

https://dspace.org/

The challenges of curriculum change challenges of curriculum change teachers in Limpopo province

Marneweck, Lorraine Veronica

2006-11-17T09:07:08Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/1843

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

THE CHALLENGES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE FACING RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Lorraine Veronica Marneweck

WitsETD

THE CHALLENGES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE FACING RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

WitsETD

Lorraine Veronica Marneweck

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

November 2004

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences
University of the Witwatersrand

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS……. i
TABLES AND FIGURES…….. iv
DECLARATION..... v
ABSTRACT..... vi
DEDICATION..... vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... viii
ACRONYMS……..... x

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH: FRAMING THE PRESIDENT'S SCHOOLS PROJECT..... 1
Outcomes-based education: setting the agenda for change..... 2
The President's Schools Project: tracing the roots of the project…… 7
Research aims and questions..... 11
Summary of chapters..... 13

CHAPTER TWO
TEACHER LEARNING AND TEACHER DEVELOPMENT:
PRACTICE, KNOWLEDGE AND PEDAGOGY…… 15
Practice: teachers and teaching..... 17
Shifting the control over interpersonal relations..... 20
Shifting the content and method of the curriculum..... 22
Implications for teacher development in South Africa……. 24
Knowledge: teachers and knowing..... 26
Conceptual knowledge..... 28
Content knowledge..... 29
Pedagogical knowledge..... 30
Conceptual knowledge as practice..... 33
Personal practical knowledge..... 34
Pedagogy: teachers and learning..... 37
Teacher collaboration..... 38
Supporting teacher collaboration through leadership..... 42
Supporting teacher collaboration through reflection..... 45
Conclusion..... 48

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH PARADIGM: PROCESSES AND METHODS…… 50
Research context: the researcher, the schools and the teachers..... 51
Qualitative interviews..... 57
A focus on Letjatji and Mashamba..... 61
Analytical categories in interview data..... 63
Qualitative observations..... 65
Analytical categories in classroom observation data..... 67
Analytical framework..... 71
Dimensions of discourse..... 72
Critical discourse analysis..... 75
Qualitative research issues..... 77
Descriptive validity..... 79
Interpretive validity..... 80
Theoretical validity..... 81
Generalisability..... 83
Conclusion..... 84

CHAPTER FOUR
TAKING-UP COLLABORATION: THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW SOCIAL PRACTICE..... 85
The nature of the project: determined by social processes..... 86
The in-service programme..... 89
The school-based support programme..... 92
Taking-up teacher collaboration: determinative of social processes..... 96
Conclusion..... 102

CHAPTER FIVE
THE STRUGGLE TO TRANSFORM: ESTABLISHING NEW DISCURSIVE PRACTICES..... 104
Transforming social relationships..... 105
Transforming curriculum understanding..... 111
Curriculum authority..... 114
The role of the teacher as decision-maker..... 117
The role of the teacher as facilitator..... 121
Curriculum knowledge..... 125
The role of the teacher as connector..... 127
Transforming curriculum support..... 129
The role of the teacher as leader..... 134
Conclusion..... 141

CHAPTER SIX
KNOWLEDGE AS PRACTICE: ENACTING IMAGES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING..... 144
The decision-maker in practice..... 145
Questions and answers: establishing pedagogical control..... 146
Group learning activities: privileging from over substance..... 155
The facilitator in practice..... 168
Questions and answers: shifting the social climate in the classroom..... 168
Group learning activities: making a distinction between authority and responsibility..... 171
The connector in practice..... 185
Questions and answers: learning contexts..... 185
Group learning activities: concrete and abstract..... 192
The leader in practice..... 201
Knowledge as practice in Baropodi..... 203
Knowledge as practice in Letjatji..... 209
Knowledge as practice in Mashamba..... 214
Conclusion..... 223

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE CHALLENGES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE: DILEMMAS AND CONCLUSIONS..... 225

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 231

UNISA

APPENDICES..... **246**
A Written consent form..... 246
B Biographical details of Intermediate Phase Teachers..... 247
C Focus group interview schedule..... 253
D Focus group interviews..... 255
E Additional interviews..... 256
F NUDIST analysis..... 257
G Text units quoted per teacher..... 275
H Lesson observation schedule..... 283
I Video discussion interviews..... 294
J Lessons observed..... 295
K Lesson discussion interviews..... 297
L Field notes..... 298
M Range of observational data quoted per lesson..... 301

WitsETD

TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

CHAPTER THREE

Table 3.1 Teachers' knowledge as practice..... 70

CHAPTER SIX

Table 6.1 Knowledge as practice – pedagogical control..... 155
Table 6.2 Knowledge as practice – form and substance..... 167
Table 6.3 Knowledge as practice – social climate..... 171
Table 6.4 Knowledge as practice – authority and responsibility..... 183
Table 6.5 Knowledge as practice – learning contexts..... 192
Table 6.6 Knowledge as practice – concrete and abstract..... 200
Table 6.7 Teachers' knowledge as practice..... 202

FIGURES

CHAPTER THREE

Figure 3.1 Discourse as text, interaction and context..... 72
Figure 3.2 Analytical framework..... 74

CHAPTER SIX

Figure 6.1 Animal teeth (activity one)..... 157
Figure 6.2 Animal teeth (activity two)..... 158
Figure 6.3 Classifying transport..... 160
Figure 6.4 Collective nouns..... 164
Figure 6.5 Weather conditions..... 165
Figure 6.6 Gender..... 174
Figure 6.7 Circulation of air..... 182
Figure 6.8 Transport..... 195
Figure 6.9 Provinces and premiers..... 218

WISER

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted fro the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Lorraine Veronica Marneweck

1 November 2004

WitsETD

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the challenges a particular group of rural primary school teachers experienced as they implemented a national outcomes-based curriculum through the support of an external agent. It uses Fairclough's (1991) model of critical discourse analysis and his theory of critical language study as a framework to explore the discourses and practices of this group of South African teachers. Methodologically, this thesis is located in the qualitative paradigm, and uses interviews and observations to systematically probe teachers' understandings of curriculum and change.

Three themes are developed in this thesis. First, the theme of teacher collaboration is presented as a new social practice that the teachers creatively took up during a school development project. It shows that while social and institutional process determined the nature of the project as a social practice, at a situational level, the teachers played a much more determinative role as they shaped the project and its practices in several intriguing ways. Second, the curriculum roles that were discursively produced by the teachers as they struggled to transform their practice from isolation to collaboration are revealed. This demonstrates that while many of these roles were common to all schools, the role of the teacher as leader emerged in only two of the schools. And third, through analysing the lessons taught by this group of teachers in their classrooms, the tacit knowledge of pedagogy and content on which their practice was based is made explicit. These themes provide opportunities for certain common sense assumptions about teacher collaboration, leadership, learning and practice to be interrogated in terms of their applicability to the schools in the project.

The thesis concludes with a discussion of the possibilities that still exist for teacher educators to enhance understanding of what happens inside traditional rural schools.

WISER

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with love, to Alan, David and Steven.

WitsETD

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the help and support I received from different people while I was working on this thesis. In particular I would like to mention:

Professor Pam Christie, my primary supervisor. Thank you for the advice you gave me as I struggled to find my path through the data I collected and the literature in which I immersed myself. Your friendship, encouragement, patience and critical input helped me to develop both as a person and as a researcher.

Professor Jill Adler, my co-supervisor. Your insights into classroom practice in South Africa proved invaluable to my understanding of the complexities of conducting curriculum research in rural schools. Thank you for the rigorous manner in which you always read my work and the support you gave me.

Doctor Dawn Butler, a trusted friend. Thank you for opening up new doors in my life and for always challenging me to grow and develop.

Doctor Neil McGurk, the present Director of Sacred Heart College Research and Development, and the past principal of Sacred Heart College. Thank you for offering me the opportunity to work more broadly in education in South Africa.

Thank you to all of my colleagues and friends in Sacred Heart College and in Sacred Heart College Research and Development (past and present). Your interest and support has helped to sustain me over these years.

Thanks as well to the Flemish Office for International Co-operation and Technical Assistance and the Flemish Government who provided the funds that made the President's Schools Project possible.

WiSER

A special thanks to the principals, school managers, school governors, teachers and learners in the six President's Schools, Baropodi, Khomisani, Letjatji, Mashamba, Mutshetshe and Nwaxinyamani. Thank you for the gracious and friendly manner in which you allowed me into your lives, into your schools, and into your classrooms.

And last, but definitely not least, to my family. Thank you to my husband Alan; you have been such a pillar of support to me in this work that it literally could not have been done without you. To my elder son David, thank you for the quiet manner in which you accepted my absence from trips to the Pilanesberg. And to my younger son Steven, thank you for letting me take over your room and your cupboards for all my "stuff"! I love you all.

WitsETD

ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
COLP	Culture of Learning Programme
DET	Department of Education and Training
EMS	Economic and Management Sciences
FDE	Further Diploma in Education
FET	Further Education and Training Band
GET	General Education and Training Band
HOD	Head of Department
HSS	Human and Social Sciences
IS	Integrated Studies
MEC	Minister of the Executive Council
MR	Member's Resources
NUDIST	Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising
OBE	Outcomes-based education
PEI	President's Education Initiative
QRLS	Queensland Reform Longitudinal Study
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SASA	South African Schools Act
SHC	Sacred Heart College
SHC R&D	Sacred Heart Research and Development
TED	Transvaal Education Department
TLC	Transitional Local Council
VVOB	Flemish Office for International Co-operation and Technical Assistance
WSD	Whole School Development
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

UNISETD