The first approach is reflected in the CUMSA proposals which are based on the view that the process of curriculum planning is essentially an unproblematical and technical process. This conception of curriculum construction has had various names, although it is commonly described as the behavioural objectives model. In South Africa it is accompanied by content-laden syllabi which teachers uncritically accept as received knowledge and pass on to students who tend to accept it uncritically (although much of the instability in African education in recent years has been due to widescale rejection of the content of the apartheid curriculum by the students themselves). The teacher in this model is a technician carrying out the orders and intentions of the curriculum framer.

The second approach to curriculum planning maintains that the first fails to understand the real nature of curriculum. Many writers see the curriculum as ideological practice. Phillip Jackson sees the "hidden curriculum" as the most important curriculum at school because it teaches values such as punctuality, regimentation and acceptance of and obedience to authority, all of which are essential values for a worker to have on the production line of a capitalist enterprise.[59] Bowles and Gintis describe this as a correspondence between the school and society in that the essential role of the school is to prepare students for their designated place in the social relations of production. They do not discuss the curriculum specifically but their critique of the ideology upon which schooling in America is based implies that the curriculum is one means of disseminating the dominant ideology.[60] Michael Young sees the selection of knowledge for the curriculum as essentially a form of social control, because those who choose what knowledge to teach are in essence exercising power over others.[61] Skilbeck, however, argues that schools can anticipate social change and seek to influence it by adopting a reconstructionist conception of education.[62] Lawton examines the reconstructionist role of the curriculum, seeing the curriculum as a means of helping society to develop according to principles and values desired by the members of that society:

> ... some kind of reconstructionist approach would seem to be necessary; reconstructionist ideology assumes that education can be used not simply for the benefit of individuals but also to improve an imperfect society. A reconstructionist curriculum will be a common curriculum based on a selection from the culture of a society.[63]

Apple and Taxel see curriculum control as essentially the exercise of power. They criticise the behavioural objectives model as unethical because it uses behaviour modification aimed at getting students to conform to the social roles determined by the curriculum planner. They go on to say:

> ... curriculum is a much more complicated undertaking, one which is as concerned with engaging in ethically correct and socially responsible activities and outcomes as it is with getting knowledge across to students. Yet something else needs to be accented. At its very heart, curriculum deals with power...power in that not everyone's knowledge is taught...power because schools are fundamentally important sorting and selecting devices for the larger society ... [and power] as different groups both within and outside the school jockey for positions to have more power over the school curriculum.[64]

In this second approach, the curriculum is essentially problematic, and open to many different influences, and therefore curriculum planning is seen as a dynamic process, always open to change and dependent on different forces and influences. The process of the planning itself becomes a focus of analysis.

Basson's description of the two approaches to curriculum is useful. The first he calls Rational Curriculum Planning (RCP), the second approach he calls Process Curriculum Planning (PCP):

> The first tends to assume knowledge to be unproblematic. It is selected by experts outside the school context, is packaged like a commodity, and disseminated to teachers who manage it in seeking to change pupil behaviour in pre-specified ways. The second assumes knowledge to be problematic. It needs to be consciously constructed by teacher-pupil participation in the ongoing curriculum activities which specify the milieu in which pupils may discover regularities which structure a subject.[65]

These two conceptions of curriculum then suggest two different models of developing the curriculum. RCP suggests a curriculum decided on at a high administrative level and handed down to schools to implement – the current practice in South Africa. PCP suggests a school-based model in which the teacher, in response to the needs and questions of the learner, develops an appropriate curriculum, which is mediated to some extent by other local interest groups such as the parent community of the school.[66] The model to be chosen will be determined by the structures of decision-making within the education system. Principle 1 (specified earlier on in this article) insists on democratic decision-making structures. Applying this to the question of curriculum development, it seems that a school-based model of curriculum development is preferable to the imposition of some form of nationally-dictated curriculum. Such a model will deliver power over the curriculum to those involved in its dissemination. The teachers, in conjunction with the various interest groups, would determine the curriculum to be taught.

There are a number of problems with an overly decentralized model. The most important ones relate to the skills level of the teacher and the availability of resources for the design of new instructional materials. The NEPI report captures this accurately:

> Centralisation of curriculum decision-making and development may seem to be a viable strategy when teachers' skills are low; however, it may help to perpetuate low skills. Decentralisation, on the other hand, may encourage the development of teacher professionalism and 'ownership' of the curriculum but it would require greater teacher support to implement equitably.[67]

The NEPI investigation examines three possible options in curriculum decision-making: highly centralized, highly decentralized and a combination between the two.[68] Basson argues that the two models (RCP and PCP) are not mutually exclusive because they address different curricular needs. He argues in favour of balancing the curriculum where there is a commitment to achieving change in student behaviour in accordance with "desirable ends".[69] This idea is compatible with Lawton's idea of the curriculum being a "selection from the culture".[70] He details a number of characteristics of culture which are present in any human group that constitutes itself as a society.[71] He argues that the members of that society can develop a common idea about what features of that culture should be passed on through the education system to the future generations of the society. All characteristics should be covered and there should be ongoing evaluation so that a mismatch does not occur between what is selected and what is taught. This leads to a common curriculum which is based on a common selection from the culture. In his conception schools will still be responsible for detailed curriculum planning, in accordance with the particular needs and conditions of the learners in a particular environment.

With this conception the makings of a possible model begin to emerge. Given the need for the curriculum to reflect the principles discussed above, coupled with the need for the development of skills amongst teachers and a lack of resources, a common curriculum based on an agreed selection from a post-apartheid culture can be adopted. This could constitute a core curriculum which would be followed by all schools. This could be fairly detailed in conception, giving very clear guidelines to implementors of what is expected, almost like a behavioural objectives model. Supported by good textbooks, it could provide the necessary security teachers will need in a situation of profound change. The core could be supplemented with some form of extra modules (revision or enrichment). This conception could correspond well with the type of administrative decision-making decided upon. The core could be decided upon at a national level, while the revision or enrichment modules could be decided upon at a lower level of government such as in a province or even at a municipal level. As the skills level (including self-confidence) of teachers increases through progressive INSET programmes, and more resources become available, more and more teachers could become part of the curriculum planning process. This could lead to more decentralisation with the percentage of the curriculum constituting the core being slowly decreased, as the optional modules increase. As a new unified culture develops, overcoming the divisiveness of apartheid ideas, so too will the conception of a common curriculum grow. With such a process,

decentralisation will be able to proceed apace, increasing democratisation, as there would be a convergence of ideas of what constituted a common selection from the culture.

CONCLUSION

The debate on a new history curriculum in South Africa is in its infancy. However, as this article has attempted to show, the debate has raised some important issues concerning a new history curriculum:

* History is under threat. Debate and negotiations concerning a new curriculum need to attend not only to the preservation of history at secondary school level, but also to the status of history in the curriculum. Perhaps research needs to be undertaken to demonstrate how educationally useful it is, even in comparison to 'high value' subjects like mathematics and science.
* History has an important social use, especially in a society as divided as South Africa. The discipline is particularly useful for education for citizenship. Care must be taken in defining what is meant by the term 'citizenship' as it is open to abuse. The concept of citizenship education, aimed at developing competent citizens able to be critical about social affairs and to participate in those affairs, is useful in thinking about content, skills and concepts to be included in a new history curriculum.
* With the changes taking place in society it is also clear that the history curriculum will need to reflect more accurately the new South African realities. This means a more Africanist perspective but not an African nationalist history that merely replaces an Afrikaner nationalist history. The content of a new history curriculum could rest on the three pillars of national, African and world history.
* The relationship between the content, concepts and skills of history needs careful scrutiny.
* The process of curriculum planning has come under scrutiny again, with an added caution. Curriculum planning cannot be the subject of negotiation. It is a scientific process, aimed at developing principles of curriculum construction from a range of sources and processes, paramount among them being a thorough social or situational analysis.
* The model of curriculum development adopted must take cognisance of the current conditions in education with a vision and strategy to move towards a more inclusive, and effective curriculum development model.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For a full discussion of this see S. Lowry, "An Analysis of the Secondary School History Curriculum in South Africa: Some Signposts for the Future" (M.A. dissertation, University of London, 1993), Chapter 2.
2. *Ibid.*, chapter 3.
3. *Ibid.*, chapter 4.
4. I have distilled these first four principles from an examination of: CHED (Committee of Heads of Education Departments), *A Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa* (Pretoria: Department of National Education, 1991); NEPI (National Education Policy Investigation), *Curriculum: Report of the NEPI Curriculum Research Group* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press & National Education Co-ordinating Committee, 1992); ANC, *A Policy Framework for Education and Training: A Draft Discussion Paper.* (Johannesburg: Education Department, African National Congress, 1993).
5. HSRC, "Report of the Work Committee" in *The Teaching of History in the RSA* – Education Research Programme No 27 (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992), 1-2.
6. *Ibid.*, 4.
7. HEG (The History Education Group), *History Matters: Debates about a New History Curriculum for South Africa* (Cape Town: Heinemann-Centaur, 1993), 25.
8. HSRC, 5.
9. *Ibid.*, 5.
10. *Ibid.*, 12.
11. *Ibid.*, 16-17.
12. *Ibid.*, 9.
13. *Ibid.*, 10.
14. *Ibid.*, 9.
15. *Ibid.*, 6-7.
16. *Ibid.*, 10-11.
17. HEG.
18. *Ibid.*, 1.
19. T. Haydn, "History Reprieved", *Teaching History* (January 1992): 17-20.
20. J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History, Second Edition.* (London: Longman Group, 1991), 1-2.
21. M. Ferro, *The Use and Abuse of History: Or How the Past is Taught.* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 236.
22. *Ibid.*, 238.
23. K. Jenkins and P. Brickley, "Always Historicise: Unintended Opportunities in National Curriculum History", *Teaching History*, 62 (January 1991): 11.
24. HSRC, 3.
25. HEG, 45.
26. *Ibid.*, 47.
27. *Ibid.*, 47.
28. *Ibid.*, 49.
29. *Ibid.*, 46.
30. *Ibid.*, 46.
31. *Ibid.*, 46.
32. *Ibid.*, 45.
33. *Ibid.*, 48.

34. HEG, 46.
35. *Ibid.*, 45.
36. *Ibid,D., 46.*
37. C. Kros and I. Vadi, "Towards a 'New' History Curriculum – Reform or Reconceptualisation?" Mimeograph prepared for publication in N. Taylor (ed.), *Inventing Knowledge: Struggles in Curriculum Construction* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1992), 15.
38. *Ibid,* 13-18.
39. A. Porter, "Impoverished Concepts of Citizenship in the Debate on the National Curriculum" (Abridged version of paper delivered at Education for Citizenship Conference, University of London, Institute of Education, November 1991), 4.
40. *Ibid.*, 14.
41. *Ibid.*, 12.
42. D. Gunning, *The Teaching of History* (London: Croom Helm, 1978).
43. HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectorate), *History in the Primary and Secondary Years: An HMI View* (London: Department of Education and Science, 1985), 14.
44. Ferro, 238.
45. P. Burke, "People's History or Total History", in R. Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 8.
46. B. Bloom, D. Krathwohl and B. Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook II: Affective Domain* (London: Longman Group Ltd, 1964).
47. See for example the taxonomies of historical skills developed by Gunning; HMI; J. Chaffer and L. Taylor, *History and the History Teacher* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1975); J. Coltham and J. Fines, *Educational Objectives for the Study of History: A Suggested Framework* (London: The Teaching of History series, No 35, The Historical Association, 1971); V. Crinnion, "Some Problems and Principles of Sixth-Form History" in C. Portal (ed.), *The History Curriculum for Teachers* (Lewes, East Sussex: The Falmer Press, 1987); B. Garvey and M. Krug, *Models of History Teaching in the Secondary School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); C. Smallbone, "Extending the Principles of Schools Council History Across the Early Secondary Years" in C. Portal (ed.), *The History Curriculum for Teachers* (Lewes, East Sussex: The Falmer Press, 1987).
48. See Lowry for a possible model of both cognitive and affective skills.
49. J. Slater, *The Politics of History Teaching: A Humanity Dehumanized?* (London: Institute of Education, University of London, 1989), 16.
50. Tosh, 1.
51. P. Lee, "Why Learn History?" in A. Dickinson, P. Lee and P. Rogers (eds.), *Learning History* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1984), 11.
52. Slater, 4-5.
53. As quoted in T. Haydn, "Attitudes to the Place and Function of History in the School Curriculum" (M.Ed. dissertation, University of Manchester, 1989), 63.
54. Garvey and Krug, 10-11.
55. K. Hodgkinson, *Designing a History Syllabus* (London: Information Leaflet 6, The Historical Association), 6.
56. As discussed in Gunning, 12.
57. As quoted in Garvey and Krug, 12.
58. HEG, 25.
59. P. Jackson, *Life in Classrooms* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968).
60. S. Bowles and G. Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976).

61. M. Young (ed.), *Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education* (London: Collier MacMillan, 1971).
62. M. Skilbeck, "The School and Cultural Development", in M. Golby, J. Greenwald and R. West (eds.), *Curriculum Design* (London: Croom Helm, 1975).
63. D. Lawton, *Curriculum Studies and Educational Planning* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983), 13.
64. M. Apple and J. Taxel, "Power and Curriculum Content" in C. Grant (ed.), *Preparing for Reflective Teaching* (Allen & Bacon, 1984), 124-125).
65. R. Basson, "Two Conceptions of Curriculum Design", *Perspectives in Education*, 4, 3 (1982): 150.
66. Of course, it is not as simple as this. One can have a school-based model of curriculum development which uses a behavioural objectives model to specify the content of the curriculum.
67. NEPI, 25.
68. *Ibid.*, 80.
69. Basson, 151.
70. Lawton, 13.
71. *Ibid.*, 24-39.

Is Education the Making Mind Full, or is it the Making Mind Strong? Reflections on the 1994 History Workshop Teachers' Conference

CYNTHIA KROS
Department of History, University of the Witwatersrand, Private Bag 3, Wits 2050

INTRODUCTION

Half a century ago and well before the official advent of Bantu Education, teacher Nkomo wrote to his professional association's journal to complain about the prevalence of rote-learning in 'native' schools. The quotation which forms part of the title of this paper is a rhetorical question which Mr Nkomo used in that letter.[1] 'Native' education's susceptibility to rote-learning had already been remarked upon unfavourably by the majority report of the Native Economic Commission (1932), for which some unpalatable remedies had been suggested.[2] Behind these lay assumptions that rote-learning was ineffectual, failing to assist Africans in learning how to maintain the 'reserves' or to perform appropriately in the social hierarchy. Ironically, Mr Nkomo derived some of his inspiration for challenging the methodology in 'native' schools from the author of Bantu Education, WWM Eiselen, who was Chief Inspector of Native Education in the Transvaal at the time, and who was distressed by its manifold inadequacies.[3] Nkomo's choice of a pedagogical model should caution us against embracing any apparently progressive methodologies without examining their origins and contexts thoroughly.

Nevertheless, Nkomo's letter, written so long ago, has a pertinent and colourful critique of rote-learning. Without the benefit of the sophisticated politics of knowledge literature published in recent years, he was able to see that his colleagues were possessed by "... a mistaken idea of the dictum 'Knowledge is power'". Knowledge, he reflected, had become synonymous with the dictation and memorisation of teachers' notes, so that the teachers, he wrote, throwing in an ineffably 1930s metaphor, acted towards their pupils as if they were inflating a 'motor tube'.[4]

Nkomo's personal experience suggested to him that any teacher who dared to proceed without notes would be angrily challenged by disapproving colleagues. One of the points I want to make in the course of this report is that when we dismiss rote-learning because we do not believe that it makes 'the mind strong', we fail to hear the clamour that has persisted, despite all sorts of epistemological revelations

and putative advances in political consciousness, from those teachers who have an investment in content regurgitation. "We are encouraged in our pappegaai (parrot) work," said one of the teachers at the History Workshop Teachers' Conference this year and her comment generated a rueful, almost self-deprecatory laughter from the audience. There are many teachers who still hold fast to what Nkomo claimed was "a mistaken idea of the dictum 'Knowledge is power'", but we have little understanding of what it is that sustains this enduring obduracy.

This report is not a comprehensive report of the History Workshop Teachers' Conference entitled 'Teaching Democracy in a Diverse Classroom', which took place in May 1994, but it attempts to catch hold of some of the ideas and challenges offered by the extremely accomplished speakers and their interlocutors – the teachers. Speakers' contributions are not discussed in order of their appearance on the programme, since I am attempting to draw out themes that only became apparent in the course of the conference and were not part of our original organisational blueprint. Speakers were asked to draw on their own fields of expertise to talk about issues related to the current high school history curriculum which provided some opportunity for exploring concepts of democracy.

All of the speakers referred to their own teaching experiences at tertiary level. I cannot remember Teachers' Conference speakers ever consciously reflecting on the reactions of their students in university classrooms before. In previous years they have positioned themselves within the academic debates rather than behind the rostrum. They also all grappled from the front of Senate House 6, in what was an incongruously mundane setting after the euphoria of April, with explaining change. "History is about the study of processes that give rise to events", said political studies lecturer Stephen Louw. Every presentation raised important issues about not only the teaching but also the writing of history. Unfortunately, the teachers in the audience did not always recognise that the academics were talking about the same processes that they themselves are engaged in. Behind the university regalia and the language of 'students' and 'professors' and 'lecture theatres' we are all *teaching* and the problems that confront us are essentially the same.

MODIFYING PREJUDICES?

John Wright: precolonial democracy?

John Wright, the first speaker, set out to show the diversity and the range of development that characterised precolonial African societies. Before addressing the content of his paper, he described some of the 'stereotypes' and 'prejudices'[5] first year students bring to his course at the University of Natal. Black students tend to imagine Africa in the days before the white settlers as idyllic and, no doubt, perfectly democratic, whereas white students think of precolonial Africa as a barren

landscape peopled by barbarians. Wright suggested allowing students to bring their 'prejudices' out into the open and then seeking, through a critical presentation of the course material, to 'modify' these 'prejudices'.

He emphasised the themes of process and change and the need to ask 'why?'. His clear and characteristically precise presentation forced the audience to follow the dynamic, interrogative pattern he traced. The strength of Wright's approach is highlighted if one compares it to the older attempts of another extremely skilled historian, Neil Parsons, to explain to high school students how "the African kingdoms grew up".[6] Somehow, despite all Parsons' insight, his account is static and he forecloses on students' possible answers by providing 'Economic Reasons', 'Social Reasons' and 'Political Reasons' in the same cut and dried formula that has alienated children from history for decades.

Wright also spoke about the capacity of 'evidence' to modify the 'prejudices' that students bring to class. It was a pity that we did not have an opportunity to explore this issue in greater detail as we had planned to do. I think that John Wright simplified the issue. Evidence is actually incapable of standing on its own, as we all know in theory. It depends for its life, in the first instance, on the historian turning it into evidence. In the electric atmosphere of the Mfecane colloquium held at the University of the Witwatersrand in September 1992, Norman Etherington took South African historians to task for their failure to grapple with the problems of evidence, which had been dramatically demonstrated by confrontations between Hamilton, Eldredge and Cobbing. Some of his opponents felt that Cobbing and his students dismissed evidence that did not suit the Cobbing case for slavery in Southern Africa too easily, or that they were selective about what they believed from sources that they otherwise repudiated as too biased.[7]

In my own work, I have confronted the problem of evidence head-on. I desperately wanted JEM Malepe, president of the Transvaal Teachers Association (TATA) in the mid-1940s, to be a Location toady, who had tried to turn TATA away from radical politics towards an appreciation of choral music. I had a smattering of Sapire[8] that gave me a rough impression of the political factions in Brakpan Location where Malepe lived and worked, one short article from TATA's journal *The Good Shepherd*, that claimed Malepe's election had been managed by a 'clique' on the East Rand, and a string of angry letters to the editor berating him for giving so many column inches to eisteddfods instead of to teachers' meagre salaries. But was this enough to convict Malepe of accommodationist politics and from there to link him to a core of Location teachers within TATA who welcomed Eiselen's pre-Bantu Education policies?

A more celebrated case is that of Jeff Peires' presentation of Governor Sir George Grey in a chapter of his book on the Xhosa cattle-killing, entitled 'Crooked Like a Snake' – an epithet supposedly applied to Grey by natives of a country where there were no snakes![9] Through a brilliantly seductive style, Peires builds up

a portrait of Grey as paranoid and probably addicted to opium. Peires admits that this latter assertion is based on a single, indirect source:

> Grey's advice to a subordinate in New Zealand, 'Whenever you feel downhearted in your work, a little medicine would always set you right'[Gorst (1908) p. 226]. The rest is conjecture, based on Grey's clearly erratic behaviour.[10]

All professionals and students who have attempted independent historical research work have probably experienced the moments of excruciating self-doubt captured by novelist Barbara Raskin in the menopausal confessions of *Hot Flashes*. Raskin's principal character, now a tenured professor at Columbia, is reminiscing about writing up her Ph.D. dissertation:

> Worst of all, I discovered that most of my raw data didn't necessarily substantiate the theory I began to develop about female rites of passage in the Brazilian Amazon Mundurucu tribe ... I had to juggle the data to fit the concepts.[11]

Despite what I have said above, I do not think that our best historians, among whom I would include Peires, do 'juggle the data' very often in the disingenuous way that Raskin describes. But the interplay between 'concepts' and 'data' is complex. The 'facts' are not 'out there floating', as one of the high school students interviewed by Holt expressed it.[12] That is precisely why it was so difficult to adjudicate between Cobbing and Hamilton – the sources do not declare themselves unambiguously to historians. Peires' footnote admission to conjecture in itself encourages his readers and students to think about the nature of evidence and what criteria it ought to satisfy. How much of it, from what kinds of sources, do we need before we convert George Grey from the benevolent Governor of school text-books to Peires' drug-riddled monster? Most of the history text-books that have attempted to be progressive tell pupils in several clipped sentences about different categories of evidence (oral, documentary, primary and secondary and so on) in the introduction, but purge all traces of evidence from the rest of the text, referring elusively to what 'some people/historians say' – often in the interest of writing simply for non-mother tongue speakers. Some, such as the primary school series by Frances Graves, go a step beyond the inflating the 'motor tube' approach by presenting evidence as part of the chapter content, but tend to use chunks of evidence as comprehension tests from which pupils should derive rather staid, closed answers. Holt argues that it is this method of teaching history which makes its students feel as if it is 'sealed off from the lives of ordinary people'.[13]

Wright also touched on the nature of historical concepts and definitions. For example, he explained why the term 'tribe' is both offensive and imprecise. It fails to capture the dynamism and the diversity of the precolonial societies he was addressing. Perhaps we need to give more careful thought to other concepts that we use so often as abbreviations – revolution, industrialisation, unification and so on – a theme the next speaker Stephen Louw was to pick up on.

Many of us remember the frustration of being stuck in the Apartheid 'is/is not functional to Capital' debate. Every article or paper you wrote had to refer to 'capital accumulation' and the 'crisis in reproduction' (of labour power). Thousands of senior essays and post-graduate dissertations must have been clogged up by these phrases and they prevented their authors from asking either straightforward or more interesting questions. One of my cherished memories is of Professor Bonner interrupting a tedious and half-hearted discussion on early radical literature in our Honours class. 'Well,' he said, 'what happened in 1886?' We all laughed and immediately abandoned the jargon that had prevented us from making an obvious connection – and from really understanding what the radical writers were arguing.

Stephen Louw: democracy and revolution in Europe

The second speaker, Stephen Louw, also spoke about the 'ideological barriers' with which his students arrive in first year, as well as their pervasive historical ignorance. On the whole, he found that black students tended to support uncritically what they thought of as communism, while white students were not prepared to concede that there had been anything positive about the socialist experiment. Louw commented that it was easier to break down these barriers than it was to shift the 'prejudices' that students held about South African history. Louw presented two explanatory models to the audience to account for the crumbling of the communist regimes in eastern Europe and, in particular, the ex-Soviet Union.

First he delineated the 'totalitarian model' – distinguishing between an authoritarian and a totalitarian society. He stressed features such as ideology, degree of popular support, Terror and, borrowing a neologism from Solzhenitsyn, the existence of an 'egocrat' at the pinnacle of totalitarian society. Louw demonstrated that this model was a product of a particular stage of the Cold War, suggesting that academic orthodoxies are often intimately associated with dominant institutional or ideological outlooks. While the model captured some of the quintessential features of the pre-1989 societies in east-central Europe and of the Nazi regime, it was too static and represented what might only have been one stage of totalitarian society.

How do we account for the tousle-headed party goers from east Berlin who suddenly popped over the rapidly disintegrating Wall in November 1989, or of the extinction of Ceaucescu's seemingly immortal Orwellian regime over Christmas of that same year? The totalitarian model, with its emphasis on total oppression and random Terror, cannot explain why these things became possible in 1989. Drawing on the work of David Lane, Louw then presented what he called the structural functionalist model, in which the impact of industrialisation on social relations is provided for. In the course of sketching this model, Louw stressed the importance of changing generational perceptions – the first generation after the Russian Revolution was impressed by the rapid pace of industrialisation which turned their village 'into a megacity in a hurry', and they were (not universally of course)

inclined to be loyal to the system which had produced such a miraculous change. But, in succeeding generations, as the pace slackened and industrialisation failed to deliver consumer goods in sufficient quantity or of quality, the system itself came under fire.

Louw also drew attention to the way women were treated in Soviet society, which did not recognise, once socialism had been instituted, that women had special interests. Women's difficulties and the injustices they suffered were supposed to have been extinguished along with the capitalism which socialist theory held responsible for them. But women in Soviet society continued to bear the double or triple burden of work outside the home, housework and child-care. What happened to the society, Louw asked, when women started having fewer children? The impact on the economy was profound and new strategies had to be considered.

Whereas Wright talked about 'evidence', Louw, a political scientist, presented us with models and then asked us to consider the comparable explanatory force of each one. Like Wright, Louw also asked us to think about change and what makes change possible. He suggested that we might consider this in relation to South Africa too, as well as warning against conflating an oppositional, civil society movement with democracy. A month later, on the evening of June 16, we had the SABC's romanticised version of the Soweto students' uprising played to the soundtrack of 'Sarafina'. The SABC has accepted the new line that Soweto 1976 led to April 1994. But, at the time, the students' revolt seemed like a dismal failure and a terrible waste of life. What exactly were the changes that were set in motion on that bitter winter's day twenty years ago?

'THE BALL IS INTO OUR COURT': TEACHERS' RESPONSES

The immediate response from the teachers who spoke out during the panel discussion was guilt. Were they to blame, they asked, for first year university students' inadequate preparation for their academic courses? The first respondent from the floor – the one who referred to 'pappegaai work' (see above) – recognised that rote-learning was a poor foundation for a university education. 'We just hit it (communism) on top,' she said, reflecting on the difference between current classroom practices and Louw's multi-dimensional presentation.

In a few graphic sentences, this speaker summed up the central problem of the curriculum. 'The DET (examination) papers are too shallow,' she said and therefore, she intimated, are incapable of delivering a new generation of critical thinkers. It is not the racism or the Eurocentricism of the material that limits its students to a narrow and distorted perspective of history, but its insistence on superficiality and a single interpretation. As one speaker recognised, the totalitarian model is the one that is embedded in the syllabus, but how to reveal it for what it is – an attempt to explain the omnipotence of a particular kind of society while it still appeared to be omnipotent – before 1989?

The academics, responding to the teachers' observations and questions, believed they were at what they would have once called a 'new conjuncture'. "The power structures have shifted", said one, trying to point out that the teachers had an opportunity to change that they should not allow to elude them. The teachers reached out for this opportunity very much more tentatively. "The ball is into our court", mused one of them – a case for some anxiety rather than sheer exhilaration.

Perhaps they had imbibed some of the more implicit messages of the presentations which they had just heard – what is the nature of this transition we are witnessing? How close *are* we to democracy? Beyond the rhetoric of the struggle, where is the new locus of power?

"We have to disentangle ourselves from this Apartheid syllabus", urged one of the teachers, pointing out through his choice of words that it is necessary for teachers to extricate themselves from something that until now has exerted great power over them. The Apartheid syllabus remains like a cloying web which it is extremely difficult to destroy. 'Who are we?' the teachers, curtailed, governed and defined by Apartheid for so long, asked of each other.

IS DEMOCRACY GOOD FOR AFRICA?

Tom Lodge: democracy and decolonisation in Africa

Tom Lodge addressed the question of post-colonial authoritarianism in Africa. Lodge, as Louw had done, drew attention to changing 'academic fashions' and their relationship to broader ideologies. In the 1960s the development of authoritarianism in Africa was not denounced by the Africanist scholars, who were inclined to argue that perhaps democracy was not good for Africa.[14] Political rivalries might exacerbate other tensions, Africa could not afford the 'distractions of democracy' and a strong, charismatic leader was likely to be more effective than a multi-party state. But after the 1960s, as Africa's developmental problems appeared to grow larger instead of being resolved, analysts began to think that the absence of democracy was a problem. Indeed, argued Lodge, "academic analysis was turned on its head" and now scholars thought that the lack of development could be ascribed to the lack of democracy.

But what could explain Africa's disinclination, on the whole, for democracy? As far as British Africa was concerned, many anti-colonial scholars blamed the autocratic nature of imperialism, arguing that democratic institutions came too late in the day, modern elites had been undermined by the colonial powers' preference for 'traditional' rulers and the administration of Native legal codes, and uneven economic development had accentuated tribal and ethnic divisions. Sometimes the policies of African nationalism which required complete loyalty were also held to be culpable for the development of authoritarianism once the British had left.

Lodge argued for the value of a comparative perspective which would show that many of these arguments were unfounded or too simplistic. The most obvious question to ask is: did all ex-British colonies turn authoritarian after independence? – to which the answer is patently negative. Democratic institutions, Lodge argued, often thrived outside of Africa. Why? If one compares two countries which were poor in terms of *per capita* income after independence, such as Malaya and Ghana, one is able to observe many structural similarities.

But in Africa the British government had acted paternally, deliberately limiting the 'scope of social change' because it did not want complexity and expense from its African colonies. European metropolitan business ventures were restricted, modernisation and education were limited. As a result no really substantial middle or working classes developed. Botswana, Lodge suggested, with a viable and economically independent class outside the state apparatuses, was an exception. Elsewhere, there was no grouping in society capable of challenging the state. Lodge argued for an understanding of the selective impact of British colonialism on Africa. The extent of military force and bureaucratisation, he claimed, has been exaggerated. Ideology was far more important than was the army in legitimating colonial rule. Even though democratic institutions may have been short lived during the colonial period, the elements of representative government that did exist created durable expectations of what good government should be, which were later to provide a basis for criticising one-party states.

Owen Kalinga: democracy and post colonial Africa

Owen Kalinga offered two case studies of Kenya and Tanzania after independence, showing how far their rulers had strayed from their original intentions to create a just and more equitable society and suggesting some of the reasons for this breach of faith. Kalinga interspersed his account with recollections of the changes that had come over his own home country of Malawi.

But, like the other speakers, Kalinga began by reflecting on his teaching experiences – this time at the University of the Western Cape. One day one of his students had thought fit to inform him that his course on post-colonial Africa was not very popular. The reason was that he 'criticised' African heroes. Exactly the same issue was brought to the fore by Julia Wells at the Mfecane Colloquium of September 1992. African students often react angrily when they feel that the teacher is taking away Shaka or Kenyatta from the pantheon of heroes. And there was a feeling of tension among the audience at this conference during Lodge's paper when people felt that Lodge was about to criticise Africans for bringing authoritarianism on themselves. Kalinga had explained to his students that there was a difference between 'criticism' and 'critical thinking'. But did this, I wonder, appease the students? Which leads us on to a larger and very difficult question: What might some people forfeit by critical thinking?

As Kalinga proceeded to describe 'the trials and tribulations' of democracy, I could imagine some of his students, who heard only the superficial account of the corruptibility of African politicians, feeling very offended and perhaps wounded by Kalinga's apparent betrayal of their Africanism. Of course Kalinga's analysis was really carefully located within the structures of post-colonial societies, in which the gulf between poor and rich yawns ever wider and politics is expected to deliver material goods to a network of clients bound to their patron by ethnic or clan loyalties. He described the rise of the bureaucracy, boosted by foreign aid in Tanzania and the bloating of presidential power in Kenya, and the consequent subversion of their respective ideologies of justice and equitable re-distribution. It would have been useful to hear Kalinga and Lodge in dialogue over the army, which, Kalinga argued, has risen to great prominence in post-colonial societies and whose intervention in politics, once begun, can never be checked.

The subtlety of these two presentations made them hard to respond to immediately. As one of the teachers remarked rather angrily, it was hard to digest them without any prior preparation. I think he felt that he had been caught with his defences down, although I pointed out that it was not possible, given our own limited resources, to provide the kind of services he expected. The questions tended to ramble around a bit, looking, I suspect for a place in which uneasiness could be expressed. Perhaps the real question people wanted to ask was: Are you saying that Africans are to blame? This, I think, is part of the rote-learning reflex – the good guys and the bad guys of the totalitarian model that was supposed to prepare us to fight the Cold War. War psychosis is one strand of the Apartheid web from which we are going to have to extricate ourselves.

'ADD WOMEN AND STIR'

Cherryl Walker: gender and democracy

Walker's paper was a case study of white women's enfranchisement in South Africa in the early part of the present century, in which she demonstrated how 'the politics of gender' had been compromised by those of Segregation. The burden of her argument was that Hertzog adopted the cause of white female suffrage to strengthen his assault on the Cape African franchise and the suffragists found it impossible to resist the colour limitations imposed by the Nationalists on the extension of the franchise to women.

But Walker managed to insert into her fascinating narrative some very important general issues, whose implications the audience was not slow to pick up, as question time revealed. She pointed out, quite severely, that 'gender' does not mean 'women'. 'Gender', she maintained, is a 'relational concept'. Women are currently defined in opposition to men – as what men are not. Definitions of women and men

and of appropriate relations between them are socially constructed and are not inherent genetic distinctions or reflexes. These may vary across societies and over time. Thus, in her written work, Walker opposes the decorative, passive ideal woman of the Victorian drawing room in metropolitan England to the robust and stoic pioneer that the Boer woman in nineteenth century frontier societies was expected to be.[15]

Walker also asked very challenging questions about how we use gender as a 'category of analysis'. In academic circles this has been a theoretical issue for some time and scholars such as Bozzoli have tackled the relationship of gender to other analytical categories, principally race and class, at a high level of abstraction.[16] Recently, Bozzoli's portraits of the *Women of Phokeng* have suggested very powerfully how gender 'shapes peoples' lives', to use Walker's phraseology.[17] Bonner's work[18] has also ferreted out the particular imperatives that governed female migrancy from Basutoland in the 1930s and 1940s. Bonner goes on to assess the impact that this great influx of country women, liberated from oppressive patriarchal rural society, but rendered vulnerable to urban privations and the depredations of criminals which he has brought so vividly to life elsewhere,[19] had on township life. But, despite the promise of the title of his 1988 article, Bonner has little to say about 'family life' – beyond reducing the inflated statistics of broken marriages compiled by contemporary social reformers.

As readers we stand very much on the outside, looking in at 'the progression of fathers' described by one of the more sensitive writers of the period, whose work Bonner quotes. There is nothing that quite evokes the life of unremitting hardship and suffering the way some of the interviews quoted by Suzanne Gordon do, in her portrait series on South African servants.[20] Johanna Molutsi, explaining how she was prevented, against her better judgement, from marrying out of community of property and the power her husband is consequently able to exercise over her, says:

> He kills me, I don't die. I don't sleep. Worries. Worries. I've got nerves. I can't understand why God led me to this.[21]

But then, a little later she adds, with a flash of unconquerable spirit: 'When I die he'll (her husband) just get my body, he won't catch my soul.' Molutsi based her triumphant prediction on her loyalty to Christian teachings, especially valuable because they gave her immunity against her spouse's enlistment of sorcery against her. What do we know of the strategies and subterfuges in which women have engaged to make sure that, whatever unspeakable things happened to their bodies, their souls escaped unscathed?

Bonner and Glazer[22] are brilliant when they are describing the constitution and activities and the self-image of male gangs and they have given serious consideration as to how women could be included in their accounts. But, in spite of their sensitivity to this issue, they cannot escape representing women in towns merely as an aggravating factor both to the municipal authorities and to gang

rivalry. Perhaps this is the result of what Walker called at the conference, to everyone's amusement: the 'add women and stir' principle. You take the standard historical batter – the spectacular growth of secondary industry and the impoverishment of the 'reserves'/Protectorates, straitened by the racial legislation and ideology of Segregation; add a generous measureful of African (male) proletariat and then sprinkle a few 'currants' into the mixture - for example, country women going to town.[23]

Full credit must go to Bonner for noting that there are different mixtures and for accounting for them in his characteristically rigorous and systematic way. He seems in his 1988 article to be about to go further than the 'add women and stir' principle, but then he falters. His originality strains at the bounds of conventional understandings of secondary industrialisation, family structure and juvenile delinquency. The standard metaphors also get in his way so that he reduces people to 'streams' and 'floods' when they enter the towns in conspicuous numbers.

There is a need to go further – further than simply adding 'gender' (which most often in this case *does* mean 'women') to broaden the picture or for more interesting detail.[24] We might think how to take up Bonner's idea of using gender to explain particular forms of African urbanisation and the evolution of state strategies.

Norval, while commending Bozzoli's study *Women of Phokeng* for its many fine features, notes that there is a tension nonetheless in the work because Bozzoli sets up a range of 'social forces' as immutable constraints on her subjects' individual autonomy.[25] Norval is not arguing that the women of Phokeng had untrammelled freedom to make their own choices. As I read her, she is arguing for a more considered and variable study of the relationship between their social context and their changing individual status. It would be an interesting experiment to begin an academic paper on the 1940s without acknowledging the spectacular advance of manufacturing, gold's waning importance and the impoverishment of the 'reserves'.

Perhaps, as Rosalind Miles has so entertainingly demonstrated in her *Women's History of the World*, the tale would be told quite differently if it were told from the vantage point of women – tone, landmarks, turning points and explanatory factors might all be very different.[26] The film 'Rapunzel Let Down Your Hair' (1978) directed by three women,[27] recently shown at the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival in Johannesburg, also has some interesting pointers for us. In the re-tellings of the traditional fairy tale of the beautiful girl who was locked up in a tower by a wicked witch and finally rescued by an itinerant prince, several perspectives are offered. From the women's point of view, the themes are: the medieval assault on female sources of power and expertise; the perversion of mother-daughter relationships; incest/forbidden forms of female sexuality; female ageing and single parenthood, fraught but relieved by female solidarity, and the free expression connoted by the phrase 'Let Your Hair Down' – a pun on the traditional refrain of the original fairy tale. From the male point of view – caricatured by the film's directors – the single theme, and the one that has made its way into modern versions of the fairy tale, is

the heroic rescue of the entrapped maiden. This Rapunzel certainly seems to be imprisoned by the bleak 'social forces' of public housing, the tower block having replaced the dainty fairy tale tower and the busy body social worker standing in for the wicked witch.

Leaving Rapunzel to return to the more sober forms of representation open to social scientists, I conclude that Walker's general points encourage us to explore the way in which "dominant social theories exclude women's experience".[28] With reference to race, Jonathan Jansen has made a similar point, urging us to think about how to extend the range of available critical concepts.[29] Walker herself might add that we also need to think about how gender modifies existing concepts and understandings of terminology. The example she alluded to her in her presentation was liberalism. What was a 'Cape liberal' if one of its champions, John X Merriman, could make disparaging analogies between 'women's counsel' and 'brandy'? Some of the limitations of South African liberalism have been acknowledged by its apologists,[30] but there has been no recognition of its accommodation of patriarchal prejudice. How might this alter our understanding of its influence and of the deep entrenchment of sexism in our society?

Walker's presentation came at the end of a long and intellectually demanding day, but she held the audience's attention. During question time, many of the questions were directed to her. One of the men teachers pointed out that, although he was a graduate of the University of the Witwatersrand with a history major, he had never heard of the women's suffrage movement in South Africa before. The overall impression was that even a few 'currants' would be better than the genderless (ungendered?) batter most of the audience had been required to work with. The teachers who spoke out were interested, both in the story of the women's suffrage and the wider issues it raised about our society, both then and now.

CONCLUSIONS

Like Mr Nkomo in 1939 we probably all favour 'making the mind strong' over 'making the mind full' but how one does that is an extremely difficult matter. The conference exposed some fundamental questions about the teaching and writing of history which are usually washed over by our daily activities and obligations. We were asked to think about the issues of evidence and historical concepts and of analytical categories, particularly gender, anew. The merits of explanatory models and comparative perspectives were suggested to us by various speakers. Many of the teachers found the conference intellectually stimulating and were eager to make a collective effort to reform the teaching of history. Immediately after the conference the first steps were taken to form a history society. But there was also some understandable anxiety from teachers now that the 'ball has come into their court' and the Apartheid syllabus has still not been eliminated. For the first time in the history of the Teachers' Conferences, there was an awkward barrier between the

academics and the teachers even though they were addressing the same enterprise. The teachers appeared to think that the academics were making demands of them, instead of recognising that they wanted to talk about the activity that binds them, namely teaching.

We know very little about teachers beyond some suggestive historical work by Jonathan Hyslop[31] and Peter Lekgoathi.[32] The former has suggested the structural ambivalence of the teaching profession in relation to the rest of the community, and the latter some of the complexities of the cleavages that have been present within the teaching profession. How do teachers conceive of themselves – from what sources do they derive their professional identities – what has the impact of Bantu Education or Christian National Education or any of the other variants been on teachers – what is it going to take for them to be able to 'disentangle' themselves from the old curricula? If we forbid rote-learning what will happen – will it seem to the teachers that we are adopting the same attitude as a Transvaal Education Department policy document issued in 1993, ironically intended to foster more open ended methodologies, which warned with a certain bureaucratic lack of subtlety: 'the teacher is to guard against talking too much'?[33]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Teachers' Conference was organised by a committee of the History Workshop composed of: Sue Krige and Cynthia Kros; Peter Lekgoathi and Ismail Vadi, with the indispensable technical assistance of Madhu Kanji.

I would like to thank Shelley Greybe for talking through some of the issues of the paper with me, and Sue Krige for her invaluable insights, especially in connection with students' 'prejudices'.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. W. Nkomo, letter to the editor, *The Good Shepherd* xii, 23 (1939): 7.
2. For a summary of the Native Economic Commission Report that brings out these details see: D. Rheinallt Jones and A. Saffery in *Bantu Studies*, viii (1993): 235-255 and in *Bantu Studies*, vol viii, (1934): 61-193.
3. See the TED Reports for the years ended 1936 to 1947 for the period of Eiselen's tenure and his impressions of Native Education. Especially interesting is his outburst of 1941 in *TED Report for the Year Ended 1941*, (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1946), TP no 1 - 1946.
4. See T. Holt, *Thinking Historically: Narrative, Imagination and Understanding*. (College Board, 1990). Holt addresses the problems of high school history teachers who are oppressed by "... the tyranny of coverage and the enormous pressure to convey a set of basic 'facts'", p.1.
5. I have conscientiously put the word 'prejudices' inside quotation marks every time it occurs because I want to draw attention to our own prejudices. How do we allow for students' expression of their own way of seeing the world if we dismiss their ideas as 'prejudices' right away? See below for further discussion of this point.

6. N. Bhebe *et al*, *Junior Certificate History of Southern Africa Book 1: Southern African Societies Before the Scramble*. (Oxford: Heinemann, 1979), 32-4.
7. This point is based on my personal recollection. Also see, C. Saunders, *Writing History: South Africa's Urban Past and Other Essays*. (Pretoria: HSRC, 1992), 81-4.
8. H. Sapire, "African Political Organisations in Brakpan in the 1950s" in P. Bonner, P. Delius and D. Posel (eds.), *Apartheid's Genesis 1935-1962*. (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1993), 252-274.
9. J. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7*. (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1989), 45-77.
10. Peires, footnote 7, p.74.
11. B. Raskin, *Hot Flashes* (London, New York, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Bantam, 1987).
12. Holt, 1990, 2.
13. *Ibid.*, 2.
14. Owen Kalinga also drew attention to this line of reasoning.
15. C. Walker, "The Women's Suffrage Movement: The Politics of Gender, Race and Class" in C. Walker (ed.), *Women and Gender in South Africa to 1945*. (Cape Town: David Philip, 1989), 313-345, 317.
16. B. Bozzoli, "Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 9, 2 (1983).
17. B. Bozzoli, *Women of Phokeng:Consciousness, Life Strategy and Migrancy in South Africa 1900-1983*. (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1993).
18. P. Bonner, 'Family, Crime and Political Consciousness on the East Rand', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, (1988): 14.
19. P. Bonner. 'The Russians on the Reef, 1947-1957: Urbanisation, Gang Warfare and Ethnic Mobilisation' in P. Bonner *et al*, 1993, 160-194.
20. S. Gordon, *A Talent for Tomorrow: Life Stories of South African Servants*. (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1985).
21. Gordon, 1985, 44.
22. C. Glazer, "'When are they going to fight?' Tsotsis, Youth Politics and the PAC' in P. Bonner *et al* 1993, pp.296-315.
23. Sue Krige and I could not resist adding a representative female proletarian figure to the cover of the resource pack which we produced for the History Workshop Teachers' Conference, to stand alongside the male migrant figure which has been the History Workshop's logo since its establishment. A gesture which we felt to be slightly irreverent!
24. C. Saunders, 1992, 77-8. For some reason Saunders' prescription is unconvincing – as if he does not recognise how profoundly the inclusion of gender as a category of analysis could change our understanding of South African history. For an unusual treatment of gender in which 'gender' is not the equivalent of 'women', but is applied to the production of ruling class masculinity, see the very interesting work of R. Morell, for example, "Masculinity and the White Boys' Boarding Schools of Natal, 1880-1930", *Perspectives in Education*, 15, 1, (1993/94): 27-52. Also, J. Hyslop, "White Working Class Women and the making of Apartheid: 'Purified' Afrikaner Nationalists' Agitation for 'Mixed Marriages' 1934-1939", *Journal of African History* (forthcoming). Also the work of K. Eales.
25. A. Norval, "*Women of Phokeng*", *Perspectives in Education*, 15, 1 (1993/94): 171-178.
26. R. Miles, *The Women's History of the World*. (London: Paladin, 1988). Thus one of the examples Miles uses is: how do we explain right hand dominance in the universal population? Women carried their babies on the left side to calm them with their own heart-beats, leaving their right hands free.
27. Susan Shapiro, Esther Ronay, Francine Winham, 'Rapunzel Let Down Your Hair', UK 1978.

28. A. McLennan, "'And Women too will play their Part': The Relevance of Gender to Equal Education in South Africa", *Perspectives in Education*, 15, 1 (1993/94): 53-68, 59.
29. J. Jansen, *Knowledge and Power in South Africa: Critical Perspectives across the Disciplines.* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1991), 3-52.
30. J. Butler, R. Elphick and D. Welsh (eds.), *Democratic Liberalism in South Africa: Its History and Prospect.* (Middletown, USA, Cape Town and Johannesburg: Wesleyan University Press and David Philip, 1987).
31. J. Hyslop, "Social Conflicts over African Education in South Africa from the 1940s to 1976", Ph.D., University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1990.
32. S. Lekgoathi, "African Teachers' Associations of the Transvaal: From Militant Challenge to Moderate Protest, 1950-1976", BA Honours Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1991.
33. Department of Education and Culture Administration, Transvaal Education Department. *Subject Policy for History Primary Schools.* 1993, p.7.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 147-162

A Survey of Johannesburg English Teachers' Opinions on a Language Policy for Education in a Post-Apartheid South Africa

NAZIRA CACHALIA
St. Barnabas College, PO Box 88188, Newclare, Johannesburg 2112

INTRODUCTION

South Africa is currently undergoing a transition from the old race-based order to a new order, of uncertain contour. Although the terms 'non-racialism' and 'democracy' are sharply contested, they constitute the defining criteria of the emerging society. It is in this context of social change and social aspiration that nation-building, language rights and, in particular, language policy in education, have become central concerns.

Before the Government of National Unity was voted into power, a range of actors put forth possible options for a language policy for a future South Africa. These included the African National Congress (ANC), the Centre for Development Studies (CDS), the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) and the National Language Project (NLP). There were also university based structures and language associations such as the South African Applied Linguistic Association (SAALA), and the recently established Language in Contact and Conflict in Africa (LiCCA) project of the University of Pretoria. One of the most comprehensive contributions on the language front, however, came from the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI). Initiated and led by the NECC, NEPI undertook to expolore policy options from the perspective of grassroots needs and opinions. Proposals from the NEPI Language Group have guided the most recent ANC document on the implementation of a language policy in education.

Implicit in the various debates on a new language policy for a post-apartheid South Africa is the notion that language is centrally tied to issues of transformation. It is hoped that an appropriately constructed language policy should include the ideals such as unity and national reconstruction. Neville Alexander is a strong proponent of this idea that language has a vital role to play in the development of any future South African/Azanian national unity, because it is this unity, he believes, that apartheid had systematically denied and discouraged through its segregationist policies. The separate languages that had been actively encouraged and codified have made many see themselves as separate 'nations'. The object of the new democratic state will be to forge a new national culture, states Alexander.[1]

In this report my concern is to highlight language in the context of the nation-building debate. I begin the discussion with a description of the research sites and methodology. This is followed by a brief review of the nation-building debate in South Africa. In the third section I report on my findings and review the implications.

RESEARCH FOCUS

The aim of my research was to ascertain how a sample of Johannesburg teachers viewed the present language policy in education for a future South Africa. It further aimed to gather teachers' views on the role of language in the building of national unity, and to identify the possibilities and constraints in constructing an appropriate language policy in education.

Methodology

The core research for this report was conducted from March 1991 to September 1991. It was conducted by means of questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were administered to forty-six English subject teachers[2] covering a broad cross-section of schools in the greater Johannesburg area. Schools under the four main Departments, namely, the Transvaal Education Department (TED), the Department of Education and Training (DET), the House of Representatives (HOR), and the House of Delegates (HOD), including a street academy, and three Independent schools were chosen for this survey. It was hoped that the sample chosen would provide an opportunity to compare teachers' views across the education spectrum found in South Africa as well as across the racial divide. Out of the forty-six teachers surveyed, thirteen were from primary schools.

As teachers play a significant role in the reproduction of social relations via the education system,[3] it is important that we understand their attitude and opinions with regard to education, and in this instance language in education. Teachers are important actors in allowing particular languages to reproduce themselves in civil society. Schools are important sites in which language is made culturally dominant.

Any changes in the language policy in education will in the final instance come about by political means. However those organizations and institutions involved in the language policy debate agree that language planning initiatives from 'below', from non-party political structures, need to be given a voice so that policy in the final instance can be negotiated through some democratic consensus. Teachers, says Heugh,[4] are excellently placed to be able to contribute to any debate about language issues. This is because teachers, together with their students, have noted the devastating effects of a party political hold on language policy in education in South Africa during the last forty years.

While it is true that most teachers contribute ideologically to the hegemony of the bourgeoisie, in South Africa it is also true that many categories of teachers are oppressed in various ways by the bourgeoisie. Many teachers may be functionally organic intellectuals of the bourgeoisie, but structurally they are not members of the bourgeois class.[5] It is for this reason that much debate has centered around the class position of teachers. Teachers also form part of the wider practices in civil society, and are constituted as subjects of a particular historical conjuncture. They therefore occupy a "...plurality of subject positions that are embodied in a concrete inter-subjective encounter".[6]

Teachers as subjects construct meaning and negotiate for its dominance. This is why their involvement in any future language policy is important.

A Gramscian conceptual framework, which views language as part of hegemonic activity in society, helped to direct and organize the empirical enquiry. Categories that linked language to nation building, policy transformations and individual interests were made possible by the Gramscian notion of language as social process. The fact that hegemony is a conflictual and contradictory process also allowed the empirical enquiry to hold together differences and tensions in teacher's views. Finally, the way in which language policies implicated particular forms of identity on micro and macro levels were facilitated by poststructuralists' contributions of linking external and internal linguistics.

LANGUAGE AND NATION-BUILDING

How the concept of national unity is understood in the many discourses found in the South African social formation is of crucial importance to any language policy debate.

The meanings of concepts like 'the nation' and 'ethnic group' have long been fiercely contested in South Africa, by both scholars and political actors, because of the colonial origins and racial form of South Africa's socio-economic order and its political institutions. The inauguration of a transition away from the race-based order has focused this ongoing debate on the concept of 'nation-building'. On the one hand, the wide currency now enjoyed by this concept indicates a degree of consensus that South Africans, potentially at least, constitute one nation; on the other, the diversity of meanings attached to the concept indicates deep differences on the nature of the emerging post-Apartheid order. This contestation of meanings of 'nation' points to the historical terrain on which conflicts in South Africa proliferate, and thus the way in which the different actors understand their place in the South African social formation.

In their book *From Apartheid to Nation Building*, Hermann Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer propose a "nation-building project"[7] based on "the genuine sharing of power",[8] which has as its goal "a transcendent South African nation-hood",[9] as an alternative to what they consider to be two predominant,

polarized conceptions of the Nation – the National Party's white-led multi-racial nation based on statutory group classification[10] and the ANC's conception of an "African-led non-racial nation which demands the elimination of all forms of politicized ethnicity".[11] They argue that in deeply-divided plural societies like South Africa, group conflicts have, in addition to a material, interest-based component, an equally important 'emotional', identity component as well.[12] Liberal individualism, of the American sort, that heralds individual rights and self-mobility cannot therefore provide the philosophical basis for nation-building in South Africa; nor can liberal democracy, represented by the British constitutional system, provide an institutional framework for the accommodation of the various groups in South Africa.[13] Successful nation-building in South Africa would require, they argue, institutions of a consociational type,[14] which accommodates the corporate-group interests[15] of the white community.

In his work on language and nation-building Neville Alexander[16] contests the 'sociological pluralism' assumed by Giliomee and Schlemmer to form the necessary basis of a nation-building project in South Africa:

> ...at this moment, building the nation means, among other things, fighting against racism and against ethnic divisions or ethnic consciousness. That is to say the promotion of non-racialism, anti-racism and anti-ethnicism or anti-tribalism is to a large extent the meaning of the phrase 'building the South African/Azanian nation'.[17]

He attacks the static 'Cartesian'[18] characterization of the African social structure as a community or rather many communities with separate, discrete cultures. He advances instead a universalist conception of an indivisible human culture which potentially embraces all individuals.[19] He concedes however that there are different 'traditions'[20] in South Africa. Nation-building is a process which combines "all positive and constructive elements in the different traditions that constitute South Africa".[21] A democratic language policy will play a crucial role in this constitutive process. Language, for Alexander, is more than a medium of communication. Language creates meanings and therefore different languages, by transmitting the same cultural content, can create solidarity.[22]

Pallo Jordan[23] shares with Alexander a concern for the divisive consequences of ethnic manipulation in the service of white political power. He locates the nation-building project within the context of the struggle for national liberation. South Africa, argues Jordan, is currently divided into two national blocs (composed of different classes) as a result of colonial conquest, and the racial ordering of its representatives institutions:

> 1910 thus entailed the formalization of a particular conception of the 'nation', which is reflective of the ideology of the dominant classes. In its pristine form it was projected as consisting of the white minority, with the Blacks an amorphous mass of colonial subjects under its tutelage.[24]

The struggle of the South African people is a struggle for self-determination, to be realized through the institutional framework of a non-racial state based on full adult suffrage.[25]

The process of national liberation through the establishment of democratic institutions, by dissolving the contradictions between the two antagonistic blocs, is simultaneously a process of nation building.[26] The concept of an inclusive political community of equal citizens implicit in Jordan's analysis does not necessarily exclude the legal recognition of diversity within civil society:

> The ANC recognizes that, owing to the diverse origins of the South African population, there are inevitably and will continue to be cultural expressions of this diversity – through the arts, in language, religious practice and other cultural usages the democratic state cannot, however, seek to legislate on such matters, any more than it should legislate on what football or tennis club a private individual should join ... Hence, we would give legal protection to those who wish to give expression to their cultural uniqueness, provided that this does not entail attempts to conscript others to such efforts against their will. We see no reason why diversity should be opposed to unity.[27]

Two notable aspects of Jordan's concept of nation-building are his emphasis on political process and his idea of an inclusive political community of equal adult citizens as a foundation of a common nationhood. While Aggrey Klaaste, *The Sowetan* editor, would probably not take issue with Jordan's political objectives, the concept of nation-building Klaaste developed in response to the 1984 township rebellion in his editorial column and several newspaper articles, reflects, in some ways reminiscent of Booker T. Washington, an awareness of the socially disruptive consequences of confrontations with state power and the limits of liberal legalism.

He therefore emphasizes the need for an accumulation of capital, skills and knowledge within the black community as a pre-requisite to political emancipation:

> Political kingdoms do not stand up on their own, pristine, exultant as a galvanizing abstraction. They are also not the result only of politicizing and rhetoric. Political kingdoms to be effective, lasting and particularly democratic, need all sorts of power structures to underpin them. They need a back-up of strong people who have clout economically, ... academically, who have strength to recognize the value of a free press, who have a spiritual or a religious foundation.[28]

Johan Degenaar shares many of the concerns of the contradictory approaches to nation building outlined above and yet agrees fully with none. For him, nationalism, an ideology which asserts a congruence of culture and state power,[29] is historically contingent, not a necessary way of defining the relationship between society and the state. He rejects the ideology of primodialism,[30] which naturalises group differences and the forms of state based ethnicity, as do all modern theories of nationalism, makes the sovereignty of the people absolute, submerges the individual citizen,[31] and suppresses cultural diversity. South Africa should therefore abandon "Jacobin" attempts to build a nation in favour of a project to create a democratic society based on common constitutional values.[32]

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Teachers' views on the present language policy in education

When teachers were asked whether there was a need for a new language policy for schools in a future South Africa, the following responses were recorded:

In favour	84.7%
Not in favour	10.9%
Uncertain	4.4%

Reasons provided for having a new policy were, firstly, that the present policy is shortsighted and outdated in that it does not take present needs into account. Here teachers were referring to the changing student population in many 'open' schools. Secondly, teachers referred to the particular bias in the present policy and felt that it does not cater for the needs of the respective communities. In this regard they strongly believed that the present policy was divisive and "discriminatory as it stands".

Many of the respondents agreed that the language policy implemented in African schools in particular had been detrimental to the development of a child's cognitive and creative skills. This response from a DET teacher makes the point:

> the content and form of the language curricula [sic] is developed to disempower African people. Pupils' creative side is not taken into cognizance, it is designed for communication purposes only and to perpetuate servitude.

A similar sentiment was expressed in this response from another DET teacher who stated:

> we have seen the effects of the apartheid language policy. DET schools have not been able to recover from the devastation.

Segregated schools which have been admitting black pupils have come to realize the problems these children have in coping with an English-only medium school. As one TED teacher indicated:

> there is a great failure rate among pupils whose mother-tongue is not English.

The 10,9% of respondents who held views contrary to the above came from Afrikaans medium schools. They felt that the policy was adequate, that children must be taught in the two official languages, and the other languages will "automatically fall into the second and third category of languages in a country".

The general impression gained from the responses was that the language policy presently at work in schools has done little that is positive educationally for those

students whose mother-tongue is not English. More importantly the present policy is not appropriate as it is not able to meet the changing needs of schools which are becoming multilingual. These are the very concerns that have occupied organizations like NEPI, NLP and LiCCA, who are debating ways of redressing the harm already done and finding a balance which will not compromise any linguistic community.

Teachers' views on the role of language in the building of national unity

> Language policy can become an instrument to unify our people instead of being an instrument of division ... We need to make a democratically conceived language policy an integral part of our programme for national unity and national liberation.[33]

> It shall be state policy to promote the growth of a single national identity and loyalty binding all South Africans. At the same time, the state shall recognize the linguistic and cultural diversity of the people and provide facilities for free linguistic and cultural development.[34]

The ANC and Neville Alexander have the perception that language can aid in the creation of national unity. On this and related questions, an overwhelming majority answered in the affirmative:

	Yes
a) Do we need to build national unity?	97.8%
b) Can language build national unity?	93.5%
c) Do you see teachers as key players in creating a unified nation?	93.5%

Surprisingly, even those teachers from Afrikaans-medium schools who had said that we do not need a new language policy answered 'yes' to the above questions. Although teachers supported the notion of 'language and nation building' they were cautious as to how they saw it working. Said one respondent:

> yes language can build national unity, but it can break it if forced on a people.

It was also felt that language could contribute towards this process provided it worked in conjunction with nation building, and that as a policy option or ideal, it is fully possible. One respondent observed that a common language can build unity because it can provide a 'norm' of meanings, but cautioned that this would not necessarily lead to consensus as often, the worst disagreements occur when people disagree over their interpretation of a meaning. This point was clearly illustrated in the section which analyzed the various debates around the concept of nation-building in a future South Africa, where it was clear that the outcome of the nation building exercise is depended on how the various political actors understand the concept 'nation'.

To sum up: Respondents agreed, firstly, that a common language was the key to forging a common identity between the various cultures that are present in South Africa; secondly, that effective communication was vital to build a nation; and thirdly, that if we can communicate comfortably in a language mutual to all, half the battle is won. This latter point is supported by Gramsci's contention that it is at least necessary to learn the national language properly if one is to function fully in that society. English was proposed as this common language, an issue which will be dealt with later. A common perception is that there is no real understanding of other cultures and therefore no sense of belonging to a common country. This tendency is once again illustrated in teachers' responses to the question of whether they thought the policy had worked against the development of various cultures in South Africa, when 71,7% of the respondents answered yes. Four of the dissenting respondents were from Afrikaans-medium schools, which could suggest that apartheid language policy aided in the development of the Afrikaner culture.

Possibilities and constraints

There seems to be consensus among the various academics and organizations that English be the *lingua franca* of a future South Africa. Reasons given are that English is an international language, a language of higher learning, that it can serve as the linking language among the various linguistic groups and, more important, that it is an already established language with many resources to offer. At the same time others have recognized English as an elite language which empowers those who have access to it and serves as a barrier to those who do not, particularly people living in the rural areas.

English was the emphatic choice in answer to the following questions, even though some respondents balanced this with other language choices.

Question	**Answer**	**%**
What language/s of instruction should be taught at school?	English	89.1
Should there be any one compulsory language as a medium of instruction at school?	English	89.1
Which language/s do you see as building national unity?	English	73.9
Do you think the acquisition of English will open ways for further educational, economic, and political opportunities?	Yes	100.0

The most commong reason given by teachers from across the education departments for the support of English was that it is an international language;

South Africa is seen as part of the international world. They also see it as a language which can provide access to education, politics, and the economic sector, i.e. to better employment, as this response clearly illustrates:

> English enjoys exceptional status in that it has international command. South Africa is a multilingual country, yet it seems inclined towards English which is an advantage in education, technology, politics and commerce.

A noticeable factor was that all teachers from DET schools motivated strongly for English to be the medium of instruction in schools and to be the national language, without qualifying their response by arguing for the importance of mother-tongue which teachers from the other departments did. This tendency was again noted when a teacher from the street academy asked her students, who are predominantly black, "which language/s should be the medium of instruction at school?"; all her students opted for English according to the teacher. They saw English as a hundred percent guarantee for success, and as the language of a future South Africa. Namibia's choice of English as the official language was based on similar reasons.

Both black teachers and students saw Bantu Education, with its emphasis on mother-tongue instruction, as a deliberate attempt by the apartheid authorities to deny them access to better job opportunities. The high failure rate of DET students was attributed to the fact that black pupils had to learn not only their mother-tongue but also both official languages. Pupils' difficulties were compounded by poor language teaching from inappropriately qualified teachers.[35]

A further common factor cited among teachers was that English was the language common to most South Africans, it is politically neutral and therefore could be the language which links people of different cultures. However, while English was accepted as the language which would build national unity, many teachers recognized the importance of the other languages spoken in South Africa. As one teacher stated, if English were the choice "it should not deny one's first language". Other languages must be accorded the respect and recognition they deserve.

Teachers agreed that where English is the medium of instruction, the language policy should be oriented towards the realities of South African life. Thus a language policy must cater for the needs of a multilingual society such as ours. For example, it should not disadvantage pupils when being admitted to open schools,. provision must be made 'for cultural differences' to ensure 'all minority groups are catered for'. In the final instance, noted one teacher, unity in education 'will mean the mixing of different cultures and standards in language proficiency'.

Once again this view is supported by the ANC:

> It should be policy to strive towards multilingualism so that the people of South Africa would have a better understanding of each other's languages and the cultural contributions they have made.

The implications of such a policy in schools will mean authorities will have to make pedagogical provisions for multilingual classes. A huge programme of retraining of teachers will be necessary, including teachers of other subjects who have no training in handling the language problem of teaching multilingual classes. In addition teachers themselves may need to develop a degree of bilingualism.

It is clear that the views expressed by teachers with regard to English as the medium of instruction in schools are instrumentally tied to the issues of access and mobility. While teachers are concerned not to disadvantage any one language group, they are equally concerned to make pupils proficient in the official language i.e. English, in order for them to function effectively 'outside' the school.

However, English as the official language and the universal medium of instruction would require the retraining of many Afrikaans (and African) language teachers. This would entail the directing of all resources and energies for the attainment of proficiency levels in the official language – as in the case of Namibia. At the same time teachers would also need to be trained in dealing with second language learners (L2). Educational material such as text books would also need to be sensitive to L2 learner needs.

All this brings us to another important issue and that is the question of mother-tongue instruction in schools. It is accepted by socio-linguists universally that mother-tongue instruction provides the most favourable conditions for learning. The United Nations charter on the rights of the child stipulates the right to mother-tongue instruction in primary and pre-primary school, and the UNESCO Report of 1951 on *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education* argued for mother-tongue instruction in the early years as part of the process of concept building and cultural absorption.[36]

With regard to mother-tongue instruction the teachers made the following comments:

* learning one's mother-tongue is necessary but knowing the official language was equally important;
* mother-tongue instruction is essential to retaining one's cultural heritage;
* it may be necessary to maintain a conspicuous balance because if English is emphasized it may undermine the need to know one's mother-tongue, whereas if more emphasis is put on the latter, it could create inherited problems. There is thus a need to create a common position which will aim at satisfying all communities, irrespective of extreme culturally inherited differences;
* more choice of languages should be available.

The issue of mother-tongue instruction at school raises the question of when the switch to English should be made. In DET schools the medium of instruction for black pupils from substandard A to standard two is the mother-tongue. One official language is introduced in substandard B, and in standard one the other official

language is introduced. From standard three onwards the medium of instruction becomes either the vernacular or an official language.

Most respondents (78,1%) felt that the switch should be made earlier. If at pre-school, the switch should be gradual. Most primary school respondents felt that the switch should be made in grade one/two or in standard one/two. 13,1% said it should be made in standard five. Some respondents felt that both the mother-tongue and English should be taught from the outset. One respondent felt that the child should be taught in the mother-tongue throughout.

When asked to cite the advantages or disadvantages of making a switch at an earlier age the responses were that the language which will be official should be taught as soon as possible. Teachers also felt that another language should be introduced when the aptitude of a child is at its greatest. One respondent expressed the concern that the transition from primary to secondary school was already difficult, without introducing a new language of instruction, and it was for this reason that the switch to another language should be made as early as possible.

The responses show that teachers seem to register more advantages to making a switch earlier. The evidence suggests that this is a more subjective opinion which may indicate that the issue of mother-tongue instruction and the acceptable age for a switch to another language is an area which teachers do not have very informed answers to. This is possibly an area which needs to be given more specialised thought, due to its importance in a child's educational development.

How possible is it to implement a new language policy at schools?

The table below illustrates the outcome of the responses to the question on whether teachers thought it possible to implement a new language policy at schools.

Possible	87%
Not possible	4.4%
Uncertain	8.6%

These figures indicate the level of consensus on this issue. However, some of the respondents said that it should be through planning and consultation, that it should be a gradual process, and that they see it as a long-term undertaking.

This view clearly supports the aims of the organizations mentioned in this report, who are all researching possible language options with the aim to democratize the process, in order to try and redress some of the historical blunders created by the present language policy.

In terms of the factors which would hamper the process of implementing a new language policy for schools, teachers cited a combination of factors:

Finance	73.9%
Lack of qualified teachers	82.6%
Lack of resourses	54.3%

A lack of finance and a lack of qualified teachers were the two major factors which teachers saw as a problem for the proper implementation of a language policy, as the above figures indicate. All DET teachers indicated a lack of resources as a problem in their responses. This is in keeping with the realities of apartheid education with its unequal educational and financial provisions for the different race groups.[37] It was also agreed upon by a large majority of the respondents (84,8%) that a new education system was needed to make a new language policy work. A single education department and a new political system were also mentioned.

Should all languages be given equal status?

A closely related issue to that of language policy in schools is the question of the legal status of languages in the country. The following points were made by teachers surveyed:

* A policy of unity in diversity should be adopted. People should feel free to choose the language they want to use, because if it is forced upon them there will be resistance. If a language is given inferior status then this is likely to create problems, as is the case in Canada and Belgium.
* Although all languages should be accorded equality we still need one language for things such as road signs, office forms, etc. Otherwise the logistics are overwhelming.
* We need to look at commonly used languages regionally, nationally, and internationally, before we can decide on the official language/s. Teachers felt that policy should not be prescriptive at this stage, but open to debate. Some teachers felt that at least one language should be compulsory, and the choice must be based on the main language in that area. This view seems to support Alexander's proposal of regional languages. Many teachers felt that

> The aquisition of an indigenous language is essential if we are preparing for a new South Africa.

In South Africa, however, teachers are not in a position for major expansion of the teaching of African languages, particularly to other language speakers. To remedy this far reaching changes will have to be made. Books will have to be commissioned or translated. It will take time to develop the necessary vocabulary in African languages and develop appropriate resources and methodologies for teachers. This may very well be both difficult and cost ineffective.

Since the time of this survey, official status at national level has been granted to eleven South African languages by the Interim Constitution (Act No 200 of 1993).[38] Provincial legislatures may declare any of the national languages to be official languages in their provinces, and differences among provincial languages are permissible.

CONCLUSION

What emerges from the responses and comments of the teachers in this survey is that language is socially constructed and contested. The political role of language is an important educational issue. Furthermore, the realization of language policies does involve teachers centrally.

There is a clear indication from the responses that the teachers surveyed seem to be aware of the problems encountered in education as a result of their subjective experience of teaching in these schools. The overall results showed that there are no significant differences in opinion between teachers from the various education departments including the four independent schools and the street academy. Teachers who have encountered second language learners share a similar consciousness with regard to the problems experienced.

All teachers showed some awareness of the limitations of the current language policy in education. The majority were certain that they wanted to see language policy changes as part of the wider processes of social transformation taking place in South Africa. Moreover there seemed to be a close correlation between the comments made by the teachers surveyed and by organizations such as NEPI, NLP, CDS language commission, LiCCA and the ANC at the time.

At the end of January 1995, less than a year after the elections of the new government, the new Education Ministry accepted a number of short-term syllabus changes in the various school subjects which were proposed by the National Education and Training Forum (NETF). The changes aim to deal with a number of contentious issues in a more balanced and constructive way especially with regard to racist and outdated history. However, it seems that the most significant changes is in respect of languages. All pupils, after passing the junior primary phases, would have to study at least two official languages, that of the medium of instruction and another chosen by the school community. The NETF sub-committee on languages proposed that there be a shift away from the strict application of rules in favour of spontaneous and creative use of language.[39] A further significant change has been the acceptance of language varieties, accent and speech patterns to apply especially to the teaching of English. This is in keeping with the Draft White Paper on Education and Training, in which there is a clause under "Right to Language and Culture" that states:

The Diversity of language and culture is acknowledged and protected, and conditions for their promotion shall be encouraged.[40]

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This report draws extensively from my M. Ed Research Report, written under the supervision of Nazir Carrim in the Department of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. I would like to thank him for all his assistance.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. N. Alexander, *Language Policy, and National Unity in South Africa/Azania.* (Cape Town: Buchu Books, 1989).
2. The focus on English teachers only, has its limitations in that these teachers have a vested interest in the future position of English. However, their views do afford us with an insight into their perceptions of teaching English to second language speakers and their willingness to consider changes in language policies.
3. For a more detailed discussion of this refer to S. Bowles and H. Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America.* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976).
4. K. Heugh, "Implications Now for a New Language Policy: A Case for Planning from Below", (Cape Town: National Language Project), 3.
5. This is taken up in more detail by M. Sarup, *Marxism, Structuralism, Education.* (London: The Falmer Press, London, 1984), 118. See also R. Connell, *Teachers' Work.* (Sydney: George Allen and Unwin,1985) and R. Hyman and R. Price, *The New Working Class? White Collar Workers and Their Organizations.* (London: Macmillan, 1948).
6. Y. Shalem. "Educated Labour: A Study of White English-Speaking Teachers in Secondary Government Schools on the Witwatersrand", Ph.D. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (1990).
7. H. Giliomee, and L. Schlemmer, *From Apartheid to Nation-Building.* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1989), 222.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*, 209.
11. *Ibid.*, 207.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, 224.
16. Alexander, *op. cit.*
17. *Ibid.*, 8.
18. N. Alexander, *Education and the Struggle for National Liberation in South Africa.* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1990), 78.
19. *Ibid.*, 76.
20. *Ibid.*, 77.
21. *Ibid.*, 77.
22. *Ibid.*, 80.

23. P. Jordan, "The South African Liberation Movement and the Making of a New Nation", in M. van Diepen (ed.), *The National Question in South Africa* (London: Zed Books, 1988).
24. *Ibid.*, 113.
25. *Ibid.*, 111.
26. *Ibid.*, 111.
27. *Ibid.*, 119.
28. A. Klaaste, *Sowetan*, 24/10/1988.
29. J. Degenaar, "Nations and Nationalism – The Myth of a South African Nation", IDASA Occasional Paper, No.40, 11.
30. *Ibid.*, 11.
31. *Ibid.*, 15.
32. *Ibid.*, 15.
33. Alexander, 5.
34. ANC Constitutional Guidelines.
35. See Race Relations Survey 1989/90 and also "Languages and Language Instruction", Human Sciences Research Council, Investigation into Education, Report of the Working Committee,1981.
36. Discussed in *Language Projects' Review*, 5, 2 (August 1990).
37. See Race Relations Survey, 1989/90. South African Institute for Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1990, for current education expenditure figures.
38. The eleven languages are Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu.
39. *The Citizen*, January 26, 1995.
40. Draft White Paper on Education and Training. Published in *Government Gazette*, 351, 15974 (September 1994): 24.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 163-162

The Politics of Specialized Education and Mainstreaming

SIGAMONEY NAICKER
Department of Educational Psychology, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535

> The excitement of special education lies in its potential to transform and revolutionize what happens in education for all children ... ultimately, however, the excitement and potential of special education lies in a concern to take the 'special' out of special education.[1]

Within the context of transformation and the refreshing changes taking place in South Africa, this report raises crucial issues in the area of specialized education by: (i) calling into question the construction of identities; (ii) arguing against the use of binarisms in specialized education with special reference to the so-called 'slow learner' or the 'learning disabled'; (iii) isolating 'LD theory' for close scrutiny because of the effects it could have on excluding children from the mainstream; and (iv) making a case for mainstreaming.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITIES IN SPECIALIZED EDUCATION

In current debates on specialized education there is a resounding silence on the implications of constructing identities through terms like the 'learning disabled' or the 'educably mentally retarded'. The tendency to speak in binarisms with total disregard for the victims whose identities are being constructed seems to be accepted practice. Genee Marks, citing Threadgold, writes:

> People with disabilities have always been constructed in terms of binarisms, irrespective of the intent of those who have done the constructing. To speak of disabilities is to acknowledge the existence of people without disabilities; to speak of the 'differently abled' is to contrast these people with the 'similarly abled'. In the early part of this century, the 'mentally deficient' were contrasted with the 'mentally sufficient', and later still, the 'mentally retarded' were compared with the 'mentally advanced' and the 'developmentally delayed' were contrasted with the 'developmentally proceeding according to schedule'.[2]

The uncritical way in which these categorizations have been relocated into the South African context is problematic. Given the acknowledged evil of apartheid, widespread protests, ideological contestations and so on, we special educationists run the risk of suffering from social amnesia. Whilst we undergo radical political changes that have implications for every aspect of our lives we still have not taken on board that prescription is tantamount to oppression. Paulo Friere is incisive here:

> One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed is prescription. Every prescription represents the imposition of one man's choice upon

> another, transforming the consciousness of the man prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber's consciousness. Thus, the behaviour of the oppressed is a prescribed behaviour, following as it does the guidelines of the oppressor.[3]

Decisions by non-disabled decision makers to construct and exclude large numbers of children from the mainstream are tantamount to victimization. Exclusion has a negative impact on their levels of confidence, motivation and attitudes. The prescriber's (non-disabled decision maker's) consciousness becomes so internalized after a period of time that it becomes hegemonic.

'APARTHEID' CONTINUES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION!

We have been through a prolonged struggle against exclusions. The ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training, under the rubric "Goals, Commitments and Tasks", refers to:

> The development of human potential, so that every person is able to contribute freely to society, advance common values, and increase socially useful wealth.[4]

Later in the same document, under the rubric "Special Education Needs" the policy proposal highlights: "The special case of the disabled learner".[5]

There is a major contradiction here. On the one hand, the document views every person as significant but in the same vein contradicts itself by citing the disabled learner as a special case. It would be useful to invoke an analogy between apartheid and discrimination against the disabled. How is it possible to contribute freely to society and advance common values when we speak in binarisms? Was it possible for blacks and whites to contribute freely to society and advance common values in the days of apartheid when blacks internalized the image of the white and adopted their guidelines? This had all sorts of implications with regard to how black people viewed themselves in relation to whites. The black reality set, which is well documented and one which will not be discussed here in much detail, was one which saw the black contribution to society as a meaningless and fruitless activity. The internalization of the image of the oppressor in that situation removed the possibilities of advancing common values. The disabled suffer a similar fate with regard to schooling. Hargreaves sums up the situation very well when he says the personality of the disabled is gripped by a sense of "powerlessness and helplessness".[6]

On the other hand, if we suppose that every individual has the capacity to contribute freely to society and advance common values then views on mainstreaming need fundamental restructuring. The point here is that human beings develop in interaction with one another in various ways. In schools today, netball, soccer and other teams are chosen to play against one another. In the process children learn that individuals have different skills and capacities. However, they learn to accept by sharing a lived reality that prepares them for the realities in

society later with regard to strengths and weaknesses. In a similar way children with differing academic abilities should share a similar type of lived reality in the classrooms of our country. A departure from this philosophy may prove disastrous for the fabric of the society that we intend building since such a substantial portion of our school population are constructed as 'slow learners'. As Sally Tomlinson writes, "to be categorised out of 'normal' education represents the ultimate in non-achievement in terms of ordinary educational goals".[7]

However, until we change our schooling system and the demands made on children, there is no way the majority of such children will be accommodated by the mainstream education system. Geoffrey Bookbinder provides an analogy that illustrates the conditions under which we can say that schools make unreasonable demands:

> Suppose that the primary aim of schools was to produce good basketball players. Tall children with their ability to jump higher than small children would be the elite. The smallest children would find it difficult, if not impossible, to compete successfully and teachers might express concern about their jumping difficulties. The reason for their jumping difficulties, however, is not that they are small. They can, in fact, jump quite easily. It is because they are being asked to jump as high as others much taller than themselves. It is the nature of the unreasonable demands that causes the difficulties – not the fact that they are smaller than their peers. There is too wide a gap between what they are able to do and what they are required to do.[8]

We have a national curriculum that marginalizes 40% of the school going population.[9] The content is pitched at a level that does not take on board the lived reality of thousands of children in this country. A modified schooling system should problematize the issues of cultural diversity, linguistic diversity, social factors that influence educability and attitudes towards diversified abilities.

Prior to concluding this aspect of the discussion it may be useful to digress a little from the 'slow learning constituency' to the politics attached to other categories of specialized education. There is a tendency for many to believe that by invoking the political and moral, scholarship is tainted. What is not noted is that "decisions about people's needs and abilities involve value-judgements and power-relations",[10] which may result in consequences never envisaged by specialised educationalists.

The experience of a 'cerebral-palsy' graduate from a local school illustrates clearly the point. This student gained admittance to a University and successfully completed her teaching qualification. When she applied to teach at the school she had graduated from, she was refused. Currently she is pursuing a B.Ed. degree since her options are very limited. Blatant discrimination has ensured that cerebral palsy becomes a personal trouble and not a public issue. Although this is not representative of what happens in such a broad area as specialized education it is time that we addressed the institutional form of discriminatory practices and disabilist images in all specialized education practices. Dessent's comments here can be useful for our transformation:

> In a democratic society, policy in this area must to some extent be a reflection of what the majority of people want – what values they hold and what compromises they are prepared to make. Any monolithic policy, unrelated to what the majority of people want and believe in, can have little real future.[11]

REVISITING THE CANON

This period of transformation is an opportune moment to bring about desirable and necessary change, since the major focus of the current government is to improve the lot of the disadvantaged in the reconstruction and development programme. Specialized Educationists could play a pivotal role in this process by departing from the traditional position of ownership of the 'slow learning' or 'learning disabled category'. There is an extensive body of knowledge which reveals that the majority of children labelled under these categories come from disadvantaged communities. Michael Apple makes some apt comments on this issue:

> ... the process of classification as it functions in educational research and practice is a moral and political fact, not a neutral helping act – it is the evidence that these labels are massively applied to the children of the poor and ethnic minorities much more so than the children of the more economically advantaged and politically powerful.[12]

South Africa has experienced a proliferation of remedial classes and remedial schools in certain departments. Is this practice going to be widespread in a unitary system? Remedial Education has its roots in 'learning disability theory' which is underpinned by biological reductionism. The fact that the theory has not been confirmed does not seem to deter people from seeking to implement it.[13] The concern is that, based on very shaky evidence, remedial education will be increasingly applied to poor and black children in the new South Africa since we have the conditions that could easily invoke this practice on a wide scale. It is imperative that we look at international studies during this period of transformation. Since this concept was unproblematically transplanted from North America we need to note whether the Learning Disability (LD) category has been useful in addressing the needs of children in that country. Gerald Coles writes of the American situation:

> Despite the middle-class bias, in recent years the LD label has been used much more broadly. Once the category was institutionally incorporated into the existing field of special education it began to be applied increasingly to minority and poor children as well.[14]

Unfortunately in South Africa many teachers and practitioners in the field continue to believe that learning disability theory is the answer to our problems. Many advocates of this theory fail to raise its very shaky roots. South African libraries have a glut of texts on Learning Disabilities which provide in most cases a definition, characteristics and how to deal with the child. Usually these definitions,

characteristics and prescriptions are accepted as absolute truths. Very little mention is made of the contestations.

This report attempts to reveal those weak foundations by appropriating the work of Gerald Coles who has made a major contribution to the field of Learning Disabilities in North America. For practical reasons I will look at three central issues in the LD debate. An in-depth critique of the LD thesis is not possible here although there is a substantial body of knowledge around this issue.

Firstly, the proliferation of Remedial Classes and Classes for Dyslexics in North America was largely the result of the work of Samuel T. Orton. Coles writes:

> Orton proposed that reading disabilities were caused by a child's failure to establish dominance for language in the left hemisphere of the brain. When reading, the disabled (or dyslexic) child's nerve impulses produce equal language records in both brain hemispheres, rather than predominantly in the language-dominant one. This neurological mixed dominance could cause perceptual confusion in spatial orientation and direction in reading and in a lack of prompt recognition of the differences between pairs of words which can be spelled backward or forward, such as was and saw, not and ton, on and no and the like, that is reversals.[15]

Orton's studies had a major impact in North America. Many schools and classes for children were initiated despite the fact that this theory was never scientifically confirmed. An English psychologist, MD Vernon, who wrote widely about reading difficulties in a 449 page document, devotes two pages to Orton and describes his work as at best 'doubtful'. The point being made here is that in South Africa we have taken for granted the neurological origin of reversals and much of this has been influenced by the work of Orton.

Secondly, reversal errors, which are the LD field's claim to fame, can be overcome through good teaching. This has been validated by studies done from 1958 to the mid-70s. The studies proved that:

> even four and five year old children could be taught to discriminate between reversed letters (such as b and d or p and q) and to comprehend the spatial relationships inherent in these reversals.[16]

Finally, perceptual deficits thought to have been caused by neurological dysfunctions which only later give rise to learning disabilities may also be a myth. Coles, referring to the work of Frank Vellutino, has this to say:

> In an extensive review of perceptual deficit theories, researcher Frank Vellutino has argued that where perceptual deficits have appeared to distinguish disabled and normal readers, other factors - such as problem-solving ability, motivation, reading ability, or language skills - were actually responsible for the differences. Several of Vellutino's own studies illustrate this perception. One used Hebrew letters and words with three groups of children: poor readers, good readers who did not know Hebrew, and a third group of children learning the language. Vellutino assumed that using a language familiar to only one group would allow for a clearer distinction between purely visual perceptual ability and other linguistic skills. When asked to write the Hebrew letters and words from memory, the first two groups achieved the same level of recall. Neither group performed as well as the children who were learning Hebrew, whose superior performance was

> attributed to their familiarity with the language and, more specifically, with the letter associations. This jibes with the experience of anyone who has studied a foreign language and observed how much easier it is to recognize letters and spell words when one can name the letters and pronounce the words.[17]

In South Africa wide-scale poverty, linguistic differences and the dearth of local research in this area makes the introduction of the LD theory problematic. It is becoming clear that largely disadvantaged children, culturally distinct, and those who speak English as a second language can be victims of exclusion.[18] Thus we need to look at ways in which a mainstream system can modify itself to cope with children who manifest learning problems in our classrooms as a result of a variety of factors. The immediate association of certain reading difficulties with neurological causes must be discouraged unless overwhelming evidence is provided. What we need is a commitment to research in this area that looks at the specificities of South African conditions and how they influence educability. Anything to the contrary will be calamitous, as the American experience proves.

The role of specialized education cannot be over-emphasized in this process. Every teacher should be a specialized educator through in-service training, workshops and other forums that could be convened to ameliorate the situation. Dessent concurs:

> The excitement of special education lies in its potential to transform and revolutionize what happens in education for all children.[18]

MAINSTREAMING AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF CURRENT POLICY WORK

It may be useful to look at current policy work around the above-mentioned issue. I shall attempt to raise issues around the recent Education Support Services[19] document that includes as one of its components the area of Specialised Education. An analysis of this document reveals that it militates against mainstreaming although it articulates a very strong mainstreaming position.

Firstly, with regard to practice, the Support Services document talks of a multi-tiered ESS personnel structure with different levels of expertise. This includes four levels: general teachers, post-basic skilled teachers, medium-skilled specialists and para-professionals, and finally highly skilled specialists. Specialized education training in this country has been largely restricted to traditionally white universities. To add to this dilemma each university trains fifeteen to twenty teachers per year. Thus the majority of teachers have very little exposure to this area of education. By creating a new class of specialist professionals we hinder the process of the spread of knowledge to the majority of teachers which, in fact, should be our main objective to ensure the success of mainstreaming. Another problem with this type of structure is that there may be a tendency on the part of teachers to refer children because, it is assumed, the experts up there do have the solutions.

Often the solution lies in good teaching that is shaped by an historical and sociological imagination.

Secondly, the policy translation is a crucial issue. Have policy makers and people who work in the trenches sufficient common understandings to ensure this policy works? In other words who has the responsibility of translating this policy? Can practitioners in the field deliver in this regard? An analysis of the document reveals that those who translate would have to possess some very imaginative skills.

Thirdly, does a comprehensive support service to mainstream schools need to rest upon kind of expert service? Learning difficulties cannot just be wished away after a short on/off consultation. The children need a continuous and maintained system of help in their learning. Dessent's comments are very relevant here:

> What both the children with learning difficulties and their teachers require, is immediate access to resources, materials and advice at an early stage in the recognition of the problem, from a colleague who is close at hand.[20]

Fourthly, the document stresses the role of highly skilled specialists in specialised assessments but no mention is made of the problematic nature of assessment. The simplistic manner in which assessment is presented does not make it difficult for one to draw the conclusion that this support services position is underpinned by the individual deviance tendency, which erases other important considerations central to diversity of culture and experience.

Another concern about this ESS document is the notion of the referral system. Would a team of experts have the time to deal with all the referrals? Given the approximately two million children, some may wait a life time. This may cause serious problems for the general running of the school. What often happens in school is that while children wait for the psychologist, teachers are reluctant to assist the child or have already decided this is the task of the expert.

If in-service training programmes for teachers will be carried out by highly skilled specialists, how can we ensure that sufficient numbers of teachers will be trained to meet the needs of the large percentage of children experiencing learning difficulties as a result of extrinsic factors? And how can we ensure a shift away from the medical and psychological perspectives that have been "extremely powerful in shaping the definitions, policies and practices of special education"?[21]

The policy document speaks of experts but does not speak to retraining 'experts'. Rather it simply reconstructs the role of educational psychologists and remedial and other specialized educationists. Although it stresses an holistic approach, very little mention is made of the specifics. For example, how does one deal with the issue of reversals in reading? How does one deal with the developmental lag between the lived reality of the disadvantaged and the demands of the curriculum? Is it a simple procedure to move away from associating certain 'weaknesses' with neurological conditions since this practice has been rampant for decades? Sally Tomlinson's questions are highly pertinent:

> In whose interests did special education actually develop? Do the social origins lie more in the interests of ordinary education? How is the system of adminstration of special education linked to the use of professional expertise? And are the vested interests of expanding groups of professionals and practitioners served by the discovery of more and more children with 'special needs'.[22]

I speak of the notion of Specialized Education and vested interests elsewhere[23] and warn of this type of professional hegemony that militates against mainstreaming. If we are child-centred and mainstream-oriented then increasing the number of categories of experts is not the correct way to proceed. Equip the teachers on the ground, empower them, let them believe they can deliver even if it means a country-wide INSET programme that has a discourse which is strongly underpinned by an historical and sociological imagination that takes on board the South African conditions.

By transplanting western curricula, labels and methods we will not benefit South African children. Let us focus on South African conditions and develop our responses to the specificities of those conditions in Langa, Gugelutu, Mannenburg and similar townships, since these are where most of our learning problems come from. Success has been sufficiently celebrated; failure has been an highly neglected area. We need to explore in great detail the societal influences on educability. Let us encourage collaborative work with other disciplines which could possibly involve: linguists to deal with linguistic diversity and the effects of second language, curriculum planners that take account of the lived reality of children, sociologists to deal with the effects of societal factors on educability and so on. It is appropriate to conclude with the insightful comments of Dessent:

> Vested interests are understandable within a historial context in which special education has been owned and controlled by individuals and groups outside of mainstream education. The challenge for the development of a 'whole authority' approach to special needs must, in part at least, involve considering how the ownership of special educational needs and the ownership of the resources for meeting these needs can be passed from the special sector to the mainstream sector.[24]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. ANC, *A Policy Framework for Eduction and Training: Discussion Document*. (Braamfontein: ANC, 1994).
2. G. Marks, "'Armed Now with Hope ...' the Construction of the Subjectivity of Students within Integration", *Disability and Society*, 9 (1994): 73.
3. P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (New York: The Continuum Publishing Corporation, 1988), 31.
4. ANC, 1994, 3.
5. *Ibid.*, 107.
6. D. Hargreaves, *Challenge to the Comprehensive School*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1992), 63.
7. S. Tomlinson, *A Sociology of Special Education*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1992), 6.

8. G. Bookbinder cited by T. Dessent, *Making the Ordinary School Special*, (Philadelphia: The Famer Press, 1991), 86.
9. S. Naicker, "'Special' Isolation Must End", *DSA In Depth, Reconstruction Issue*, (1994): 52-53.
10. L. Barton and M. Oliver, "Special Needs: Personal Trouble or Public Issue" in *Voicing Concerns: Sociological Perspectives on Contemporary Education Reforms*, (London: Triangle Books Ltd, 1992), 74.
11. Dessent, 168.
12. M. Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum*, (London: Routledge, 1990), 136.
13. G. Coles, "Excerpts from the Learning Mystique: A Critical look at 'Learning Disabilities'" *The Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 22, (1978):267-277; S. Sigmon, *Radical Analysis of Special Education*. (London: The Falmer Press, 1987); B. Franklin, *Learning Disability: Dissenting Essays*. (Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, 1987).
14. G. Coles, *The Learning Mystique: A critical look at 'Learning Disabilities'*. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1987), xiii.
15. *Ibid.*, 21.
16. Cole, 1978, 30.
17. Cole, 1987, 35.
18. Dessent, 166.
19. Education Support Services Policy Proposal, (1994), 8.
20. Dessent, 73.
21. Barton and Oliver, 67.
22. Tomlinson, 18-19.
23. SADTU Curriculum Conference Proceedings.
24. Dessent, 30.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 173-182

Curriculum Reconstruction, the RDP and the Late Capitalist Crisis

Speech to the SASCO National Education Policy Conference, University of the North, December 3, 1994

FRANK WILDERSON
English Department, Vista University, Soweto Campus

Comrades,

I've been asked to speak on Curriculum Reconstruction and its implications for meeting the RDP Human Resource needs and I feel it only fair to warn you that I intend to do nothing of the kind. As a lecturer of English, a so-called practitioner in the field, one whose day-to-day experience has given him certain insights, I consider myself to be just as qualified as the next person to make concrete recommendations about curriculum reconstruction on the level of content; and I've done so elsewhere: in *Tribute* magazine, and in a forthcoming essay in the *Journal of Literary Studies*, where I've looked at:

1) the absence of interdisciplinary coursework;
2) the absence of key courses in the humanities and social sciences, at institutions like Vista University;
3) the universities' monomaniacal fixation with a labour intensive examining apparatus which tests nothing more than the student's ability to take tests;
4) a plethora of academics who are not theoretically self-conscious about their practice, who toddle along treating transformation of their disciplines like private domains accessible only to the Senate and themselves.

I could begin with such empirical anecdotes and insinuate my perspective into the topic of discussion and arrive at several reasonable suggestions without having said anything about the necessary *preconditions* for reconstruction of the curriculum; without having indicated the limits of RDP-type reform under conditions of late capitalist crisis. Lest the nihilistic prospects of my remarks seem unpalatable, let me say that what I do intend to salvage is, not the RDP as a sweeping signifier for economic empowerment, and certainly not the content of curriculum reconstruction to meet the needs of capitalist reform, but a theoretical framework through which

curriculum reconstruction can indeed be realised, provided socialism is still on the agenda.

A dialectical approach to the issue forces me to interrogate the assumptive logic of the topic itself rather than assume the legitimacy of its terms. What has been celebrated, in social democratic quarters, as a 'convergence of economic opinion' between the ANC Leadership, Union Officials, and Capital, a convergence which many, like Comrade Andre Kraak, see as necessary for the RDP to get off the ground, is in fact nothing less than the terms of surrender for the working class and that seventy percent of the South African population which lives on the periphery of the economy. What is more they are terms of surrender negotiated by highly placed notables, however well meaning or well intended.

Contradictions abound. As intellectuals and Communists we must wallow in them even if, *especially if*, a solution is not immediately apparent. To begin with, there's not a person in this room who would question the nobility of the aims – however limited – of the RDP. But the RDP as a narrative strategy functions as what Foucault calls "a system of containment" and a strategy for excluding a range of interventions within the political economy which would destabilise capital. Just how this narrative strategy functions as an enabling vehicle for the containment and exclusion of revolutionary interventions, and what the significance of all this to curriculum reconstruction is, is something we'll return to below. For now suffice it to say that whereas the RDP opens up tremendous possibilities of popular enunciation *about* the economy (Tokyo Sexwale's People's Forums, Jay Naidoo's Agenda appearances, and the new industry of intellectual production for people like myself) it simultaneously forecloses upon popular participation *within* the economy.

Chapter 3 of the RDP, on Human Resource Needs, correctly characterises the state of play in the education sector as plagued by a lack of democratic ownership and control over the process of idea formation; yet gives no hint as to what incentives or coercive measures might change this. The Minister of Education's White Paper, the State's reading of Chapter 3, is even more silent on the matter. What we have is a transcendental set of documents (WPs and RDP) that allow us to talk about god, without ever talking to god. For to actually seize the time with our intellect and our bodies and demand forthwith what the RDP says is ours, is to run afoul of administrators who dismiss and exclude us with impunity; or to run afoul of the State as did the Wits SASCO branch on the steps of the MEC for Education, as did the Vista Sasco Branch in Pretoria in August in the car park of their very own university.

In 3.1.1 of the RDP we read

> Students teachers, parents and workers are excluded from decision making processes [in education]

And in 3.2.1 we read

> Human resources, unlike other resources, think for themselves! People are, and must remain, the architects of the RDP...

As a socialist I'm charmed by how easily accommodating the first two statements are of a socialist agenda; but then the Minister's WP comes along and presents itself as an unfortunate framing narrative which *contains* and *constrains* our architectural activity by prescribing strategies for enhancing equal opportunity *to* education while simultaneously *excluding* strategies for bringing about equity/equality *within* education.

The register of dissonance is profound and the implications for struggle are too harrowing for most of us to consider: for, at first blush, it raises the spectre of two fronts of struggle (capital and the state) whereas before we experienced them as one.[1]

But perhaps not. If, in this five-year purgatory of what was and what will be, we maintain a post-modern sense of play – play being the most operative word which we can steal from post-modernity, for indeed the multiplicity of readings which the RDP invites makes it the world's first post-modern government document, something akin to a mood stone that turns a different colour with every different gaze – we may very well wallow in the contradictory readings of the RDP long enough to salvage a revolutionary positivity (you'll excuse the oxymoron). Comrade Heinrich Bohmke, in a recent paper titled "Grinding Our Access", pulls a rabbit out of this hat of multiple readings:

> Indeed it may be said with all sincerity that the vagueness of the WP is its saving grace. Whilst no one can accuse the Ministry of acting counter to the inhibitions of GNU, local communities are left with the responsibility to form their own institutions into a machine that addresses their organic concerns. This machine can treat with irreverence and irrelevance the pacting that (necessarily?) occurs on government levels without implicating our representatives in that government in 'acts of bad faith'.[2]

This machine will provide the necessary incubator for the possibilities of curriculum theorising, a matter I'll return to later. For now let us consider the necessary preconditions of this machine; what are the limits to its birth if we genuflect to the social contract and the seeds of late capital's assumptive logic: high automation, increasing linkage with a hostile and debilitating international export economy, wage constraints and cost sharing in the social welfare arena.

In a recent set of Higher Education Policy Papers, produced by UDUSA, Comrade Andre Kraak rearticulates this assumptive logic and uses it as a springboard to make problematic assertions about the reconstruction and development possibilities of a high tech, export oriented, so-called 'growth' economy; which in turn becomes the springboard for even more problematic proposals as to the future of South Africa's institutions of higher learning.

Kraak takes as given the new world order and, rather than imbue his paper with a bold social transformatory agenda, rather than lament the barbarism of structural

adjustment programmes, a hostile world market, Kraak glosses over these contradictions with vague claims about how the promoters of the new world order provide for the West, as evidence enough for why they will provide for *us* in South Africa. From there it's just a hop, skip and a jump to the justification of South African tertiary institutions accommodating this model.

Comrade Kraak, in commenting on the domestic and global realities, all but admits the obscenity of capital accumulation when he writes that the development of South Africa's economy "has taken place in a highly uneven manner" in which the urban manufacturing sector constituted the 'core' of the economy, "...a homogenous sector dominated by a few monopoly giants with thousands of small manufacturing firms struggling for survival in the shadows of the giants". He continues in a way that can only be described as a premature if not shameful reification of the concentration of economic power:

> Nonetheless, it is within this 'core' economy with an already existent research and development technological infrastructure, that the future export-led economic renewal is likely to take place. The contribution of higher education institutions here is going to be critical.

This cartographic gesture from the base to the superstructure has profound implications: If we must accept the 'core' for what it is and invest in its increasing automation because "*that's the trend of the world economy*"; then it stands to reason that we must do the same thing in higher education. To put it crudely, social-democratic logic disallows even the thought of putting a loaded gun to capital's head to insure that wealth and development spreads to the periphery; and thus forecloses on any form of coercion to force privileged universities (with an excess of fifty-four books per student in their libraries) to spread their material and intellectual wealth to the historically disadvantaged universities (with four books per student in their libraries).

It's all very well to talk of "slow transference of technological expertise" coupled with "growth strategies ... aimed at the rapid increase in the export of manufactured goods through higher value-added production" (euphemistically referred to as 'beneficiation' or the 'higher attaining of a higher technological content in export production'). But social democrats are loathe to admit that all this will not and can not impact on almost seventy percent of South Africa's population.

A fine tooth comb through the said and unsaid of Kraak's essay reveals only two possible reasons not only for his accepting the state of affairs but also for his recommending that the curricula of higher education become a site of conformity, not resistance, *to* that state of affairs:

1) Because, as he puts it, 'key parties' in the South African negotiating process have recognised the centrality of expanding the export sector and this has "led to a greater convergence of economic opinion than was possible in the past".
2) Because "the global economy imposes particular requirements on national economies if they wish to survive...Engagement with the global economy can only take place on the latter's terms".

Notable in these arguments is that they hamstring popular economic reconstruction, and/or revolution (through curriculum development or any other means) in a way the RDP does not. Kraak's second point is in lockstep with the logic of the RDP in that they both foreclose upon the possibility of radical, mass participation *within* the economy. His first point (base superstructural conformity to a high tech export economy, purely because highly placed notables within the Alliance, Big Business and the Nationalist Party, have reached a "greater convergence of economic opinion that was possible in the past") forecloses upon even the somewhat miserly *enunciatory* possibilities of the RDP! From an economic crowding out of the 70% on the periphery we go to a discursive crowing out of all dissenting voices.

Once we've accepted these discursive moves we slide right into a curriculum reconstruction that is merely the handmaiden to greater automation, beefing up the export economy and incremental benefits to poor squatters on the margins. And perhaps, if our gullibility is as high as our fetishism of high technology and export profits, we can call it curriculum reconstruction without cracking a smile.

If it sounds like *deja vu* it's because you've heard it before: Ronald Reagan called it "trickle down". Eight years after his inauguration fourteen million Black people had *trickled down* from their subsidized housing to sleep in the streets of New York, Atlanta, Chicago, L.A. and Washington, D.C. Universities such as the University of Minnesota, the largest land grant institution in the country with a total of 75 000 students, an institution which once prided itself on admitting and graduating "every farmer's and every worker's son and daughter", over-dosed on Reaganomics, declared itself the handmaiden of technological advancement, and through a massive reorientation campaign called *The Commitment to Focus* allowed big business to redirect its research, curriculum and teaching orientation *carte blanche*. And then embarked upon wanton cost cutting and department slashing in the arts, the humanities, and dentistry (because the mean income of dentists had gone down from $200 000/year to $75 000/year which meant that fee paying whites were no longer applying and in their wake came a wave of bursary needy blacks, hispanics and Native Americans). When the administration unveiled its master plan to liquidate General College (the University's two year bridging program through which every farmer's son and every worker's daughter could bring themselves up to scratch to enter the other faculties) every farmer's daughter and every worker's son woke up to the fact that U of M's commitment to focus was little more than a commitment to fuck us in sheep's clothing. So they took to the streets and they

occupied buildings and they forced the president and his vice-president to resign and they went back to the job of salvaging a university for the people.

The social democratic compromise elaborated by Kraak and others is void of the mere scintilla of popular ownership and control of the University. Absent is the whisper of a struggle or the hint of a perspective which decommodifies education. Arguments such as these simply reify the assumptive logic of capital and perpetuate the material and discursive disenfranchisement of the masses.

Fortunately, the assumptive logic of capitalist claims to social reform and redistribution, provided we are all willing to be mature, enter into a social contract with it and uphold our end of the bargain – or at least not squeal bloody murder when the State forces us to uphold our end of the bargain (truckers, students, Pick 'n Pay workers, squatters). Fortunately this assumptive logic has been challenged by Herbert Marcuse of the Frankfurt School, Patrick Bond of Planact, South African economist Stephen Gelb. Marcuse's catalogue of capital's tendency toward crisis is formidable:

1) concentration of economic power;
2) fusion of Economic and Political Power;
3) increasing intervention of the State into the economy;
4) increasing difficultly in stemming the tendential decline in the rate of profit;
5) the need for engaging in neo-imperialism in order to create new markets and possibilities of enlarged accumulation of capital;

Bond's detailed mapping of Marcuse's catalogue onto the South African economy is too involved to go into here but let me hit the high points. Bond demonstrates that the South African economy is based on manufacturing and mining sectors which at the turn of the century were both labour and capital intensive. This gave to Capital what it most desired – a steady, if not increasing, rate of profit. In fact in the 1950s and '60s South African capitalists were blessed with an economic growth rate of eight percent, the highest in the history of modern economies. As marxists, however, we know how this was made possible. It was through the creation of wealth by an ever greater extraction of surplus value. And we all know that this can only be done to warm bodies. Try exploiting a machine, it breaks.

Kraak's suggestion to put universities at the service of a greater automated economy stands in violation of this most stern commandment of capital. For this leads to a falling rate of profit in the following way. Automation leads to radically fewer workers on the assembly line, so to speak. Hence, no matter how intense the 'exploitation' of the remaining workers is, the capitalist's ability to extract surplus value falls. With no promising rate of profit to spur investment, capital simply over-accumulates and stagnates, deepening the existing structural problems of this mode of production.

If you seek the crumbs of reforms from capital's table as Kraak's project suggests; if the only mitigating factor you can present to your revolutionary tribunal is that you wilfully crippled the humanities and arts and their radical discourse to produce technicians and engineers for "'leading edge' industries" simply because you believed that sponsoring new automated technologies would help those industries make more "... significant contributions to the export sector and therefore to national revenue"[3], you will surely be found – NOT guilty. Not guilty by way of ignorance. In finding you not guilty, the commissar might insist, though, that you read *Capital I* and *III* to avoid future embarrassments. For, in terms of capitalism's own laws that Kraak and other social democrats seem determined to bow before, it is precisely the over-automation of industry (too many machines, too little warm bodies exploited, which explains our forty-six percent unemployment rate), the absence of new markets to export anything to and the subsequent over-accumulation or 'stagnation' of capital"[4] leading to the inability to realise surplus value and thus a declension in the rate of profit, that will decrease both the 'national revenue' and social welfare.

Kraak's assumptive world that sees growth of the capitalist economy as the way out is cracked on two counts. Count one: The world economy is declining with the declining rate of profit. Count two: It is further cracked to suggest that one can reverse this trend in South Africa by sponsoring 'leading edge technologies', which lead to less surplus value for capitalists and thus less profits to be taxed to RDP, in terms of the workings of the capitalist system he is counting on to deliver development.[5]

The key to Bond's analysis is that this overaccumulation of capital, absence of markets and falling rate of profit are what characterise a *capitalist crisis*. And in a capitalist crisis, the reforms Kraak wishes to solicit *from* capitalism are – *well* limited.

Bond arrives at several strategies for the decommodification of housing and the popular participation of the masses in the economy,[6] which we at Vista, albeit unsystematically but not unintelligently, have transposed into the decommodification of intellectual resources and the participation of the masses in the economy of discourse:

1. exit-gate for campus management and UMC: struggle and the consolidation of progressive hegemony;
2. democratic NTF[7] which declared itself to be the legitimate authority over and above Council;
3. LTF's: The Soweto model;
   a) A debate amongst democratic forces as to what the meaning of community is: Who's in/who's out? Those that are in include delegates from structures which have struggled for change at Vista and those structures in Soweto

which have a history of struggle and commitment to redress in society at large. These structures constitute the Plenary of the LTF.[8]

b) All other interested parties can take part in the LTF's open session, but should deadlock's occur then the community, as manifest in the constitution of the Plenary, will retire to break the deadlocks.

c) Proposal: technical committees on all aspects of Vista life. One would be on Curriculum development or perhaps more broadly academic affairs. From that committee it is envisaged that three (or a combination thereof) types of curriculum theorising would be debated and form the basis for transformation of the curriculum. And the choice of the three would be determined by what view of the economy, development, political orientation the stakeholders adopt.

Decommodification of educational currency is by its very nature dialectical and therefore lends itself to a metatheoretical process when it comes to reconstructing the curriculum. It is not based on paradigms which are either supportive of, or *laissez faire* in their attitude toward, the assumptive logic of capital. I am aware of three theoretical frameworks out of which curriculum can be developed:

1. Technical Curriculum Theorising
2. Practical Curriculum Theorising
3. Critical Curriculum Theorising.

Technical curriculum theorising usurps the assumptive logic of capital and the State. The development of the curriculum operates within aims and objectives acquired from curriculum experts, big business and the state.

Through practical curriculum theorising courses can be produced and ideologies can be elaborated which empower the individual student to be enlightened. Here the lecturer, the so-called internal role player, initiates and controls the process, from his/her privileged vantage point as a moral and enlightened agent. Although enlightenment is indeed the operative word in this process, class mobilization/consciousness and collective action are not.

Through critical curriculum theorising all democratic stakeholders begin to develop courses and approaches to teaching, via forums committed to critically analysing not just the content of what is learned but the very circumstances in which they find themselves. And enveloped in this process is a dedication to changing those circumstances, to overcoming the constraints of irrationality, injustice and coercion which we all experience under capital; coupled with a dedication to linking up with other groups in other sectors of the political economy who have the will to do the same.

The key is that *whatever* curriculum comes out of this critical curriculum theorising is legitimate because the rightful owners of the economy, the working class, are in full control of the process; because the process is a dialectic one;

because it captures new terrain for people on the ground, while simultaneously rupturing the discursive logic of capital. And again, to borrow from Marcuse, the logic of capital has to be ruptured discursively if we are to hold out any hope of the production of capital being ruptured materially.

This is the essence of Bond, Bohmke, Marcuse and SASCO Wits and Vista's notion of self-mobilised, social bases and the decommodification of higher education. Perhaps this means replacing the social democratic export continuum with a basic low-needs, high-profit margin, regional employment cooperation continuum. Perhaps it means something else, which I – standing on this stage outside of such a Forum – am not qualified to think of nor mandated to suggest. But what can be asserted is that...

> [T]here is an obvious need for labour and social movements to intensify mass struggles for basic human rights *access* to meaningful employment, housing, education, health care, etc., and simultaneously to seek out what might be considered "non-reformist reforms"; i.e., those strategic gains which open the door to further struggles through empowering activists and their grassroots constituencies...with new tools, new insights and new courage to press for what is rightfully theirs.[9]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. South African Students Congress, the ANC-aligned movement for all students in Tertiary Education.
2. The struggle which the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions waged with Kenneth Kuanda's government over control of workers' education curriculum may very well salvage a working class critical consciousness on the other side of barbarism which is being rapidly pursued under IMF structural adjustment programmes, the goals of privatisation, 'liberalisation', 'cost-sharing' in health and education; the reduction and elimination of subsidies including those on maize; increased exports and reduction of public expenditures. Had the government been able to impose its policy for industrial peace and increased production (which rested on the myth of worker indolence and absenteeism) on the curriculum of workers' colleges then an uncritical group of disenfranchised workers would face this state of barbarism in ignorance.
   Before long skilled and unskilled workers on the ground realised that the union leadership, corporate bosses and Kuanda's government had become the three pillars of a corporate power elite determined to exploit and sap workers of their energy in the pursuit of increased profits. (In South Africa we refer to these three pillars as the "healthy convergence of economic opinion".) Nowhere was resistance to this war on the working class more starkly contested than in the war between ZCTU education desk's desire for curriculum autonomy and the government's desire to design a curriculum that would "make workers' education an effective programme for raising productivity, preventing strikes...[fostering] discipline among workers" (UNIP's 'Policy for the Decade 1974-84').
3. I don't have a problem with the falling rate of profit and more machines. If that will destroy or inhibit capital well and good. But Kraak looks up front for a healthy capitalism from which to supply "national revenue". Where we'd differ is with respect to how the University insinuated itself into this crisis.
   In a War of Position the role of the university is to create a space for critical consciousness to develop. And that critical consciousness actually becomes a force in the world. It has a material

effect. It is naive to suggest that this critical consciousness can stem the tide of Structural Adjustment Programmes, rising unemployment, and homelessness but it can do two things:

a) participate in Bond's project of capturing capitalist resources for the working class. For what is the university if it is not a capitalist resource?

b) help consolidate a working class perspective, or intelligence, i.e. if, or perhaps we should say when, the IMF, the World Bank and/or American military skulduggery map Zaire onto the South African terrain, they won't be able to map the debilitating class ignorance onto it as well.

But these two possibilities only hold out hope of success if we *a priori* have rejected the "handmaiden of leading technologies" scenario for a scenario developed by democratised universities.

4. See Bond's public housing proposal in "Limits of Capitalist Reform under Conditions of Capitalist Crisis" 1993, Unpublished. Presented at the University of the Western Cape Marxist Theory Seminar, 6 May 1993. National Transformation Forum. Vista is a "national" university created by the Nationalist Party (Broederbond). It has seven campuses in seven townships throughout South Africa. Each campus has about 3 500 students. They are controlled by "Head Office" a four storey building in Pretoria where 220 Afrikaner administrators sit. Mass action and violent clashes with the police and the advocacy and full participation of about 10% of the staff resulted in the resignation of the entire top brass at "Head Office". In its place a democratic (save the seats which are occupied by the Senate and the Council) National Transformation Forum now sits with representatives from various democratic structures on all of campuses. At the time of the writing we are still fighting Council over the powers and authority of the NTF and may have to initiate another wave of action in order to get rid of them. (Council has 18 seats, but through mass action and national propaganda campaigns we were able to whittle it down to four, very stubborn, members. Aluta Continua!)

6. At the Soweto campus (the most liberated, the campus with a critical mass of progressive academics and students), we have managed not only to get rid of "Head Office's" management surrogates but to set up a democratic managing tribunal in their place (the Interim Management Committee). It is made up of members from the staff union, the worker's union, the student government and the three student political organizations which are aligned to the ANC, PAC and AZAPO. In our debates about the meaning and construction of community, it was decided that faculties and departments would not have representation on the IMC until they transformed along the lines of the democratic structures (at the University and in the country) which had played a meaningful role in the struggle against apartheid. In other words, thy would have to reorganize along transparent, democratic, nonsexist and anti- racist lines; and open up their decision making processes to all constituencies (of course in a structured and negotiated manner). To date they have refused; and to date they are not represented on the new Interim Management Committee nor in the plenary of the LTF, the Local Transformation Forum.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 183-190

Radical Posturing, the Challenge of Policy Making and the RDP: A Response to Wilderson

ANDRE KRAAK
Academic Planning Unit, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535

After my first reading of Frank Wilderson's speech made to the 1994 National Congress of the South African Students Congress (SASCO), I had a powerful sense of *deja vu*. It took me back to my heady days in Nusas in the 1970s and those glorious years in the early eighties when democratic socialism was on the agenda. We conjured up what we thought were blueprints for the fundamental transformation of Apartheid society. Nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy was not sufficient. Only with the socialisation of the means of production, with workers empowered to run all social institutions and factories, would there be any real change.

Socialism is now no longer on the immediate agenda, and Wilderson sees this as the product of deep betrayal in the top echelons of the South African liberation movement. I do not entirely agree. My partipication in the policy formulation era of 1990-1994 taught me a profound lesson I was unable to learn earlier in my political education. The lesson was the following: the retreat from socialism in South Africa has not only to do with betrayal, or with the antagonistic conjunctural and structural conditions which arose in the Eastern Bloc countries in the late 1980s. It also has to do with the failure of the South African left in the insurrectionary period since the early 1970s to specify a precise path to socialism. Our commitment remained at the rhetorical level, and we were never able or required to define the exact terms upon which the transfer of power would take place.

The dictates of policy formulation in the period 1990-1994 changed all of this. This era was not characterised (as Wilderson would have us believe) by a widespread abandonment of socialist goals by notables in the liberation movement. Rather, these new times forced upon the principle authors of post-Apartheid social and economic policy a hard reality which was never present in earlier political periods: how were we to take power under conditions verging on civil war and a seige economy, with employment and industrial relations, education and urban development, a total shambles? What precise steps were needed to improve the situation in the short-term, measures which would not disturb the fragile peace necessary to prevent a racial bloodbath, but which allowed for an improved quality of life for the masses in the medium- to long-term. And what then were to be the long-term, post-Apartheid policies in every field of human endeavour? These were

complex questions which ex-socialists and committed socialists alike found difficult to answer.

The retreat from socialism is therefore a combination of factors - conjuctural, structural, and what is actually feasible in policy terms – which has led to a modification of past socialist values. Wilderson's radical posturing to an already converted SASCO audience about the desirability of socialism now is mischievous in that he fails throughout his speech to describe a social and economic policy framework which can support his socialist vision. And yet he damns those who have attempted this difficult task.

Wilderson's contribution must also be understood in terms of the incompatibility which has emerged between the two dominant discourses concerned with politics and social change in South Africa: a policy discourse versus a social critique discourse. It would be an ideal world if these two discourses reinforced and influenced each other. However, the challenge of policy formulation is so complex, contingent, time-bound, resource-constrained and contaminated by the need for compromise that it becomes almost tedious to argue with social critics in repetitive fashion the impossibility of socialist transition in South Africa at the present time. But I shall be responsible and respond.

Wilderson's central argument is difficult to pinpoint, primarily because in an address supposedly on *Curriculum Reconstruction and its Implications for Meeting RPD Human Resource Needs* he refuses to focus on curriculum and proceeds to attack the RDP. Wilderson constructs a wonderful series of reductionisms, which, put crudely, argue that the RDP represents the surrendering of the struggle for socialism to the dictates of capital. The role envisaged for universities in this policy logic, according to Wilderson, is to make universities subject to the dictates of capital accumulation. In opposition to this, Wilderson argues that what is now required is to shatter the 'commodification' of knowledge and the stranglehold which capital exercises over the universities and the RDP. We need to reassert the struggle for socialism.

As a proponent of corporatism or 'social compacts' as a means of economic renewal and human resources development, some of my work has fallen victim to Wilderson's tirade against the RDP and the retreat from socialism. My response to the essense of Wilderson's attack will be a wide canvas focusing on three fundamental weaknesses in his argument: a highly problematic conception of socialism and the transition thereto; a theoretical naivety in dealing with difficult economic policy questions; and finally, a simplistic reading of the role of universities and an empty contribution to the debate about curriculum reconstruction.

SOCIALISM AND THE TRANSITION THERETO

Wilderson provides his audience with no conception of a workable socialist model that is applicable in the current global context. One can only assume it is an orthodox view which paints a black and white distinction between capitalism and socialism and which is founded on a radical rupturing of *all* social relations under capitalism. In his view, everything must change.

Wilderson's perspective on capitalism appears equally rigid and monolithic, disallowing any possibility of divergent capitalist systems across different national economies, with differing social conditions, some harshly exploitative, others less so. Wilderson's view, in turn, disallows a conception of socialism in the future as a *hybrid social formation comprised of old and new constituent parts*. Socialism is an 'ideal-type' which in reality has never been or will never be achieved in its pure form. Rather, it is more likely to be an amalgam of past capitalist social relations alongside new social relations and institutions which seek to achieve socialism's major goals: equality and an end to poverty. The latter view, of socialism as a hybrid social formation, enables the incorporation of strategies to reform capitalism as a left project to establish those social relations and institutions which are not hostile to the objectives of a future socialist order. In all likelihood, any future socialism will not require the destruction of all things capitalist. It will need to rely on many existing capitalist relations and institutions, which on their own are not antithetical to the interests of socialism. These could include a free education and public health system, a vibrant university system, a just and independent judiciary, a multiparty democracy, elements of participative industrial relations, a strong state role in the economy, and private property rights. Upon such a stable foundation, a future socialist government may succeed in asserting strong redistributive social policies which are not feasible right now.

This conception of socialism views the RDP as a transformatory project within capitalism, which nonetheless seeks to shift capitalist social relations away from a brutal and racist free-market system (with minimal economic growth potential) towards a more humane and codeterminist social system founded on real economic and social renewal. Wilderson's socialist alternative is what Freund calls 'barracks socialism':

> The context of revolutionary change in today's world is highly unfavourable. Socialism as an international movement and as a total system has, for the time being, been discredited. Powerful regimes willing to combat international capitalist forces have collapsed (on the demands of their own populations). A South African revolution could, therefore, only be accompanied by local devastation, with massive emigration of skilled people and capital flight, as well as in the teeth of international hostility. It would at best be a harsh, militantly policed 'barracks socialism'. Such a militarised socialism could organise a society with a high degree of equality but at a low level of consumption and with few prospects for accumulation and development.[1]

A 'new left project' in South Africa must be two-pronged: on the one hand, it must advocate support for 'social democratic realism' in the core economy to ensure both sustainable economic growth and a stable political democracy; on the other, it must support 'socialist solidarity' aimed at those disadvantaged South Africans in the peripheral economy. The former strategy would provide the necessary basis for economic growth and the foundations for societal redistribution. The latter strategy would constitute the source of political pressure on the state to ensure that the fruits of growth are redistributed fairly to the most impoverished sectors. Corporatist social relations and the RDP are a beginning along this new path.

ON THE ECONOMY

Wilderson's lack of support for the growth/redistribution duality is based on a naive reading of the economic realities which face South Africa. He simplifies what are often quite complex issues, three of which I would like to focus on.

My first problem is Wilderson's treatment of South Africa's economic dualism. In my Udusa papers I tried to highlight the highly uneven manner in which capitalist development has taken place in South Africa. The legacy which has now been inherited by the ANC-led government is a society acutely divided along racial, class and demographic lines. These core/periphery divides have huge implications for social policy. Most importantly, new policies cannot assume a homogeneity of economic and social circumstances across the country – as is, unfortunately, often the case. Indeed, many of the arguments for export-led competitiveness do not hold true for large parts of the country, which are rural and underdeveloped, and which serve as home to millions of the unemployed. These spatial inequalities pose a major responsibility for policy makers, who need to devise sustainable strategies which differentiate across diverse social and industrial settings, but which have the common aim of reducing social inequality. There are no easy solutions to these structural determinants of poverty. Socialists and non-socialists alike have come up with few solutions. Wilderson again displays his 'barracks' mentality:

> To put it crudely, the social democratic logic disallows even the thought of putting a loaded gun to capital's head to insure that wealth and development spreads to the periphery ... and thus forecloses on any form of coercion which will force the Wits and UCTs ... to spread their material wealth to the Vistas and the Vendas ...

My second problem is Wilderson's treatment of social democracy or corporatism. Here, Wilderson employs a useful polemical devise which is to reduce all economic policy models to a single strategy – structural adjustment programmes – which, of course, are easy to stigmatise and trash. Thus, for Wilderson, social democracy/corporatism is no different from Reaganite free-market policies, which, when applied to the new South Africa, signifies a surrender of working class struggle to the needs of big capital. By so doing, Wilderson completely misses the

point I tried to make in my Udusa policy papers,[2] which was that differing capitalist institutional frameworks with distinct economic growth strategies have highly divergent implications for social equality. In other words, the transition to a more just social order (towards socialism perhaps) *can* be built upon a programme of reforming capitalism.

There are essentially two 'ideal-type' macro-institutional frameworks - one 'free market' centred; the other 'coordinated market' centred and multipartite. The Udusa papers described these distinct institutional frameworks in the following way:

* On the one hand, a '*free-market*' or 'low participation, low skill' (LP/LS) macro-institutional framework is characterised by market-led policies in education and training, with divisive access to higher education based on class privilege; also entailing employer-led, job-specific technical training; minimal state intervention; deregulation of labour markets; taylorist work organisation and narrow skilling. This scenario is best characterised by the policies of Thatcher and Reagan in the UK and USA in the 1980s.
* On the other hand, *a coordinated market* or 'high participation/high skill' (HP/HS) macro-institutional framework is premised on the delivery of high levels of education and training by both the state and employers, but with overall state regulation as the central pillar. Maximum mobility between all education and training institutions and a unified system of qualifications is envisaged. Skilling is broadly conceived, encompassing both vocational and more general educational competencies. The social democratic countries of Europe represent the best in this HP/HS category, although more recent innovative attempts along this route are being made in countries such as Australia.

This macro-institutional distinction is significant, because within this framework, a range of 'state coordination/ market mechanism' mixes arise which have divergent outcomes in terms of social equality. Most importantly, the 'free market' model is driven by a massive reliance on the market mechanism and on employers to 'do good' in the provisioning of ET. Societal regulation is based on employer voluntarism and a minimalist state. This was the reform route chosen by the Apartheid state and some sectors of capital. Economic development here is governed by market-led decisions. Growth will occur without the existing inequalities being significantly altered.

The 'coordinated market' scenario is different. Under this macro-institutional framework, state coordination and market regulation are effectively balanced; Within the 'core' economy, a social compact is agreed to by organised labour and business, whereby the application of new technologies, new methods of work organisation, and the introduction of export strategies are agreed to in return for higher wages, ET and worker participation in decision-making on the shopfloor.

Within the 'periphery', the marginalisation of communities is diluted to some extent by the redistributive thrust made possible by high levels of growth in the core sector, and by social democratic forms of governance. The equity/development trade-off here is less harsh, less brutal. These forms of regulating market relations have constituted the foundations upon which the successful economies of Europe, Scandinavia, some of the Pacific Rim economies (to a lesser extent), and more recently, Australia have been built.

My third problem with Wilderson's treatment of the economy is his dislike for strategies that have to do with export competitiveness on global markets. He sees them as part of a larger neo-imperialistic plot to subordinate Third World economies to the dictates of monopoly capital. Wilderson implies that the more desirable route should be a major delinking from the international economy.

Wilderson misses the key structural reason why export competitiveness is now so important to our future economic well-being. The failure of the Apartheid regime to build export competitiveness and its reliance on primary goods and import-substituting manufacture was one of the key determinants of its eventual decline. It is a trap which no post-Apartheid state can risk falling into. Put simply, the continued importation of higher value-added manufactured goods, intermediate and advanced capital goods without an equivalent source of revenue obtained from South African exports, runs the risk of placing the balance of payments permanently in deficit. This trap is precisely the reason for the failure of delinking strategies elsewhere in the Third World. Unfortunately, Wilderson's radical rhetoric disallows a more careful examination of this harsh reality.

He also fails to examine ways in which the new technologies (acquired in pursuit of global competitiveness) can benefit the poor. One example that comes to mind is the current restructuring of the state health sector. It has been suggested that computer and networking technology be put to use in the proposed public health system in the rural areas where nurses and other public health practitioners will provide a greater spread of medical services, including the dispensing of basic medicines. On-line help from the PC network will greatly facilitate this process. This is merely one example of the potential of the RDP to deliver, both in terms of export-competitive manufacturing and basic needs provisioning. Wilderson misses the interconnectedness between a vibrant core economy and a periphery needing basic social services. I do agree with Wilderson, however, that such an intepretation of the RDP is not automatic and it relies heavily on progressive forces to ensure (and at times force through struggle) its proper implementation.

THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITIES

Wilderson has particularly strong views on the role of universities. He is deeply suspicious of higher education reform programmes which link academic programmes to human resource development needs. I agree. Unfortunately, he does

not quote me accurately. He selects only those parts of the Udusa papers where I argue the importance of linking university education to national economic and social renewal. Wilderson warns that such an approach will inevitably result in the university system – in its entirety – supporting the skills requirements of big capital.

In the Udusa papers I argued that the university system has a dual role in most societies: the first being 'system maintenance', the second as 'engines of change'. In pedagogical terms, this involves the intellectual pursuit of both productive/managerial knowledge as well as critical/emancipatory knowledge.

The former function has seen universities in South Africa engaged in the development of economic potential, the training of both a state bureaucracy and a private sector managerial and professional strata, and in general terms, the promotion of the dominant ideology. This knowledge function has not only been reproductive (knowledge that sustains existing technologies and existing forms of social and economic regulation), but it has also been innovative in orientation: the creation of new productive knowledge.

The latter function has entailed universities contributing to the overall intellectual ability of a society to reason and critique, equipping citizens to fully participate in the economy and polity, providing them with an understanding of the social implications of particular political and economic choices. This function has also led universities to extend their influence and open their doors, via open access policies, to larger sectors of society. In many cases, university institutions have aligned themselves politically with a range of social struggles – on issues such as democracy, justice and economic, gender and environmental exploitation.

As a consequence of this duality, universities are in most cases institutions shaped by conflictual and contradictory responsibilities. The dominance of one role over the other is contingent on the social and political conditions of the time. Individual universities might articulate or amplify one role over the other – productive as against critical knowledge, or vice-versa.

The challenge in formulating a new philosophy for universities is to ensure that these dual tasks – 'social and economic development' and 'critical social enquiry' – are both obtained in this new period of South Africa's history. Wilderson's approach refuses a role for the university system in economic development, and by so doing, masks all universities' inherent link to the labour market and the professions. He also assumes that the entire university system will or can play the role of social critic, and that this can be socially engineered, even under the pressure of a barrel of a gun.

CONCLUSION

Our challenge in the university system, then, is to ensure the balance referred to above. Undoubtedly, universities have a key role to play in terms of economic development. In addition, the methodological requirements of intellectual work

demand of universities a rigour and critical capacity which must be central to university life. Wilderson's concluding comments on curriculum reconstruction do not assist in obtaining this curriculum balance. He simply mimics Habermas's three typologies of knowledge – and in particular, the importance of critical knowledge – but does not elaborate on them given South African conditions.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. B. Freund, "A New Industrial Revolution? Part Two: An Examination of Trends from Metal-related Industries, 1987-1990", unpublished paper, University of Natal, Durban (1992): 79.
2. See A. Kraak, "Towards Equity and Growth: Cosatu's Education Proposals – Extending the Benefits of Growth', *Matlhasedi*, 1, 2 (1992); A. Kraak, "Udusa Policy Proposals on Post-Secondary Education: A Macro Perspective", unpublished Udusa policy paper, 1993.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 191-192

Kenton Twenty-One: 'Between a Rock and a Wet Place' October 1994

MARK ABRAHAMS
Centre for Cognitive Development, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535

'After Policy' was the theme of the Kenton 21 Education Conference which took place wedged between the Hottentots Hollands Mountain range and False Bay in Cape Town – 'between a rock and a wet place'. This conference also marked the coming of age of Kenton - coming of age in more ways than merely being the 21st conference. In 1994, the year of the first inclusive national elections, the Kenton Conference was for the first time organised under the auspices of the formally constituted Kenton Education Association. The occasion of the coming of age of Kenton was marked by the publication of *Vintage Kenton*, a collection of Kenton papers through the years. This 'gift' was given to all present and according to the back-cover blurb, it celebrates the contribution that progressive educational thought has made to education. For any newcomer to the Kenton Education scene this is going to become recommended if not compulsory reading.

Approximately 150 people attended. There were forty papers and one workshop. The 'after policy' theme could have been substituted with 'after elections' because it allowed too much scope and hence the wide range of topics. Several papers did remain in the policy ambit. Anneke and Myi investigated the effects of an affirmative action policy at the University of Natal. Chisholm and Motala focused on policy implementation, the challenges and limitations, while Wolpe's paper warned of the lack of clarity in promoting non-sexism which remained a rhetorical insertion in policy documents. Abrahams provided a critical glimpse of the use of promotion of quality in education in the policy documents and Nkacha presented a very critical, informed and somewhat cynical view of the RDP which sounded real warning bells concerning implementation. Papers by Meyer, De Wee and Arnot, Jacklin, and Mkwanazi dealt with policy processes, providing analyses of past processes and contributions towards future policy. The Mkwanazi paper, which focused on the representation of race and gender in the NEPI and other policy processes, makes one wonder if the theme 'after policy' was not chosen with direct reference to the participation of academics in those policy initiatives.

Carrim argued for the development of a pedagogy which would meet the educational challenges of working with and through difference in the future. Tikly's paper on the racial interpretations of the democratic movements re-emphasised difference in terms of ideological perspectives within and among political organisations through years of struggle. This theme was enunciated further

in papers by Robins and Prinsloo, and Samuel's level of interrogation remained anecdotal. Culture, ethnicity, and race were however adequately raised as factors in need of continued, intense, theoretical analysis. The focus on difference allowed for a discourse that was critical of generalisations and exploded the notion of 'common-think' among progressive academics. But it also underscored the lack of agreement on broad theoretical principles and promised contestation based on difference. This kind of discourse should be counterposed with the one that is synonymous with Kenton: 'critical-with-a-purpose', which was revisited and re-emphasised during the recollection of the origin of this annual educational smorgasbord.

An analysis of participants over the past five years would reveal a fast growing level of participation from black academics, although the same cannot be said for the participation of traditionally black universities.

Before commenting on the grand finale of the conference I would like to share some thoughts about some personal responses – my own and others'. Besides the buzz words of 'discourse' and 'difference' there were people for whom the proceedings were 'too theoretical'; others felt cheated because of the absence of papers from some of the Kenton 'heavies'. There were a few respondents who overstepped their brief by developing completely new papers instead of responding to papers presented. The reality of parallel sessions forced me to make certain choices but I would have liked to have heard Faragher, Breier and Haarhof.

The grand finale came in the form of Basil Bernstein's presentation during the final session of the conference. A guest speaker *par excellence* who immediately homed in on the polarities he observed in the conference discourse(s). Basil Bernstein's eloquent abstraction of the discursive arena provided an illuminating view of the processes of knowledge production. What was mystifying for me was the issue of power relations within and among cultures which was not dealt with in any detail and which in my opinion could account for some of the polarities extant in the present discourse. Nevertheless, it was an exhilarating experience, not only because of what Bernstein shared but because of how this was done.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 193-204

Education Policy Discourse and the New South Africa

RAN GREENSTEIN
Education Policy Unit, University of the Witwatersrand, Private Bag 3, Wits 2050

INTRODUCTION

The last year has witnessed a crucial transformation in the nature of education policy debates in South Africa. The fiery rhetoric of People's Education discourse of the late 1980s, still popular among activists in the early 1990s, seems to have given way to a more sober and pragmatic evaluation of what is desirable and what is possible in the process of educational change. On the face of it, the reason for this is obvious – the elections of April 1994, followed by the formation of a Government of National Unity, marked a decisive shift in the location of political power. No longer restricted to cogent but futile critiques of the system from the outside, elements in the democratic movement have moved towards assuming positions of responsibility and power within new administrative-political structures. These circumstances have given rise to changing conceptualisations of the situation in the field of education and have modified the terms within which debates over educational transformation are conducted.

And yet these dramatic political events have had little impact on the state of education so far, and no immediate or drastic changes are expected. Furthermore, while a new leadership assumed political control of the Ministry of Education at the national level and the majority of the provinces, most senior and middle management positions remain firmly in the hands of the old bureaucracy with little input from the ranks of the democratic education movement. Paradoxically, it seems, it is at the moment of victory of the democratic movement that the direct influence of its activists on the process of change is waning and it appears out of touch with the new political realities. A split between those elements who made it into the system and those left outside, either by choice or by failure to integrate themselves, is clearly evident. The shift in policy discourse has been accompanied, then, by a shift in the locus of power. How the two have informed and shaped each other over the last year is the topic this review seeks to address.

PEOPLE'S EDUCATION AND NEPI

Before proceeding any further it would be useful to clarify what is meant by the democratic education movement. Since the late 1970s, and more vigorously since

the mid-1980s, popular forces opposed to apartheid education mobilised to protest and demand a change in government policies. In 1985 these activities led to the formation of the National Education Crisis [later Coordinating] Committee (NECC) as an umbrella structure, operating within the framework of the United Democratic Front (UDF). The NECC brought together community, student and teacher organisations, political activists and academics who shared a vision of transformation in education. After 1990, the movement increasingly worked with the African National Congress, its education department and later on the Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD).

To appreciate the change in discourse that has taken place since those seemingly remote times, a brief look at the concept of People's Education should suffice. Prominent on the agenda of the democratic education movement were notions of education at the service of the people as a whole, education as a tool for people's power, education as an element in the struggle against exploitation and domination and education as an emancipatory practice preparing people for total liberation by shaping creative, critical and analytical minds.[1] While the meaning of these causes was rarely explicitly and coherently defined, their oppositional thrust clearly militated against engagement with the existing system in anything other than critique and a resolute stand against collaboration. The idea that democratic forces could negotiate with the powers that be and work together to improve the system seemed very far fetched at the time.

Only a short time after Mashamba hailed the "great intellectual and strategic importance" of the "conceptual breakthrough" represented by People's Education discourse,[2] the political scene went through a dramatic change. The unbanning of the liberation movements in February 1990, and the beginning of a process of negotiations and political settlement, forced the education movement to tackle more seriously the existing system in all its complexity; a need for devising concrete mechanisms of structural transformation was felt. While populist rallying cries were not abandoned, it became increasingly clear that they must be transcended in order to be realized. To effect a move towards a more responsive education system, attuned to people's concerns, one had to go beyond slogans, attractive as they might sound, and focus on the ways to get from the existing to the desired situation. The original and frequently glorified definition of what is desired might itself change in the process, however.

The outcome of the encounter between the emancipatory goals of the democratic movement and the need to come to terms with existing realities was, of course, the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) process. Launched during the interregnum of the early 1990s, NEPI explicitly acknowledged the changing political context and its implications for policy analysis. The principles of non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, a unitary system and redress served as a link between the erstwhile goals of the NECC and the demands of the new period.[3] At the same time, in a move away from previous positions it was recognised that

progressive principles were not necessarily compatible and that policy formulation may involve trade-offs between different goals, all equally desirable. Furthermore, notions such as equality and democracy cannot be assumed to have a unified meaning and a move towards attaining them in one area may clash with their attainment in another. Perhaps of most interest in this context was the introduction into NEPI of considerations of efficiency, feasibility and affordability, notions previously alien to the democratic policy discourse.[4]

THE ANC POLICY FRAMEWORK

Without dwelling on NEPI any further,[5] its crucial role in the transition from a demand-oriented discourse to a discourse oriented towards policy option analysis and formulation needs to be recognised. This is all the more so since the NEPI project concluded as South Africa was moving into the last stage of the transition to democracy. The education policy document of the ANC, released shortly before the elections in the beginning of 1994, drew extensively on the work undertaken by NEPI and incorporated it into a policy-oriented framework with an explicit political content.[6]

Obliged to compress discussions of a large number of issues into a single manageable document, addressing popular as well as policy-informed audiences, the ANC Framework has little use for the extended weighing of points and counter-points in a largely academic vein that characterises many of the NEPI reports. Rather, in a much more pragmatic manner, the Framework outlines general vision and principles and specifies the steps to be taken in each of the areas it tackles. In doing that, it is forced for the first time to deal concretely with the financial and administrative constraints of policy change. At the same time, the obvious political nature of the document means that realism is frequently tempered with unrealistic commitments in an attempt to reconcile the pressures applied by diverse constituencies. The result is an internally contradictory discourse.

An example is the question of priorities. An integral part of policy planning is the need to set priorities straight, identify which sectors are more important, which issues are more urgent, which areas should have a prior claim on resources. Being both a policy programme and a pre-election manifesto, the Framework refuses to make these difficult choices. In listing the major policy initiatives for the following five years, all sectors of the system are mentioned.[7] If everything is defined as 'major', however, the term becomes meaningless. Similarly, by not making a quantifiable commitment of resources to the different sectors, one may get the impression that everything can be done simultaneously and no trade offs need be involved. Without specifying how programmes will be financed and where facilities and personnel will come from, the inclusion of new initiatives in the Framework is little more than wishful thinking at times.

Having made the above point, the serious consideration of constraints creates a new discursive terrain for the democratic movement. The Framework acknowledges that fundamental changes take time and that the process involves many unknown and uncontrollable factors. It therefore concludes that "education and training systems tend to change less rapidly than policy-makers hope for, and they often change in unexpected ways, whatever the intentions of governments".[8] This cautious attitude is particularly noticeable in the section on the mobilisation of financial resources for educational reconstruction.[9] In placing educational change in the context of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Framework takes an important step towards re-conceptualising the relations between economy and society.

In People's Education discourse, the economy is regarded as a pool of resources that should be used to meet needs, raise living standards, improve services and redress inequalities; it is of little intrinsic importance beyond that. The ANC Framework, in contrast, regards the growth of the economy as a goal in its own right and is concerned with the impact of education and training on the structure of the labour market and the competitiveness of the South African economy in the world market. In other words, rather than merely asking how the economy can satisfy educational needs, the Framework additionally asks how education can satisfy economic needs such as skilled labour force, high productivity, positive balance of payments and sustained growth. Along the lines of the newly-industrialising Asian countries, it argues that "a strategy which emphasises the acquisition of a good quality basic education and training by all South Africans is needed to underpin medium-term growth, diversification of the economy, and export success".[10]

The focus on the role of education in economic growth reflects the influence of the labour movement, concerned as it is with job creation and skill enhancement. There is nothing wrong, of course, with the desire to make the labour force better skilled and the economy more productive, especially since economic growth would allow more resources to be directed to education. These goals potentially clash, however, with other concerns such as the development of critical thought and of democratic awareness. The fact that the economic success of those Asian countries seen as models to be emulated has been frequently accompanied by the adoption of authoritarian modes of control and teaching methods is not addressed in the Framework. While different and even contradictory discourses of efficiency and growth on the one hand, and democracy and equality on the other, *can* be reconciled within an overall programme, their tensions need to be explicitly recognised to prevent confusion and unwanted outcomes. Poor editorial work is partly responsible for these tensions; of more importance, though, is the attempt to please different audiences simultaneously without worrying too much about consistency.

The growing recognition that populist rhetoric cannot solve funding problems and that practical questions must be tackled directly leads the Framework to explore

new financial mechanisms. The reduction of repetition rates, administrative rationalisation and reduction of subsidies to private schools are identified as saving devices. Given the enormity of the challenge and the likelihood of increased expenditure due to population growth, backlogs and rising maintenance costs, it is recognised that these measures will not suffice to solve the problem. Consequently, "everything possible must be done to seek enhanced school quality while minimising its impact upon costs".[11] In addition, funding partnerships with business, communities, NGOs and donors are proposed, primarily in areas falling outside formal schooling such as adult basic education and early childhood development.

Reading the financial section with a focus on discursive shifts shows the prevalent use of concepts associated with mainstream economics such as budgetary constraints, economies of scale, cost effectiveness, unit costs, a lack of flexibility with regard to the practical possibilities for redistribution of resources, cost-sharing, fiscal incentives for business contributions, appropriate levels of fees and other charges, fiscal discipline, productive applications of funds and pricing. To be sure, these concepts are used all over the world as a matter of course in discussions of state finance; however, their deployment in the Policy Framework testifies to a significant move which sits uneasily with other elements inherited from People's Education discourse, especially prominent in the Goals, Values, Vision and Principles sections of the document.

The tensions in the document reflect the contradictory political location of the ANC at the time of publication, as an opposition movement mounting a challenge to the government, and therefore very generous in its plans and promises, as well as a government-in-waiting which is careful not to raise unrealistic expectations that would be difficult to fulfil and might come back to haunt it at a later date. The new discursive elements, with their tone of pragmatism and moderation, do not merely express realities of power, however, but also serve to shape the very nature of power. By conferring on certain theoretical and political approaches (and their representatives) the mantle of responsibility and readiness to govern, discourse helps determine which policies are deemed reasonable and realistic and who is considered respectable enough to decide on and implement policy. The allocation of personal power after the elections in the form of appointments to influential positions had a lot to do with considerations of this nature.

THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IPET)

Further steps (both political and discursive) towards asserting responsibility over education policy were taken with the IPET process. Unlike its direct ancestor the ANC Policy Framework, IPET was an internal project. It was open to people who were invited on a personal basis to contribute to the translation of the Policy Framework into concrete plans of implementation in nineteen different sectors. It

was never meant to be consumed publicly, and to this day it has not been published and distributed. This is a major reason why it could afford to do away with much of the populist discourse of the past; as no mass constituencies were addressed, there was no need for professions of loyalty to the progressive cause.

When going through the reports of the IPET task teams, it is difficult not to appreciate the drastic difference from the documents preceding them. Not only are the reports much more detailed and specific, but they are full of data, tables, budgetary figures, analyses of political and bureaucratic constraints, and outlines of concrete steps to be taken at different stages in the process of transformation. Little of NEPI's considered and theoretically-informed evaluation of options, or the Policy Framework's constant affirmations of the principle of giving voice to the concerns of marginalised constituencies, can be found in them. They are written in a matter-of-fact manner with a distinct technocratic slant, concerned more with getting a job done under time pressure than with elaborating on lofty but detached visions.

That this is the case should not be surprising given that the brief to the task teams specified that they should set targets and dates, propose legislation, provide estimates of the capital, recurrent costs and personnel requirements, and spell out other pre-requisites for successful implementation.[12] In addition, only two months were assigned to the task, too short a time to leave much room for indulging in prolonged contemplation. There is more to the changing nature of discourse than these technical concerns, however. Free of the direct pressure of having to canvass popular support, the IPET task teams could concentrate on what should and could be done, regardless of popular expectations. This is not at all to say that the process was free of politics or that the participants were indifferent to popular demands; in fact, a plan of implementation that does not consider political factors would be completely useless. In addition, by virtue of their involvement in the project most of the task team coordinators and members had a stake in an ANC victory. However, the impending transition made the desire to be practical and useful, not necessarily popular, the most pressing imperative.

The report of the Finance task team is a good example. It recognises that not all areas could benefit from the new policy priorities to the same extent and it therefore does not make any special provision for the coming year for sub-sectors such as Special Education and Further Education. It seeks to offer precise figures of the extra funds needed and what proportion of these could be transferred from some departments and sectors to others. It qualifies the concept of free education – arguably the centrepiece of the ANC policy – by asserting that it would not mean funding for all at current white levels, but only "a certain minimally acceptable quality of schooling which would be made available to all"; it further acknowledges that although the long term plan is to equalise per capita subsidy levels, "perfect equality would be unattainable".[13] In considering ways of obtaining greater equality in subsidy levels, such as those of "devolving the choice of financial

strategy to the level of the school", and allowing "the different fee-paying capacities of parents to be reflected in the practices adopted by the schools their children attend",[14] the report makes no promises of instant solutions.

In a more explicit political vein, the report of the Governance task team identifies the obstacles that might arise in the implementation of ANC policies, including "political opposition, individual insecurities or merely bureaucratic inertia",[15] and suggests ways of overcoming these. It cautions that popular dissatisfaction and impatience might lead to "pressure to expedite the process of transformation prematurely", and warns of the danger that "attempts to tackle too many changes at once could lead to major inefficiencies and even a paralysis of the transformation process".[16] At the school governance level, the report notes that stakeholders might clash among themselves since the notion of Parents, Teachers and Student Associations (PTSAs), made popular by the democratic movement as the organ of community control, obscures the likely resistance by parents and principals to the involvement of teachers and students in the running of schools. Furthermore, inadequate infrastructure and lack of education and organisational capacity would hamper the ability of poor communities to participate in governance, thus rendering the notion of democratic governance problematic.

The Governance report, together with most other IPET reports, goes beyond facile populist formulas to engage with practical issues of transformation. The dual nature of policy documents produced by the democratic movement, and expressed in the Policy Framework, is still evident in IPET, but the populist component of discourse has weakened relative to the technical problem-solving component. Obviously, this does not imply that IPET deviates from the principles of the Policy Framework, or that it is a cynical attempt to speak on behalf of popular constituencies without really caring for their concerns. Rather, the point is that in modifying the focus of discourse, problems that used to be considered important (such as the legitimacy of the system, the consultative nature of policy making and the role of national versus regional and local structures) appear in a different light, and the solutions traditionally proposed to these problems acquire a new meaning and may even seem irrelevant. In other words, while discourse has no independent existence outside material reality, it shapes the ways in which that reality is defined, organised in order of importance and managed.

THE WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The shift away from populism has found its most recent manifestation in the White Paper on Education and Training, released by the National Department of Education in September 1994. This, the first major policy statement by the new government, was produced as a result of the move of elements of the democratic movement into the centre of the policy making process. The Paper is not a product of the movement as such, however, but rather an outcome of the encounter between old

and new elements which have joined forces in the framework of the Government of National Unity. This encounter, an expression of the current realities of power, has an obvious effect on the policy discourse used in the Paper. This discourse, in turn, serves to consolidate the new alliance forged in the Ministry of Education between established and incoming bureaucrats, and to demarcate boundaries between former allies in the democratic movement who became insiders or outsiders in the new political and administrative set-up, as the case may be.

The White Paper identifies many problems in the current system, and in particular the disparities in facilities, resources and quality of provision. These have resulted "in huge inequalities in skills and competences in the nation's labour force, with the same racial, ethnic and gender hierarchies reproducing themselves in private and parastatal employment, and in the public service".[17] The consequences of these historical patterns "have been devastating for social and economic development, because the human capacity of the majority of the South African population has for generations been neglected, wasted and stunted".[18] In placing itself within the RDP, the White Paper maintains that education should be seen as an

> element in national economic reconstruction and development ... in order to provide the basis for employment growth, to raise workers' level of general education and skill, to support the introduction of more advanced technologies, to overcome the inheritance of racial and gender stratification in the workforce, and to achieve effective worker participation in decision-making and quality improvement.[19]

While the Paper goes on to define education as a basic human right, it justifies this on the ground that all citizens should have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential, and make their full contribution to society. In what seems an inversion of the original rationale of People's Education, the goal of education is seen as uplifting individuals so that they may contribute to the development of the economy and society, rather than uplifting the economy and transforming society so that they can contribute to the development of previously marginalised individuals and communities. Of course, the two goals are not mutually exclusive and the Paper makes numerous references to the need to develop individuals and their capacity for critical thought. The focus of the document lies elsewhere, though.

Throughout the Paper, concerns with productivity, economic growth, technological advancement and orderly development feature prominently, and a discourse focusing on a cost-benefit analysis is deployed. Thus, as the productivity of the system – "what it produces in terms of personal learning, marketable skills, and examination results, in relation to what it has cost" – is very low in much of the system, improving efficiency and productivity are crucial.[20] In this vein, adult basic education and training is considered important since it is "a force for social participation and economic development, providing an essential component of all RDP programmes".[21] The further education sector needs to be re-shaped in light of the fact that

> global changes in the industrial and service sectors of the economy require an increase in the general education component of vocational training and a concomitant increase in the ability of those in full-time education to develop applied and problem-solving skills.[22]

Similarly, the structure of higher education needs to be overhauled since it

> is the inverse of what is required by the society and economy with a small technikon sector, a relatively large university sector, and a fragmented post-secondary college system, with poor articulation among the various parts.[23]

All of the above are legitimate, even essential, considerations. That they are discussed within a technocratic discourse that is more concerned with tangible outcomes than with the legitimacy of decision-making procedures, or the extent of consultation in the policy process, should not be held against the White Paper. The crisis in education is so severe that a focus on what can be done to improve the ability of the system to produce hard skills seems justified. It is important to point out, however, that a concern with outcomes may obscure other considerations which are of importance not only in their own right, but also in their impact on the productivity of the system overall.

As was mentioned earlier, there is an implicit tension between technological education and education for democratic awareness and critical thinking. Given the potential societal rewards of a scientific-oriented education, marginalising the latter goals may seem a small price to pay; it is doubtful, however, that this approach could be mechanically copied and applied wholesale to South Africa. For strategies of change to succeed, they have to take into consideration the historically specific context within which they are applied. The East Asian model of development through education was built on very different foundations from those obtaining in contemporary South Africa. It benefited from centuries of centralised state control, a highly structured and disciplinarian culture, a committed work ethic and an elevated status of learning for its own sake. In the absence of these factors, the mere channelling of resources into technological and scientific education is unlikely to yield the anticipated results.

This does not mean that the pre-conditions above are the only ones which can ensure high performance or that different conditions cannot be created. The point here is that a system suffering from a crisis of legitimacy and a breakdown of the culture of learning and teaching cannot be reconstructed without addressing these concerns directly. They are a product not only of political conflict and material deprivation, but also of a state of mind which has acquired a life of its own. The move to a technocratic discourse with a clear focus on performance and outcomes signifies a welcome change in its timely concern with efficiency, sustainability and feasibility. We should not forget, though, that the long history of struggle for democratic and popular education is far from over and any change in policy would have to tackle its continued legacy.

Precisely such a reminder is provided in the submission of the NECC to the hearings of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the White Paper. The NECC praises the White Paper for making a decisive break with apartheid policies and moving to tackle the fragmented, stratified, excessively bureaucratic, exclusionary, racist, gender-biased and region-discriminatory legacies of the past. At the same time, the NECC criticises the Paper for being extremely cautious and vague on the measures needed to achieve greater equity, redress inequalities and redistribute resources. In voicing its concerns, the NECC expresses its intent to continue being a thorn in the flesh of the government to ensure that it lives up to the ideals of People's Education. These are defined as commitment to a popular social movement transformation of education within a national project which involves a commitment to individual, community and national liberation and development through education and training.[24]

It is interesting to note here that even as the NECC re-asserts its support for the ideals of the populist discourse, it embraces the new emphasis on the role of education in economic growth and development. In fact, it goes as far as to critique the White paper for not going far enough in linking education and training to the national economy, labour market policy, the country's industrialisation strategy and the development of science and technology. The inescapable conclusion is that the technocratic discourse has become deeply entrenched in current debates on education policy. How the experience of the coming school year and the beginning of practical implementation of policy changes will affect all that remains to be seen.

CONCLUSIONS

The brief discussion of changes in education policy discourse offered here could not possibly have covered all the numerous issues addressed in recent policy documents. The goal has been more modest: to present a gradual but persistent trend of change in discourse which has accompanied the ongoing change in power relations in the country as a whole. The paper has sought to identify a consistent move from a populist emphasis on process, consultation and equality to a more technocratic emphasis on performance, outcome and economic competitiveness. This move should not be seen in dichotomous terms. Concerns with economic growth and development were expressed in the past, and the quest for equality and redistribution of resources has not been abandoned. However, there has been a clear shift in emphasis which can be expected to continue as the democratic movement consolidates its hold on power. The clash between the different and sometimes contradictory discursive principles outlined above thus promises to occupy the centre stage in coming years.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. G. Mashamba, *A Conceptual Critique of the People's Education Discourse*. (Johannesburg: Education Policy Unit, 1990), 42-49.
2. *Ibid.*, 51.
3. National Education Policy Investigation, *The Framework Report* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1993), 5-8.
4. *Ibid*, 10-15.
5. See the critical exchange in *Perspectives in Education*, 14, 2 (1993), 191-237.
6. African National Congress, *A Policy Framework for Education and Training* (Johannesburg, January 1994).
7. *Ibid.*, 9-13.
8. *Ibid.*, 8.
9. *Ibid.*, 29-46.
10. *Ibid.*, 33.
11. *Ibid.*, 34.
12. ANC Education Department, *Implementation Plan for Education and Training* (Johannesburg, May 1994), v-vii.
13. *Ibid.*, 74.
14. *Ibid.*, 75; effectively, an extension of the Model C system without dealing with historically accumulated inequalities.
15. *Ibid.*, 60.
16. *Ibid.*, 61.
17. Department of Education, *Draft White Paper on Education and Training* (Government Gazette, Pretoria, September 1994), 9.
18. *Ibid.*, 10.
19. *Ibid.*, 11.
20. *Ibid.*, 13.
21. *Ibid.*, 17.
22. *Ibid.*, 18.
23. *Ibid.*, 19.
24. National Education Coordinating Committee, *Submission to Parliamentary Select Committee on Draft White Paper on Education and Training*, 31 October 1994.

Perspectives in Education, 1995, Vol 16 No 1, 205-208

Vintage Kenton

W. Flanagan, C. Hemson, J. Muller and N. Taylor (eds.), Maskew Miller Longman, Cape Town, ISBN 0 636 02062 2, 290 pages

TONY MORPHET
School of Education, University of Cape Town, Rondebosh 7700

The 'Kenton' education conference has been active for twenty-one consecutive years. For twenty of those it operated in a loose *ad hoc* way from conference to conference, but in 1993 it constituted itself as a formal 'education association'. In 1994, to mark the twenty-first year, the Association published a selection of papers from previous conferences called *Vintage Kenton.*[1] The compilers of the book speak of it as "an artifice of narrative" which constructs a version of the path which Kenton has taken over the years.

At the invitation of the editors of *Perspectives* what I offer here is another version – at once as artificial as the book it 'reviews' and as loose in form as the other representations of the Kenton track which appear in its pages.

KENTON : 'A STRANGE THING TO DO'

The first representation of the conference 'history' is given by Clive Millar. In his 1984 paper "Nagmaals on the Little English Trek"[2] he observed that there was "some kind of propulsion" coming from outside the conference "that (made) people meet every year for eleven years". And he added, in a characteristically *faux-naif* remark, "It's a very strange thing to do". After the twenty-first event it doesn't seem so strange. Now that it has not only a formal constitution but in *Vintage Kenton* its collective 'biography', its identity seems stable and secure. But the 'propulsive' energies remain obscure.

Majority status hasn't come easily. Kenton has had a turbulent and wayward youth and even now, as the formal annual general meeting at Kenton 21 showed, it can only swallow adult academic decorum with a thick slice of irony. But its assured continuity between conferences reflects a startling change in its fortunes. Where there used to be an annual cycle of death and re-birth there is now the steady reassurance of bureaucratic procedures. These changes prompt thought about both the 'propulsions' of the past and the stabilisation of the present.

KENTON AS ACADEMIC PICARESQUE

Vintage Kenton has twenty-one papers. They are not chronologically organised but the book is probably best read as a series of intellectual adventures in which the 'hero' – the conference itself – very slowly learns the ways of the world and finally comes to a stable adult identity. Not everyone holds a high opinion of the hero. At the 1994 South African Association for Academic Development (SAAAD) Conference, Kenton was referred to in public session with what can only be called 'fear and loathing', and held up as an example of what SAAAD did *not* want to become. The projected image showed a nasty intellectual bully in the house next door. The warning given was against cavalier intellectual violence and the dreaded exposure and humiliation which it can produce. There is some truth in this – even Kenton devotees will agree – but it's not the whole story. Kenton has had its measure of soft-pedagogies and nurturant sub-cultures; it was little else in the early years and that strand has persisted. Pretty well every conference has been obliged to hear and attend to complaints about the treatment given to 'marginal' groups and interests. Nonetheless Kenton's public reputation and, for that matter, its private practice, has not been about supportive sympathy. It has been about danger and risk; about well-aimed shafts and desperate defences; about triumphs and humiliations – about an intellectual adolescence in fact. It is just possible that some of the glamour of such instant intellectual calls to action may now be of the past. The picaro may indeed have settled down.

LEAVING HOME

If we are looking for the propulsions of these times they are not hard to see. When Kenton emerged from its calm and sheltered childhood on the East Cape coast and went to the city in 1980 it struck a daring post in a swirling and dangerous world. The sound of battle was never far off and for white academics in the Historically Liberal Universities there was a great deal at stake. They could be either cut down where they stood, stranded between the forces of the Afrikaner State and the rising power of The People; or, still more daunting, they could be lost without trace beneath the mounting waves of theory coming at them through history, sociology, and political economy, not to mention education itself – from Frankfurt, Paris, London and New York. How to keep one's feet in the classroom, fend off the political behemoths and keep one's theoretical trousers or skirt buttoned and belted, was enough to tax even the boldest and best prepared.

TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF HEAVY WEATHER

Consider the buffetings of the twenty-one years as the figure in the *Vintage* biography. Caught in the groundswell of eighteen years of rolling crisis in the schools Kenton has been witness, on either side of its rickety and precarious stage, to two versions of People's Education (remember Volkekunde); two versions of Development (remember the Homelands debate); two national educational commissions (remember de Lange) and a dozen different calls to stand and identify itself.

It has also imbibed (and voided) more strong theory than is good for any youth. Liberal structural functionalism went out first, though it, along with Weberian rationality, has recently made a reappearance on the table. Then, in a long and rowdy bout, the radicalisms were gulped down – each more heady than the last – the 'young Marx'; the 'middle Marx'; the 'old Marx'; the neo-Marx from Frankfurt; the neo-Marx from Paris; the neo-Marx from Rome. Not much was taken of the structuralists but from the 'post' theorisers there have been many years of bibulous pleasure.

GENERATOR AND DISTRIBUTOR

The adolescent Kenton learned the terms of survival in its battle in a turbulent world – and in the engagement it discovered the other internally propulsive force – power. At first the stakes were low; a matter of a settled position in a safe place – an internal promotion perhaps or even a chair somewhere else. But as Old South Africa began its melt-down the stakes rose. Kenton found that you could set up power circuits not just inside the academy, but out in the world as well. The academy itself began to change its political and its social colours. The connections came slowly at first – 'community' credibility; links with the UDF/MDM; pre-post-apartheid conferences abroad; promo tours, scholarships and foreign funding. They began to pick up speed with the EPUs, the political networks, policy work, NEPI, consultancies and commissions, even, for some, the final incandescence of election to office. For a brief period it even seemed as if Kenton and its friends might constitute the core of a new and glittering educational 'court'. Somewhere there must have been some loose wires because it hasn't turned out that way.

Kenton generated power and Kenton distributed power. The intellectual armatures produced it, but the rules for plugging in and switching on where never explicit (they never are); the means were sometimes desperate – even cruel. Those that got it flourished and shone, those that didn't dimmed or fell away, turning to

some other source for their comfort. The full story of Kenton is as much about those who left as those who stayed.

Vintage Kenton, is subtitled 'a commemoration'. The hint of a death is presumably deliberate but that is surely going too far. Kenton isn't dead – just grown up. And necessarily so. The currents have steadied and the power surges are less extreme; survival is less of an issue; personal positions are either largely won or lost. It looks like an appropriate time for Kenton to settle down to steady long-term work – at least for a time – but one can always hope that another generational burst of youthful excess will save it from too much academic cholesterol.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. W. Flanagan, C. Hemson, J. Muller and N. Taylor (eds.), *Vintage Kenton* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1994).
2. C. Millar, "Nagmaals on the Little English Trek", *op cit.*

Subscription Form

Faculty of Education
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3
Wits
2050

	Individuals	Institutions	Students	Donors
Home	R40	R60	R25	R200
UK & Europe	£25	£40	£15	£200
USA & Canada	$50	$60	$25	$200
Austr and New Z	$50	$60	$25	$200

Name: . . . . . .

Address : . . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

I wish to subscribe to *Perspectives in Education* for volume : . . . .
and enclose my subscription for R/£/$
Cheques etc should be may payable to :
Perspectives in Education

Notes for Contributors

1. Contributions should be typed, doubled-spaced, on one side of an A4 sheet only. Three copies should be submitted and one retained.
2. Title, author's name, full postal address and a biographical note should be typed on a separate sheet.
3. An abstract of 100-200 words should also be typed on a separate sheet.
4. **Discs:** Where copy is submitted on disc, for computer based editing, text should be submitted with no formatting. *i.e. All text to begin flush with left hand margin. No indenting of text. One space (not two) after full stops, between sentences. No line spacing between paragraphs. No line spacing between headings and text. All headings in lower case. Tables without tabs or spacing.* Discs must be accompanied by a typed copy which indicates paragraphing, table formatting and relative importance of headings (A,B), in pencil in the margin. The following word processing programmes are acceptable: ASCII, DOA, MSWord, Multimate, Wordperfect, Wordstar, Xerox Writer, Xywrite.
5. **Typed copy:** Submit typed copy in the style of *Perspectives in Education*.
6. **Text:** Dates thus: 1 January 1989. Double quotation marks only (except for "quotes 'within' quotes") to be used; all quotations of more than 40 words to be on new line without quotation marks (but indicated in pencil in the margin). Abbreviations to be given in full at first, then written without points, for example, United States (US).
7. **Notes and References:** These are always at end of text, in order of appearance and numbered ("...at schools'.[7]) No separate bibliography to be given. Please do not use computer generated endnotes.

For reference to a book:

P. Kallaway (ed.), *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg Ravan Press, 1984), 2-5.

For a journal reference:

A. Simon and P. Beard, "Discriminatory Factors Affecting Women Teachers in Natal", *Perspectives in Education*, 9, 1 (July 1986): 59.

For a reference to a chapter in a collection:

F. Chikane, "Children in Turmoil: The Effects of the Unrest of Township Children", in S. Berman and P. Reynolds (eds.), *Growing Up in a Divided Society: The Contexts of Childhood in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 20.

For reference to work listed directly preceding:

Ibid., 20.

For reference to a work listed above, but not directly preceding:

Simon and Beard, 61.

Unpublished sources:

Phillips to J.D. Rheinalt Jones, 10 September 1934, Ray Phillips Papers, A1444-1446, Church of the Province of South Africa, University of the Witwatersrand.

Published government reports:

South African Native Affairs Commission Report, 1903-1905 (Cape Town, 1905), 71.

Newspapers:

The Star, 3 September 1986.

Unpublished theses and papers:

M. Cross, "Capital, State, Missionaries, and the Foundations of a Segregated Schooling System on the Witwatersrand, 1900-1924" (M.Ed. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985), 1.

Oral interviews:

N. Ncube, teacher at Citrusdal Primary, interview with author, Citrusdal, July 1988.

8. **Proofs:** Proofs will be sent to authors if there is sufficient time to do so. They should be corrected and returned to the Production Manager within a week, unless otherwise stated. If authors miss the deadline, publications will go ahead without their corrections. Major alterations to the text cannot be accepted.

Contributions should be sent to The Editors, *Perspectives in Education*, University of the Witwatersrand, Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050, South Africa, or through Regional Associate Editors.

Please note: The editors regret that they will not be able to accept for publication final versions of articles which do not comply with the above conditions.

Introduction
Edward French 1

ARTICLES

Banking on Education
Bobby Soobrayan 5

The Status, Constraints and Potential of Primary Teacher Education Reform for Basic Education in Mozambique
Kuzvinetsa Dzvimbo 33

Transforming Pedagogy in South Africa
Catriona Macleod 63

Democratizing the Matric Biology Curriculum
Botlhale Tema 83

A Critique of the History Curriculum in South Africa
Stephen Lowry 105

REPORTS, DOCUMENTS AND DEBATE

Reflections on the 1994 History Workshop Teachers' Conference
Cynthia Kros 131

Report on Language Policy for Education
Nazira Cachalia 147

The Politics of Specialized Education
Sigamoney Naicker 163

Curriculum Reconstruction, the RDP and Late Capitalist Crisis
Frank Wilderson 173

Radical Posturing, the Challenge of Policy Making and the RDP: A Response to Wilderson
Andre Kraak 183

Kenton-at-Gordon's Bay, October 1995
Mark Abrahams 191

REVIEWS

Education Policy Discourse and the New South Africa
Ran Greenstein 193

W. Flanagan *et al* (eds.) *Vintage Kenton*
Tony Morphet 205