
THINKING ABOUT TEACHING

*The professional education of teachers and
educators of adults*



A festschrift in honour and appreciation of
Professor Clive J Millar



This book is a celebration of the life and work of

Emeritus Professor Clive Millar

Cover photograph – Scarborough by CJ Millar

2017

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and personal reflections by former colleagues and students

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FOREWORD

BY ALAN PENNY

This *festschrift* has been compiled as a tribute to Clive John Millar by some of his former colleagues and friends who responded to an invitation to participate in producing it. It is a *festschrift* of an unusual kind because it includes some of the writing of the person being honoured. It is also the product of a collaborative exercise as befits Clive's own preferred way of working both as an educator of adults and as a teacher educator. The book takes an interesting form in that it is closely framed around Clive's own professional work as an educator. The core of this volume is the twelve papers that Clive declared were the only ones he could still read with some pleasure. They are grouped into three sections. The first group of papers, written in the 1970's, engage with innovation in the profession education of teachers at the Universities of Stirling, Cape Town and Fort Hare. Alan Penny provides a perspective on these. The next six were written in the 1980's and 1990's and explore the development of a professional curriculum at the University of Cape Town to prepare a new generation of adult educators for work in post-Apartheid South Africa. Robin Mackie and Barry Hymer provide a perspective on these.

The final three papers, written in 2016, are extracts from Clive's book, *A Practical Guide to Classroom Research*, based on ten years' work with students at the Centre for Creative Education. Peter van Alphen, Beulah Reeler, Alexi Silverman and Leigh Moore write about their very personal learning arising out of the student research programme at their institution. The final part of the book, the *Afterword*, captures personal tributes to Clive from some of his former colleagues and students. At first, Clive found my approach to him about the possibility of preparing a *festschrift* in his honour both unexpected and unsettling. This changed, and the Clive we all know emerged with characteristic sharpness of intellect honed with a wisdom acquired over time. The papers themselves have a currency today as more and more technical solutions are

encouraged to address major issues of quality in our education systems. ‘Systems thinking’ alone, divorced from context, has had devastating consequences on educational practice across Africa and elsewhere. The copying of educational practice, the emphasis on symbol above substance, the ‘subjectivisation’ of information and the failure to focus on learning processes, continue to dehumanise the experience of schooling for millions of children. Our failure as educators to anticipate the impact of electronic media on how each of us learn and are shaped (and by whom) should be of considerable concern. Where are the curricula that encourage learners to develop personal knowledge and to turn information into wisdom? Where is the educational practice that encourages the valuing of knowledge, not as a commodity but as a life-enhancing process?

Reading Clive’s work, it is immediately evident that the essence of education lies in the development of a capacity to theorise and reflect, and that such theorising is founded upon the learner’s experience of the educative process. Theory inheres in action and action inheres in theory, thereby encouraging the practitioner to subject both to situational verification. This lies at the core of Clive’s recent book, *A Practical Guide to Classroom Research, 2016*, which underpins the contributions by staff and students at the Centre for Creative Education. As one reads these contributions by Peter van Alphen, Beulah Reeler, Alexi Silverman and Leigh Moore, in the last section of this book, Clive’s own pedagogical skills resonate.

Clive John Millar was born in Cape Town, South Africa on 24th June, 1936. He was close to both his parents and through them appreciated the fine, if simple, things of life. He attended the South African College School (SACS) and after what he described as a poor matriculation pass entered the University of Cape Town in 1954. He achieved a first class honours degree in English in 1957, a Bachelor of Education degree with distinction in 1958 and followed this with a Master of Arts degree in English in 1962. Between 1959 and 1963 he taught English at Westerford High School in Rondebosch, Cape Town and at the Gordon Schools in Huntley, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He joined the staff of

Aberdeen College of Education in 1963 and remained there until he was appointed to the staff of the University of Cape Town in 1967. In 1972 he successfully completed a Master of Science degree in Education at the University of Stirling, Scotland. In 1975 he was appointed Professor of Teaching Science at the University of Fort Hare where he remained until 1978, when he was appointed Professor of Adult Education at the University of Cape Town – the first chair of Adult Education at a South African University. He remained at UCT until his early retirement at the end of 1998.

The papers included in Chapters one, two and three track his career. The tributes paid in the final section, *Afterword*, provide more about the person. Over my long personal and professional friendship with Clive, I thank him for many things: his wresting me from nomothetic certainty, his inducting me into the fine art of situational humour, and for stirring my conscience, including encouraging me to make peace with people in spite of their being ideological poles away from me.

Looking back on a friendship spanning over forty years, I prefer to sum up Clive's capacity for reflective and informed thought in the words of T S Eliot in *Little Gidding*.

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.



CHAPTER 1

INNOVATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Part 1 reflects Clive's early work in teacher education in the 1970s, as a researcher at the new University of Stirling, as lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and as newly appointed Professor of "the science of teaching" at the University of Fort Hare. The first is an account of his research at Stirling into what was then a promising development in teacher education, microteaching; the second a brief sketch of the micro-teaching programme he subsequently introduced at UCT; and the third a reflective paper on his four years of innovative work in teacher education at Fort Hare.

Alan Penny's response to these papers focuses mainly on the work at Fort Hare, something he is uniquely qualified to do. He was a senior colleague and friend in Clive's department and fully involved in the challenge and turbulence of a Black university under Apartheid conditions.

Three papers by Clive Millar on Teacher Education (1974 - 1984 Stirling, UCT and Fort Hare)

1. "Assessment of the quality of evaluations of observed teaching" (1975)
2. "Microteaching for the Education Student" (1974)
3. "Curriculum improvement or social innovation?" (1984)

“Assessment of the quality of evaluations of observed teaching” Clive Millar (1975)

Though a great deal of research has been done on changes in student teachers' attitudes and much time expended on assessing students' competence in practical teaching very little interest has been taken in the ability of student teachers and others to observe teaching and make spontaneous judgements about its quality.

Observation of teaching, usually the teaching of experienced teachers or fellow students, but recently, by means of video recording, observation of oneself, has traditionally been a major component of teacher education, though the purposes of such observations have seldom been defined and the difficulties experienced by student teachers in making sense and use of what they see have been given little attention.

Interpretation and evaluation are needed---judgements; for example, as to the appropriateness of a skill or strategy for the achievement of particular objectives. It is, in part, the quality of a student's evaluation of observed teaching that will influence his professional development. Good judgements are not only means, however, but ends in themselves. A student's capacity to evaluate teaching will be a good indicator of the extent to which he has usefully synthesised a wide range of understandings gained during professional education.

"Do student teachers improve in their capacity to evaluate observed teaching as a result of professional education?"

This practical question directed the research. Before this practical question could be dealt with, however, a more fundamental question had to be answered: "What are the characteristics of 'good' evaluations of observed teaching?" Good evaluation had, in fact, to be defined in operational terms.

Our concern was with the quality of "natural" or "spontaneous" evaluation, and this meant that it was essential to devise some kind of free-response procedure for

sampling the evaluative behaviour of student teachers and some procedure for the reliable description of this behaviour in quantitative terms so that students' evaluative behaviour might be assessed and training evaluated.

Criteria which guided the choice of a procedure for sampling student teachers' evaluative behaviour were the following:

- The constraint on form of response should be minimal. The evaluation should be realistic ones of observed lessons.
- A range of lessons, different in design and teaching style, should be evaluated.
- These lessons should be identical for all observers whose evaluations were to be compared.
- The procedure should be economical of student teachers' time.

Four ten-minute video-recordings of micro-lessons were accordingly selected for observation and a response sheet designed with simple instructions for observers, the main one being that evaluations were to be written down in the form of a number of separate statements. This was the only constraint on form of expression. It was found that student groups managed to evaluate four lessons in 70 minutes, and that on average 20 evaluative statements were produced per student.

Far more difficult than sampling evaluative behaviour was the problem of judging its quality in some objective way. This problem was defined more precisely in the following terms:

to describe objectively in quantitative terms, and in relation to explicit criteria of good or valuable judgements, characteristics of the following aspects of students' "spontaneous" evaluations of observed teaching: the emphasis on aspects of teaching attended to and the range of aspects

attended to; the structure of evaluative statements; the validity of judgements.

Clearly, what observers attended to, how they expressed themselves and how accurate their judgements were, were all important aspects of evaluation, and it was these master categories within which procedures were developed for coding evaluative statements in terms of explicit criteria of good evaluations. The task of arriving at such criteria involved essentially a back and forth movement between theoretical and empirical study. The theoretical enquiry was rooted in, and involved a synthesis of, models of the logic of evaluation, of classroom teaching and of goals of teacher education. This enquiry gave direction to, and was itself shaped by, the empirical study of a great number of recorded judgements of observed teaching. The criteria arising from this approach are discussed in the remainder of this paper.

Aspects of teaching attended to

In order to classify the aspects of teaching attended to in students' evaluations, it was first necessary to develop a generalized description of teaching in terms of a predetermined set of categories. This categorization had to meet the following conditions:

It should differentiate classroom activity, and particularly the teacher's activity, into a number of clearly distinguished and significant phases. The set of categories should leave no aspect of teacher activity unaccounted for. The number of categories should be sufficiently large to allow systematic differences in the range and focus of students' attention to become apparent, but small enough for reliable assessment of such differences to be possible. The system should distinguish between phases of teaching in terms of the degree of specificity with which they are identified.

Especially in view of the condition that most categories ought to reflect "significant" aspects of teaching, such a system should ideally be derived from a theoretical analysis

of teaching and of the effects of teaching, synthesizing the results of empirical studies. In view, however, of the paucity of substantive research findings on the effects of teaching behaviour, no such general theoretical analysis is yet possible. Most workers concerned with analysing teaching behaviour (for example, Wright and Proctor, 1961; Smith and Meux, 1962, Flanders, 1970) have limited themselves to attempting more or less detailed analyses of limited aspects of teaching.

One conceptual framework, however, which did provide a starting-point for our categorization of teaching, was the account by Mack and his co-workers (1966) of classroom verbal interaction. Viewing verbal interaction as a "language game", they found it possible to classify teachers' and pupils' verbal activity in terms of four kinds of "pedagogical move":

1. Structuring: moves set the context for sub-sequent behaviour
2. Soliciting; moves designed to elicit a response
3. Responding: moves fulfilling the expectations of soliciting moves
4. Reacting; moves occasioned by previous moves, but not directly elicited by them, serving to modify and/or rate what has been said previously

At the same time, as major analytical categories were being considered we were attempting to define a wide range of specific categories that could possibly be subsumed within them. None of the many published analyses of teaching behaviour or classroom interaction provided a set of categories adequate for the purpose. Most were considered too general in their phase definition to be sufficiently sensitive to discriminate between "trained" and "untrained" perceptions (for example, Baral, 1968; Flanders, 1971; Robertson, 1957), while others were too narrowly focused and specific in their detailed breakdown of limited aspects of teaching (for example Wright and Proctor, 1961; Smith and Meux, 1970).

Two lists of categories, however, had achieved a middle range in their degree of generality and were comprehensive in their coverage of classroom teaching. Unruh (1968) had constructed a list of 17 categories by means of a content analysis of

1 768 responses to observed lesson. Of these 17 categories 11 related to cognitive phases of teaching, 7 to affective phases, 5 to the teacher's personal qualities, and 3 to content and organization of the lesson. Cicirelli (1969) had identified 23 categories with a strong emphasis on affective, as opposed to cognitive, phases of teaching, while content and organization of the lesson and the teacher's personal qualities received much the same emphasis as in Unruh's system. However, because lists of categories such as these had been devised in contexts quite different from the one in which the "focus" instrument was designed to be used they could provide little more than an idea of a desirable level of generality and a useful checklist to guide the construction of an instrument that would measure in a sensitive way the aspects of teaching attended to by student teachers who had followed a unique course of professional education. It seemed that the material to be used in the first instance for generating the categories to be included in the instrument should be the evaluations of students who had completed the course of training the results of which, in terms of evaluative behaviour, the instrument would ultimately be used to measure.

On several occasions, therefore, a group of trained student teachers at the University of Stirling was asked to evaluate videotaped lessons and a comprehensive list was made of all the aspects of teaching attended to. The list of phases generated in this way was used to code a further sample of evaluative statements by trained students and difficulties of classification were solved either by redefining phases, combining categories or creating new ones. Finally, the list was checked for omissions against available rating schedules. This procedure resulted in a list of 14 phases of teaching. It was found that while Bellack's extremely narrow category of "responding" was subsumed under "reacting" his three remaining categories could accommodate all 14 specific phases except those dealing with the arousal of interest, social relationships and other affective aspects of teaching. For this reason, a fourth major category, "motivating", was introduced, while Bellack's "structuring" category, renamed "explaining" was to be restricted to

cognitive aspects of teaching only. The basis of the system for classifying aspects of teaching was thus a division into four phases: "motivating", "explaining", "soliciting and 'reacting".

The classification of specific phases of teaching within four master categories made possible both a distinction between attention to general and specific phases of teaching and a degree of elasticity in the instrument dependent on such a distinction. The major category "motivating", for example, had the following 6 subdivisions:

1. General statements
2. Use of variation
3. Use of materials, audio-visual aids, examples
4. Encouraging pupil participation
5. Social climate
6. Other specific statements

An evaluative statement to do with motivation could thus be classified as general, specific in one of four defined ways. or specific but undefined. This inclusion of "general" and "other specific" categories within each of the four major categories ensured both that all evaluations could be categorized and also that the distinction between general and specific evaluations was consistently maintained. Three additional categories seemed necessary to cope with evaluative statements not focused on the actual teaching process: "teacher's personal characteristics", e.g. "shy", "aggressive", "content and organization" e.g. preparation, choice of content, and "pupil behaviour", both cognitive and affective. Categories were given careful definition and coding instructions were drawn up and revised in the light of trial codings of evaluative statements. (For a full account, see Millar, 1972.)

The tendencies of an observer to give more or less attention to certain aspects of teaching than to others are expressed quantitatively in three ways. In the case

of major phases of teaching the number of endings in any category is expressed as a percentage of all codings within the four major phases. In the case of "content and organization". "teacher's personal qualities", and "pupil behaviour", the score is the percentage of all evaluative statements which deal with each aspect. The range of phases of teaching attended to is a simple tally of the number of sub-categories of major phases used.

The structure of evaluative statements

Could trained observers be expected to differ from untrained not only *in* the "range" and "focus" of their evaluations but also in the ways in which judgements are formulated? If so, which structural characteristics of evaluative statements could be considered desirable outcomes of professional education and how could these be described so as to permit reliable identification as a basis for quantification? The procedure adopted was to study a large sample of evaluative statements of trained and untrained student teachers attempting to conceptualist, observed differences, guided by a simple model of the logical components of any judgement and a tentative definition of the goal of teacher education especially as these applied to observation and analysis of teaching.

The model was that of Toulmin (1958) in the form used by Meux (1963, and Meux and Smith, 1964) in their analysis of the logic of evaluation as it occurs in communication in the classroom. Evaluation in its ideal form was seen to consist of four elements: the *object* to be evaluated; the *claim*—the evaluation of the object in such terms as "good", "false", "desirable", etc.; the *warrant* or *criterion* by which the evaluation is supported or justified; and the *connecting facts* about the object which show the connection between object and warrant and give the warrant relevance. Meux divided warrant into four kinds; application of rules, comparison with criteria, appeal to personal factors, and examination of consequences. Use of "examination of consequences" warrants, seemed particularly appropriate in being

consistent with systems thinking about teaching, where skills and strategies are to be used and justified by reference to intended or observed change in pupil behaviour, rather than rules, external criteria or personal approval. This distinction between warrants which dealt with consequences and those that did not provided the first category for classifying evaluative statements--"consequentialism".

"Consequentialism"

The distinction between evaluative statements that were expressed in "consequential" terms and those that were not was, in most cases, not difficult to make. Compare these evaluations, *for example*.

"The teacher used lots of higher order questions."

"His higher order questions bewildered the class."

The warrant in the first could be either a rule or a personal preference, the second disapproves of the teacher's questioning by describing its consequences in terms of pupil behaviour, the essential feature of its "consequential" warrant being the cause-effect relationship between two factors. It seemed reasonable to assume that student teachers' tendencies towards "consequential" evaluation would be positively related to the emphasis in their professional training on analytical thinking as opposed to rule-following. In particular, a course of training that required students to define educational objectives and devise strategies for realising them, that used micro-teaching procedures where teaching skills were practised with regard to their effectiveness in promoting desired pupil responses, and that consistently attempted to use observed pupil and student behaviour as the major criterion for course and lesson evaluation could be expected to increase the "consequentialism" of students' "intuitive" judgements.

"Purposiveness"

A second basis for classifying evaluative statements was suggested by the fact that the cause-effect links in some of the statements studied were not "consequential" but

"purposive" (e.g. "He asked questions to gauge the level of the class"), This characteristic seemed worth distinguishing because it indicated an approach that involved not only the analytical perspective implicit in "consequentialism" but also a strategic type of thinking, a tendency to infer the purpose of the observed teacher. It was thought that such a tendency might indicate some degree of professional identification, an awareness of intention behind skills and strategies.

"Specific Qualification"

In those cases where an aspect of the lesson was identified as the "object", a "warrant" might either not be given or be given in terms of a descriptive word or phrase with evaluative connotations (e.g. "sensitive", "precise"), it was judged that students who provided such "warrants" rather than making unwarranted claims were probably learning to apply appropriate criteria to various aspects of teaching and to be developing a sophisticated professional vocabulary. Such statements were therefore categorised as "specifically qualified."

"Substantiation"

Whenever a warrant took the form of a generalization, some substantiation in the form of reference to observed facts was appropriate. Substantiation is the equivalent of the fourth component of Meux's model of evaluation, the connecting facts about the object which show the link between object and warrant. For example, the warrant that "The children found the questions too difficult" might be substantiated by the statement "Only one pupil answered", an observed fact that backs the assertion.

It seemed desirable that in courses of professional education students should learn to back assertions about so complex a phenomenon as teaching with factual references.

"Alternativism"

In making evaluative statements students frequently suggested alternative procedures, what they would have done or what should have been done in the observed circumstance. In some cases, alternative suggestions were extensions of

cause-effect thinking. In others, "alternativism" might well have been based on learnt rules 'personal preferences, there being no evidence of a foundation of diagnostic and prescriptive thinking. As with "purposiveness", the tendency to suggest alternative procedures seemed likely to be associated with an identification with the observed teacher as a fellow craftsman, with strategic rather than, or in addition to, analytical thinking. There was a case, too, for expecting an increase in "alternativism" from students who had had practice in the design and redesign of lessons during professional training and who had grown accustomed to thinking in terms of improving their own performance, a perspective probably particularly encouraged by micro-teaching.

"Complexity"

Among statements there was considerable variety in the level of their organization of ideas and in their general sophistication. A category of "complexity" was therefore defined to include all statements in which distinguishable generalizations were clearly linked to one another. It was judged that an increase in the "complexity" of evaluations would be a desirable outcome of training.

These then were the six categories to be used for describing ways in which evaluative statements are structured. These criteria passed through several stages of definition as they were used by a team of three coders to classify and reclassify a large sample of statements, and by the same process detailed rules for coding were drawn up. A score on any of the structural criteria was simply the percentage of evaluative statements made that included the relevant feature.

Validity of evaluations

A clear requirement of evaluations of observed teaching is that they should be valid. Research reviewed suggested two ways of judging the validity of evaluations of observed teaching: in terms of the degree of coincidence with expert or consensual ratings on rating scales (e.g. Waimon and Ramseyer, 1970) and in terms of the extent

to which criteria are used that correspond with criteria shown to be related to effective pupil learning in a particular context (Unruh, 1968). In the first case criteria are given, and the greater the discrepancy between a grading and the criterion grading the lower its validity is judged to be. In the second case, the evaluator must himself select and use the appropriate criteria. Validity of the second kind is both more difficult to measure and more difficult to achieve, and therefore if some measure of the validity of "spontaneous" judgements is required, an assessment of validity in terms of degree of correspondence with "ideal" criteria is the only acceptable one.

The first task, then, in judging the validity of observers' intuitive judgements was to decide on "ideal" judgements of the lessons they were to observe. One highly rigorous approach to this problem is to assume that good teaching procedures are those that can be shown to correlate with desirable pupil behaviour in the context of specific lessons (Unruh, 1968), and that valid judgements are those that attend to such procedures. This was thought to be too restricted a formula for validity. It is notoriously difficult to establish cause-effect relationships between teaching skills or strategies and outcomes in terms of pupil behaviour, especially long term outcomes (See Rabinowitz and Travers, 1953). Phases of teaching are difficult to define and isolate and learning outcomes difficult to measure in breadth and with subtlety.

A second approach is to assume that "good judgements" are those that attend to characteristics of teaching that are believed to be *generally* related to effective learning and which are manifested in the behaviour of the teacher being observed. While this approach is both less complex and less restricted than the former, it is necessarily subjective both in the choice of criteria and in the judgements, as to which of these criteria are relevant to a particular lesson.

The decision to use this latter approach was influenced by the belief that the subjective element could be limited by requiring a team of trained observers using carefully prepared and tested observation procedures to make relatively objective judgements as to the relevance of general criteria to particular, lessons. Their battery of four systematic observation instruments and two rating scales (developed by White (1972) for use with students on teaching practice after they had completed a micro-teaching based course) covered the following aspects of teaching: "Questioning"; "Structure of the Discourse"; "Varying the Stimulus"; "Reinforcement and Use of Cognitive Feedback"; "Classroom Personality and Subjective Mastery"; "Lesson Structure".

These six instruments were contained in all 26 categories. Criterion judgements were generated in the following way. Video-tapes of the four ten-minute lessons that students would be asked to evaluate were observed and coded by four trained observers. The patterns of pupil and teacher behaviour recorded on the four observation instruments and mean scores on the two rating scales were expressed graphically as a 23-item profile for each lesson. By recording high and low points in the profile of each lesson, a total of 47 evaluative statements were generated (e.g. "very little probing", "much pupil participation").

It could not be assumed automatically, however, that characteristics which are generally strengths or weaknesses of teaching need be such in the context of a specific lesson, and each of the 47 judgements was checked for appropriateness in terms of inferred lesson goals and observed effects. This led to a reversal of one judgement and the addition of two of "higher inference" than the others giving a total of 49 criterion judgements in all. Of these, 12 were based on consensus on rating scales and 37 on systematic observation. Each student's judgements were compared with the criterion judgements to assess the number of agreements and contradictions.

"Validity" scores were then calculated by expressing the total number of a student's judgements corresponding with criterion judgements, less the number contradicting criterion judgements, as a percentage of the total number of evaluative statements he had made.

Reliability, consistency and application

To test the reliability with which evaluative statements could be coded according to the criteria developed, the sets of statements made by a group of students were coded by teams of trained coders and correlations and percentage agreement among coders calculated. Results showed that all structural criteria, all major "focus" categories (but not all sub-categories) and validity criteria could be used with an adequate degree of reliability. It was decided on the basis of these reliability trials to use codings within sub-categories of major phases of teaching only for finding the *number* of specific phases used by a student. A check on the consistency of evaluative behaviour was made on a sample of students who had not yet started their course of professional training for teaching. They were asked to evaluate the same set of four video-taped lessons on two occasions. 12 weeks apart and the two sets of scores were correlated. In the case of eight categories the relationship between performances on separate occasions was at a level of significance that indicated fair consistency.

These categories were: "range of specific phases", "reacting", "teacher's personal qualities", "pupil behaviour", "alternativism", "consequentialism", "purposiveness" and "substantiation". There was no consistency whatever in validity scores.

It is perhaps not surprising that little consistency was apparent for several "focus" categories, since schemata for describing teaching are unlikely to be developed among untrained observers, whereas training may tend to reduce unsystematic or random responses. More obviously, it might have been predicted that the proportion of "valid" evaluations made by untrained students would be a matter of chance. To

check that this was not the case with trained students the "validity" scores obtained by a group of students on two occasions at the beginning and end of their second Education semester were correlated, giving a coefficient of 0,50. Among trained students, therefore, the ability to make valid evaluations appears to have greater stability. It was reassuring that there was a fair degree of consistency in what had appeared on theoretical grounds to be the more important structural categories though some doubt was cast on the value of the "specific qualification" and "complexity" categories. These procedures have already been applied in three ways: in the assessment of progress towards the objectives of a specific teacher education course (Millar, 1974); in the comparison of different procedures in teacher education directed towards the same objectives (McIntyre, 1971); and in classifying phases of teaching attended to by supervisors of teaching practice (White, 1972).

In the first study the procedure for analysing focus of attention was validated to the extent that change over a semester in students' "focus" scores took place in directions hypothesised in the light of course objectives. Although procedures for dealing with "structure" and "validity" of evaluations received no such validation *in this study*, this may not necessarily be a reflection on the criterion used. Whereas changes in selective attention might be expected to take place fairly quickly, one semester is probably too short a time to expect changes in such behaviour as "consequentialism" or "purposiveness", which probably reflects some generalised set or predisposition. (See Krathwohl, *at alia*, 1964.)

These procedures have been applied on the assumption that students are unaware of the criteria -certainly in any specific terms-that are to be applied to their evaluations of observed teaching. They test what Krathwohl (1964) has called "does do" rather than "can do" behaviour. It is probable, however, that the structural criteria could be used to "accelerate" desired change simply by

sensitizing students to them as course objectives. As research tools these procedures, or others similar to them, could be used in further ways: in the diagnosis of individual students' strengths, weaknesses and biases; in the study of professional ideologies, for evaluations of observed teaching may reflect more closely the attitudes with which teachers approach their own teaching than do responses to the questionnaires and attitude scales in terms of which teachers' ideologies have been studied to date ; and in studying the evaluative styles of supervisors of student teachers as revealed in their spontaneous judgements.

Perhaps the framework for analysing evaluations of observed teaching described in this paper will not be entirely suitable for use in institutions other than the one for which it was designed. What it may do is provide a starting point for the development of other course-based instruments to describe, and ultimately encourage, good professional judgement.

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“Microteaching for the Education Student” Clive Millar (1974)

MICRO TEACHING is a concentrated experience designed to assist student- teachers - especially in the initial stage of professional education - to acquire a range of skills in an environment simpler and more controllable than the average class-room. It is ‘micro’ in three senses: in time - lessons last from 10 to 15 minutes; in size of group - usually five or six pupils; and in focus - the teacher gives his attention to the practice of one skill at a time. Microlessons are usually televised, the student watching a video recording of his performance soon after the lesson has ended.

Introduced in 1972

Microteaching was introduced in 1972 for students in the education faculty who were being trained to be primary-school teachers, as a preparation for supervised teaching in schools later in their course. The procedure we follow, based on those at the universities of Stanford and Stirling, consists of five stages.

1. In the preparation stage the student is introduced to the teaching skill to be practised - using ‘higher order questions’, for example - by means of a lecture of a theoretical nature on the functions of this kind of questioning and on criteria for judging its effectiveness. He views a video recording of a teacher using the skill effectively and learns to “code” the questioning he observes within a number of categories on a ‘systematic observation schedule’. He is then given a few days to prepare a 10 or 15-minute lesson in which he will concentrate on practising the skill. He watches the playback.
2. The student teaches his brief lesson to five pupils from a nearby school in a studio-classroom in the education faculty building, attempting to use ‘higher order questioning’ as frequently and as appropriately as possible.
3. With a supervisor and possibly a group of fellow students, he watches the video playback of his lesson, using a ‘systematic observation schedule’. He

analyses his performance with the help of his supervisor and discusses possible improvements.

4. He reteaches the lesson in a modified form to a further group of pupils later in the day.
5. Once again he views the playback and analyses his performance with the help of his supervisor.

This fresh approach to learning the practical art of teaching is, in the early stages of training, proving an attractive alternative to the conventional 'school practice'¹ situation, in which student teachers have to deal with large classes of pupils in local schools for periods of 35 to 40 minutes. Several Advantages Claimed Several advantages are claimed for this innovation. All are plausible and square with our experience but all need to be substantiated by research. It is thought that teaching skills are better learned (at least to begin with) in a simpler and more protected environment than that provided by the average class-room. Microteaching reduces both the bewildering complexity of the class-room for the beginner and anxiety about problems of management and control in crowded class-rooms,

- The analysis of teaching into a range of 'component skills' and the systematic introduction to and practice of these skills enable the student to make steady and visible progress and give him a sense of achievement. He is not faced, as in the 'school practice' situation, with the daunting task of simultaneously trying to master a large range of skills and strategies.
- The intuitive feed-back of the school- practice supervisor is replaced by the systematic observation and analysis of the videotaped lesson by the student himself, encouraging the student to take responsibility for his professional growth and at the same time improving his ability to make accurate and valid judgments.
- The focus on a sequence of teaching skills helps to integrate theory and practice, making theory relevant and practice comprehensible. Courses in

both psychology and methodology can be integrated with a microteaching programme.

- There develops a flexible and analytic approach to teaching rather than partisan commitments to particular methods that may be advocated by individual supervisors.

Separation of Skills

Central to microteaching is the possibly optimistic assumption that teaching can be usefully analysed into 'component skills'; that these can be attended to and practised separately, and in time orchestrated in the service of a variety of strategies. The fact that no two institutions seem to introduce their students to identical repertoires of 'component skills' is not surprising, given our present uncertainty about what constitutes 'good' teaching, one of the problems being the notorious difficulty of establishing the validity of teaching skills in terms of their effects on pupil learning. At UGT our repertoire of skills includes the following:

- 'varying the stimulus' - arousing and holding interest by means of variation of many kinds;
- 'introducing' - ways of stimulating pupils' interest at the start of a learning experience; 'reinforcement' - praise and encouragement in a variety of ways;
- 'use of pupil contributions' - accepting and developing pupil contributions to lessons in a variety of ways;
- 'use of higher-order questioning' - questions requiring explanation, justification or some relating of ideas, and not simply recall of information;
- 'probing' - asking pupils to clarify, justify or elaborate on answers;
- 'clarity of explanation' - showing relationships clearly and explicitly, avoiding discontinuity;

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- ‘use of examples’ — the skill of moving back and forth between abstract statements or generalizations and concrete examples in order to help pupils to grasp and apply principles.

To the students involved in microteaching the most significant part of the programme is, probably, not our repertoire of skills but the opportunity to see themselves on the television screen. Certainly, the videotape recorder has been able to provide teachers with a previously impracticable quality of feed-back on their own performance. The traditional way of evaluating teaching is for a supervisor to comment on recalled incidents and procedures as soon as possible after the observed lesson. Clearly the success of this procedure depends in part on the extent of agreement between two recalled perceptions, one by an observer and one by a participant in a situation not likely to encourage detached self-awareness.

If, however, a video recording is made of the lesson and replayed soon afterwards, the student himself becomes an observer and he and the supervisor can attend to and analyse the same recorded events. This is clearly a most important advantage and one that may influence some of the basic objectives of professional education - the growth of self-awareness, an objective and analytical approach towards the professional task, and independence of judgment.

There are so many practical and theoretical problems to be dealt with in introducing microteaching that, promising as this procedure is, innovation must be cautious, results must be carefully studied and other options must be kept open. Although equipment costs, technical support, time-tabling, organization and availability of staff, etc., are all present problems, it is the more theoretical questions which are the fundamental ones.

Four Fundamental Questions

1. How can skills learned separately be effectively orchestrated within a teaching strategy at a later stage?
2. How can the effective 'transfer' of skills to the real class-room setting be encouraged?
3. Is it realistic to attempt to focus on isolated teaching skills rather than on more complex strategies?
4. How is the use of skills related to the logic and teaching method of particular subjects?

Fortunately, microteaching can be used as a research tool as well as a training procedure and these and other questions are being studied empirically in several countries. Even if, as a result of such research, microteaching as we understand it now does not survive as a major component of professional education, its introduction will have made an important contribution to our understanding of class-room interaction and teacher effectiveness.



“Curriculum improvement or social innovation?” Clive Millar (1984)

Journal of Curriculum Studies

A Case Study in Teacher Education at a Black South African University'

Introduction

This paper is a case study in the form of a retrospective account of a small-scale educational innovation in a specific context written by a participant in the process. Furthermore, it is a case study of what might be called a failure in innovation. It is the experience of failure that, in two senses, gives the case study its potential interest and value. First, the assumptions on which the innovation rested are revealed as inadequate and a more substantial theory of innovation has to be worked towards. Second, the analysis of failure to innovate in intended ways reveals with some clarity the 'normality' of the institution concerned, the nature and power of the social processes that work within and through it. Such a study should make for a better grasp of the stability institutional change must contest.'

The paper is also a case study of a particular kind of innovation - the development of a new course for teachers in training at a black South African university-which rested on a particular view of curriculum and curriculum development. A curriculum was seen not simply as content to be covered, learning materials or course components, but as a complex social process of a three-fold kind that included:

- a) formulating a policy or constitution to guide and structure teaching and learning (including statements of aims, appropriate methods, content, course requirements, etc.);

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- b) the untidy reality of complex social transactions among teachers and learners, within a particular institutional context - the curriculum in practice; and
 - c) the attempt to make sense of this practical engagement through observation and analysis, contrasting intention with reality, in order to improve the curriculum as policy-curriculum evaluation.

Such a view of curriculum saw some failure as inevitable and its analysis as providing the foundation for course development. It saw it as important that the analysis of failure should not be restricted to 'efficiency' terms, to improving techniques for achieving unquestioned objectives. Curriculum evaluation needed to be 'holistic', both in the sense of subjecting goals and rationales themselves to questioning and in the further sense of seeing the institutional and social context in which the course was embedded as part of a social process that needed to be understood.

The setting for the innovation in teacher education was the University of Fort Hare from 1975 to 1977. The context for school placement and practice was the predominantly rural school system of the Ciskei in the Eastern Cape. The university was founded in 1916 largely as a result of missionary endeavour. In 1959, under the Extension of Universities Act, Fort Hare became a segregated 'non-white' university college exclusive to the 'Xhosa ethnic group'. It remains substantially this in spite of minor alterations in apartheid policy.

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The social functions of such a university are complex. It serves as an instrument of political and cultural control in that it gives expression to an

explicit ideology and is part of a network of institutions that attempt to channel black aspirations in ways supportive of the present political and economic system. In particular, it attempts to channel black aspirations into the service of ethnic 'homelands' or 'national states'. In addition, the university provides professional skills and knowledge from which financial security follows: it is an important means of social mobility and of confirming elite status. At the same time, however, the university serves as a site for the sustaining and development of a student counterculture opposed to apartheid ideology.²

The new course, in theory

A new department had been created in the Faculty of Education to take responsibility for the 'professional' aspects of teacher education including courses in teaching method, microteaching, and the supervision of school practice. A head of department and additional staff had been appointed. Innovation of some kind was expected. Staff numbers were high, student numbers low and there were adequate resources of time and personnel to build a fresh foundation for professional teacher education. The task of the new course that emerged to reflect this concern was to prepare graduate student teachers with a conceptual framework and repertoire of skills and strategies that would assist them to teach their major subjects in an effective way. The course was conceived of as a general introduction to teaching, running parallel to specialized courses in the method of each high school subject. It included exposure to a general model of teaching, a range of teaching skills and strategies, a microteaching programme with related assignments, and supervised classroom teaching in local schools.

Four main assumptions underpinned the course: assumptions about an appropriate general model of teaching, about teacher professionalism, about

knowledge and higher-order thinking and about active learning. These assumptions can be described here in only the briefest and simplest terms.

The general model of teaching assumed by the staff to provide a conceptual framework appropriate for the teaching of all school subjects was that usually described as a 'systems' or 'objectives' model. Teaching is seen in technological terms as the selection of means to achieve prespecified ends, these to be defined in performance terms. The specification of such objectives provides the basis for rational planning of lessons or courses, for student assessment and for the evaluation providing for some individual mobility through certification, it exercises — through of the effectiveness of teaching. Teachers are managers of students' learning. Their task is to develop their ability to define as clearly as possible the desired outcomes of student learning and to accept accountability for the achievement of such objectives. This form of accountability underpinned the course in its early stages. Practical and theoretical difficulties led to its abandonment in favour of a different model of teaching and a different form of accountability — that of 'principles of procedure' with which teaching needed to be consistent. This was a move to what has been called a 'process' model of curriculum or teaching.' In either case, a general grasp of teaching was expected to enable planning and evaluation to take place on a rational basis.

The view of professionalism that underpinned the course was implicit in both models of teaching. To be professional was to be committed to defining one's educational objectives or one's principles of procedure, to evaluating one's own teaching and to seeking to bridge the gaps between intention and performance. This entailed an innovative and strategic approach to teaching method, a commitment to continual improvement based on rational analysis. It presupposed a high level of teacher autonomy. Teaching subjects were seen

not as quantities of information but as forms of thought or ways of enquiry. Induction into these subjects required not the recall of terms and information but the capacity to reason, for example, historically or scientifically. Hence the importance of higher-order thinking (as opposed to lower-order thinking or information recall) both as a goal of teaching and as a normal part of classroom activity. Higher-order thinking was seen as including interpretation of information, application of principles or procedures in new contexts, analysis and synthesis of data, and the making and supporting of judgements. All teaching subjects were requiring, though in different ways, engagement in such kinds of higher-order thinking. They could not be grasped without such engagement. The final assumption was that effective learning required active engagement on the part of students. The task of the teacher was not to transmit information to passive listeners but to assist them to engage in a wide range of tasks involving higher-order thinking, both individually and co-operatively. Student enquiry and problem-solving in various forms and in all subjects would be the key ingredients of classroom life.

To the above four assumptions on which our new teacher education curriculum rested must be added two general viewpoints — largely unquestioned — held by the innovators. The first was that the four assumptions were not widely shared in the black schools in which our students would be teaching. In our experience, teaching in black schools appeared to be routine-based; school subjects tended to be reduced to information to be memorized for examinations; pupil passivity was the classroom norm and teacher professionalism meant in essence conformity to the requirements of authority.

We saw black school systems, despite the intentions of individual teachers, as serving to discourage intellectual growth and critical awareness. And we saw our student teachers as products of such a system.

The second was that our four assumptions reflected the 'best' current professional thought and practice of the early 70s — a blended international orthodoxy derived from the educational technology movement, curriculum theory, recent work on teacher effectiveness, teaching skills and microteaching, and prevailing views on active learning, critical thinking and professional autonomy. The contrast between this progressive vision and actual conditions in black classrooms provided the impulse for reforming zeal. We hoped to prepare some of the most able black teachers with a grasp of teaching and learning that would enable them to contribute to change in a restrictive school system.

In the short term, 'success' for our curriculum would have meant that our students would practise with understanding and commitment new approaches to planning, engaging in and evaluating their teaching, both during their year of professional education and in their own classrooms on appointment to schools. Beyond such professional goals lay social and political goals, unformulated and vaguely 'progressive' and 'reformist'.

The course in practice

A detailed formative evaluation of the course was carried out over a period of three years, based on a regular flow of information from students and on staff discussion. This resulted in many changes in course design. What will be discussed here are pervasive themes in student and staff evaluation throughout the three-year period, ones that called into question the value of the entire enterprise.

The fundamental point made by student teachers was that the kind of teaching the university staff valued and required, desirable as it might be, would not work in black schools and they were in no position to make it work. The following extracts from student evaluations, all made after the experience of school practice, express the general position.

'The training I have received is not suitable for the present schools. Maybe it will be suitable for them in ten years to come or even twenty, when they have enough money to buy books for the school, to order relevant and new textbooks, enough chairs and desks and tables where pupils will be free to work hard. At present there are not enough classrooms, pupils are overcrowded, they use poor textbooks, no school libraries, as such, there are no sources of information accessible to pupils except the irrelevant and poor textbooks at their disposal — therefore, under these conditions which I can't explain fully for various reasons, I feel I must prepare myself for dishing out information for most but not all of the time.'

'The learning methods are too slow. They will not be practical in most of the subjects which have a wide syllabus. If you apply them, you will produce good students who are analytical in their approach but you will also produce bad results at the end of the year. Thus, you will have failed in improving their standard of living in the future.'

'But I feel that the methods we are taught are too slow and through constant use of these the syllabus at school will never be finished. I am aware that teachers shall not be exam-conscious in teaching but the teachers are always forced to produce better results. This is actually due to the system of Bantu education, examiners and all the authorities above the teacher. If this exam fever and the importance of pass marks were to be eliminated right from the top, teachers could then be able to use all these methods effectively. By not

using these good methods we are disservicing our pupils but what else can we do?'

It is clear that we were placing students in a situation of considerable tension. As one student put it, 'I found myself in a situation where I had to please the tutor when he came and also the pupils when he was not there'. Our expectations had thrown into relief the nature and power of school and classroom ecology. What follows are student accounts of this ecology and their perceptions of its effects on attempts to innovate. They have been chosen as representative of student opinion and as illuminating several facets of each issue.

Higher-order thinking and questioning

One of the course requirements most firmly grasped by students was that of raising the cognitive level of classroom discussion by means of higher-order questioning and pupil assignments involving thought rather than recall. The following extracts from students' reports illuminate their difficulties in attempting to do this.

'Application of Higher-Order Thinking. This valuable method made me the most 'hated' invader because the curriculum is packed arid the teachers want to accelerate the pace in order to finish the syllabus. In short there is a discrepancy between the method and the present curriculum. But the method is 100% noble.'

'The course is not suitable with the present syllabus as appears in the black schools. The syllabus is too tight and the time stipulated or allocated for periods does not allow one to use higher-order thinking successfully.'

'The intensive use of the questioning system in the classroom, although valuable, delays the teaching progress and if the teacher uses it frequently he cannot finish the syllabus and consequently the pupils may have little knowledge of that subject and they may fail the examinations.'

'One thing that makes it difficult for teachers is that you apply "higher-order thinking" in class and the exams come out with "recall".'

The experience of emphasizing higher-order questioning and attempting to raise the cognitive level of classroom work and discussion suggested to one student the revealing metaphor of 'invader'. What the 'invader' was threatening was an established practice for coping with full syllabuses, restricted time and an examination system requiring memorization.

Pupil participation and involvement

Students were expected to engage pupils actively in learning, through discussion and individual and group tasks. They were to avoid lecturing or 'telling pupils the answers'. In practice, students had difficulty in getting pupils to answer questions, engage in group discussion, do work on their own or apply in practical situations rules that they could state in theory. They stressed that such behaviour required pupils to play unaccustomed roles, their habitual one being that of passive reception. They saw pupils as being handicapped further by lack of fluency in English (the compulsory medium of instruction at secondary level), their poor background in various subjects and the chronic shortage of books and materials.

'Those who were not so active in the class voiced out that they were not used to this situation of telling themselves but the teacher should do so.'

'Since the lesson according to microteaching is solely based on the co-operation between the teacher and pupils answering his questions, what will the teacher do if the pupils are not responding?'

'For instance, when we consider the point on higher-order questioning, our pupils in schools are a very passive lot and that kind of procedure never gets a teacher anywhere and we find we have to resort to explaining, lower-order questioning etc., where higher-order questions would have been most appropriate.'

Pupil pressure on student teachers to conform to type

Pupil 'passivity' proved a misleading term. Pupils could become very 'active' indeed in defence of their 'passivity' when this was challenged by student teachers. What they were doing, essentially, was defending their right to what they perceived as the legitimate form of education.

'The pupils would expect one to teach them the way they were taught by their teachers. Any deviation from this method results in a disarray of some kind.'

'Senior pupils have a course in mind which a 'good' teacher must follow and if he follows a different one he is not good because he does not know his work. To show that he knows his work he must tell them what they do not know.'

'Another difficulty is that they expect the teacher to play the role of the traditional school — that of giving information until you leave the classroom. When you start questioning them and refer them to their textbook you will hear them whispering to each other that this teacher is not clear about his work, is lazy and has not prepared the lesson. This originates from the fact that African pupils are used to listen and follow the part played by the teacher and they even call the teacher "mobile textbook".'

'They wanted me to tell them the subject matter. They were whispering to each other saying, "Why is she asking us a lot of questions? Is she prepared to teach us?" I was forced to tell them that this was my method of teaching. Those who had a teacher's course could understand.'

'During the first lesson with one class pupils discovered I was not at ease. Perhaps they thought that I was not quite clear with the subject matter. This was indicated by a certain boy in this class who said that I should give him a definition of the concept "plateau" without using an example and without drawing a sketch. Then another boy in the same class asked me to give a definition of the concept I was explaining, without using an example. In both cases, I assessed that they wanted to judge how I compared with their teachers in these two subjects.'

Pupils made it clear to student teachers in a number of ways that their unwillingness to play the accustomed role signified incompetence, lack of knowledge, and inadequate preparation. The teacher's task was not to stimulate and organize enquiry on the pupils' part but to communicate information in the syllabus simply and directly. The penalty for not doing this was lack of co-operation, verbal criticism, tests of 'competence', and a possible breakdown of classroom order. Such pupil sanctions were not to be taken lightly particularly when class control was seen by student teachers as a major problem.

Coverage of the syllabus

Experienced teachers were generally co-operative and helpful but their reaction to innovation in teaching was consistent with that of pupils. They saw the student teachers as slowing down the rate at which the syllabus was being 'covered' and therefore not preparing pupils adequately for exams.

'My process of teaching has been too slow. The teachers become excited, asking me every day how far I have covered.'

'The teachers were so uneasy as if we were retarding the fast-moving progress. There are times he would remark, though friendly, that the methods you use, you people, will not help you next year when you are practising teaching since the schools are always short staffed. And he felt I was doing too much probing and he advised that in a case of this probing a telling method would be preferable to avoid wasting of time.'

Language medium

Pupils' poor grasp of the medium of instruction, English, was seen by student teachers as a major problem, one affecting ease of communication, clarity of explanation, capacity to respond to higher-order questions and level of work in general.

'One problem that I experienced was that of explaining to the pupils. The pupils I taught were at form 2 level. I found it difficult to explain to them in a vocabulary that will be totally understandable to them. The source of this problem is that the pupils are using the medium of a foreign language in school subjects and they find it difficult to acquire enough vocabulary because they converse in the vernacular in their daily lives.'

'In Xhosa there was no language problem. But in History it was quite difficult. Here you found it hard to stoop to the standard of the pupils. I found myself using words which to them are difficult to understand. Sometimes I was forced to clarify something in their vernacular. Even in their answers they found it difficult to express themselves in Xhosa and I felt that if they were to be corrected by an Englishman he would be completely lost, not knowing what the pupil was trying to say.'

'The main difficulty I experienced was the language problem, the question of the medium. School pupils are very sensitive to embarrassment therefore they would not answer a question in English if they were not sure of how to express themselves, and they would not love to change to Xhosa—seemingly that would belittle that respective pupil in the eyes of the class.'

Lack of resources

Lack of resources, especially of sufficient copies of textbooks and of adequate textbooks, was seen as a problem by many student teachers.

In geography teaching I had difficulty in introducing new material that was not available in the textbook used by the pupils. As a result, I tended to be artificial in dishing out information. One other thing is the shortage of textbooks and atlases in this school. As a result, once I referred the pupils to their atlases, there would be a lot of commotion—pupils trying to share these atlases. I do not know how this problem can be solved because many of the pupils come from poor families which cannot always afford to buy these books.'

Lack of resources, too, had a bearing on teaching that tried to encourage higher-order thinking and pupil activity. In teaching the sciences, lack of apparatus made it necessary to replace group experiments with teacher demonstration and, in some cases, to teach by means of diagrams, while overcrowded classrooms led to discomfort, to difficulty in seeing demonstrations and to problems of class management. All these factors made it much easier to transmit information to pupils than to encourage them to participate in higher cognitive activity. The production of materials for pupil activities was severely handicapped by the lack of secretarial support and duplicating facilities. There was a striking absence of pictures, wall charts and visual materials in classrooms.

Discussion

The context of this account of curriculum innovation has been a small-scale institutional or interinstitutional one. The expectations of the school and classroom have been seen as opposing those of the university department and the student teachers, therefore, in a situation of role conflict, resolved in favour of school and classroom norms. It is important to add that though this is the resolution in terms of classroom practice, there is evidence of considerable tension of an intellectual kind.

These are the terms and this the scale in which university staff and students normally perceived their tasks and problems. However, all were conscious of a wider cultural and political context of action and drew on this from time to time in explanation or justification. This section will first draw together the account of institutional dynamics and then raise questions to do with such wider cultural or political 'explanations'.

'Institutional explanations'

What made our sample of rural black schools and classrooms so effective in resisting innovation in teaching method was both the functional strength of school norms and procedures and the extreme weakness of the innovators' position. Prevailing classroom norms of teacher-talk and pupil-recall were the most rational of solutions for pupil and teacher alike in a situation of overcrowding, wide ranges of age and performance, lack of resources of every kind including textbooks and libraries, a poorly grasped medium of instruction, a curriculum of limited relevance, a poorly qualified and highly mobile staff and the overriding importance of passing examinations — the route of escape from rural poverty.

The solution was a reductionism of the simplest kind in the nature and level of the subjects studied, in the demands placed on pupils, in the forms of assessment used. It was a solution that maximized success and safety for pupils and teacher alike. To introduce higher-order questioning, subjects as forms of enquiry or pupil assignments of a demanding kind, was to introduce risk, exposure of weaknesses and constant opportunities for failure. It was to attempt to subvert a smoothly functioning ecology, to alter a 'stable state'. The strength of this ecology was in contrast to the powerlessness and marginality of student teachers. They were unqualified teachers, guests in the system, intending to enter employment in the system and therefore needing to make the appropriate impression on those in authority. Furthermore, their major need at this stage in their professional education was to learn to cope with the demands of classroom and school. However, their university course was directed at innovating not coping: at unconventional goals, at unaccustomed ways of designing lessons, at fresh ways of conceptualizing teaching skills, at unfamiliar strategies. It was taught in a context of simplified classroom situations and a great deal of the course involved discussion and analysis of teaching, rather than teaching itself.

Students' classroom experience was confined to a brief period of teaching practice. What was hoped for was a quality of professional thinking, a strategic ability, that would enable students to raise the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms as they pursued goals of higher-order thinking. What staff had under-emphasized, almost to the point of losing sight of it, was that the students' problem on entering teaching would be to survive, to meet school requirements, to cope with a bewildering range of demands, to feel themselves into the role of a teacher. They would not, except in rare cases, be able to give priority to any difficult or time-consuming innovatory role. And this the students perceived more clearly than the staff. Had we been able to demonstrate to students that the innovatory procedures we advocated would enable them to cope adequately

with the flow of classroom events and school expectations this tension might have been avoided, but we had no grounds for making such a claim. And if the school system had had the resources and the traditions to encourage innovation and increased professional autonomy our emphasis might have been more acceptable. As it was, the charge we laid on our students might well have been seen simply as one more onerous burden to cope with, or to relinquish at the first opportunity.

‘Cultural explanations’

The above is an 'institutional' or 'ecological' explanation of failure to innovate — a microlevel kind of explanation. But there are other forms of explanation relating to wider social dynamics that must be considered. I shall label these 'cultural' and 'political'.

Cultural categories of explanation and justification were common in University of Fort Hare staff discussion of black education. Indeed, official apologetic for the creation of segregated black universities was cast in essentially cultural terms, separate universities being described as necessary for the preservation of different 'cultural identities'. Such uses of cultural terms to legitimize forms of discrimination and social control have done much to discredit them as terms for serious analysis. Certainly, it would not be difficult to see certain classroom norms as having possible roots in traditional stereotypes of African culture: the emphasis on oral transmission of information and the valuing of oratory; a view of knowledge as given and authoritative; a reticence in questioning, criticizing or confronting in order not to offend age or office; a collective rather than an individualistic orientation to life; or language codes lacking Western technological categories of thought.'

Such interpretations taken further would see persisting traditional norms as working to dilute an alien Western technological curriculum into which black

children and teachers could not fully enter, while at the same time their own culture and language were being devalued by this modernizing curriculum. If the school curriculum could not become an authentic cultural possession but its mastery remained necessary for personal advancement, then its reduction to some manageable form became essential. Hence the stress by the pupils and teachers on memorization at the expense of meaning and a utilitarian view of the process of education. An explanation of this kind would be consistent with Beeby's influential cultural theory of educational innovation in developing countries based on the assumption that school systems pass through different stages of 'growth'. Beeby's stages range from one of meaningless ritual, through 'formalism' and 'transition' to a stage of 'meaning', where the progressive curriculum valued by the innovators finally becomes the cultural possession of teachers, pupils and community. The explanation this theory provides for our failure in educational innovation could not be neater: the commitments and methodologies appropriate to the stage of 'meaning' were being introduced into a system which could function only at a stage of 'formalism'. Such an innovation — from this point of view — could succeed only as part of a slow process of modernization across the broad spectrum of social and economic life. A school curriculum would acquire 'meaningfulness' in Beeby's sense for students and teachers only when it embedded in a diffused culture or world view that reinforced such 'meanings'.

While the perspective employed by Beeby is useful in highlighting the fact that numerous factors in an educational system cluster to form a functional and change-resistant ecology, that to attempt to transfer assumptions or processes from one such ecology to another is often a naive form of cultural imperialism, and that all curriculum development has a cultural context that will act to accelerate, restrict or subvert the developer's aims, it is a perspective with serious limitations. In emphasizing different but interacting

'cultures' it tends to miss the dynamic and historically rooted way in which beliefs and values are shaped, used and changed in economic and political contexts.⁶

Furthermore, in common with other forms of modernization theory, it tends to assume a foundation of progress through benign social engineering. What it does not illuminate is that cultural classifications have themselves political and economic functions and that reflecting such differences in educational forms may serve as an efficient method of social control.

'Political explanations'

It is this latter perspective that could be labelled a 'political' as opposed to a 'cultural' one. It would see black pupils and teachers not as restricted by traditional, rural culture from full participation in a modernizing curriculum, but as locked in a situation of political powerlessness and economic exploitation; rather than providing release from this situation their educational system functions to perpetuate it.

While providing for some individual mobility through certification, it exercises - its administration, its resource allocation, its standards, its ideological formation and its generation of the experience of failure on a massive scale — a social control of the most comprehensive kind. Such a view of the functioning of education in society has only recently informed educational research within South Africa, the dominant tradition of educational study having been a development of continental phenomenology known as 'fundamental pedagogics': Kallaway's recent attempt to draw together a number of studies in the political economy of black education in South Africa describes this tradition as emphasizing 'the "dependent" nature of the schooling systems, and seeking to emphasise their political (ideological and control) functions and their economic role as producers of specific types of

"manpower" relevant to the needs of the dominant systems of production in society'.⁸

In this view social reproduction and conflict serve as the major categories of explanation. The educational system functions to secure the continuity of economic, political and ideological structures, but in doing so educational institutions become themselves sites of 'contradiction' and of conflict. The development of black skilled manpower, for example, becomes incompatible with the limitation of black political power. Black education is therefore a process of social control but a control contested through an endemic process of conflicting agendas.

One explanation that this perspective suggests for our failure in innovation would take the following form. A black university like Fort Hare is seen as part of a repressive structure of apartheid institutions. As an institution to secure emancipatory goals of a personal or collective kind it is discredited. What it does do is provide a context for qualified and instrumental participation, a matrix for individual professional entry through certification. If an institution is perceived as acting against black collective interests there are two stances that students of any political awareness can adopt. They can reject the university and what it symbolizes by means of protest or withdrawal, a response that is mobilized by crisis inside or outside the university, like the Soweto revolt of 1976, or they can limit co-operation with the institution to what is required to pass examinations and secure individual certification, avoiding all signs of commitment to institutional norms.

This, in my view, is the stance that most students negotiate most of the time at the University of Fort Hare. It is a kind of complex and sustained 'working to rule'.⁹ A powerful and defensive student subculture of 'working to rule'

would serve to withdraw meaning from the university curriculum, and particularly from those parts of it that called for high and visible co-operative commitment from staff and students: an apartheid institution could not be allowed such seductions. An educational innovation is normally one requiring precisely such commitment. Furthermore, at times of political crisis this discrediting function of in-system location is likely to increase sharply as identification with the forces of radical protest located *outside* and in opposition to the educational system is called for.

The years 1976 and 1977 were ones of mass protest and violent repression, when educational institutions were major focuses of revolt and students were absent for long and highly politicizing periods of boycott or closure. Under such circumstances to recruit student commitment from within the system to minor innovation becomes absurd. For a while at least potential in-system innovation is powerfully confronted by the dynamic of radical social change. What such extreme conditions do is highlight the location and credibility of educational innovation and eclipse considerations of educational worth in specific situations. The immediate value of an innovation becomes a subsidiary concern to such questions as: Who are the innovators? What institutions do they belong to? Whose interests are they serving? What breakdown in social order reveals is that the impulse and legitimization for a reflective and questioning pedagogy in black education are certainly present but they lie outside and in opposition to the formal school curriculum. They constitute a *latent* ideological base for curriculum renewal.

Conclusion

A framework of three available explanations for failure in small-scale in-system innovation has been sketched in the briefest terms. The assumption

has been that the three forms of influence act as a set of complementary influences. At its strongest their cumulative effect would be sanction and prevention; at its weakest, dilution. 'Ecological' forces would work at close range and in terms of day-to-day awareness and clearly grasped and articulated rationales. Teachers would be labelled incompetent, for example, or a classroom practice would be seen as irrelevant to examination success, in terms of a tried and tested framework of institutional norms. 'Cultural' forces would work at a deeper level and might escape common-sense perception. They would lodge in attitude, language and relationship, but crisis or breach of expectation might call them into defensive play. 'Political' forces would work in two ways: negatively to discredit innovation and innovators classified as system-supportive, and positively to provide a latent ideological base for curriculum reconstruction, the experience of crisis serving to reinforce both processes. The above view is one of a spectrum of social influences on innovation, a view of cumulative effect.

What has not been analysed is the far more complex *dynamic* of interrelated influences on education innovation in South Africa, though such an analysis is clearly necessary to inform any adequate theory of innovative action. It is likely that such an analysis would see ecological processes as themselves framed or contained by more fundamental political and economic ones, and provide for an even more pessimistic assessment of the limitations upon in-system innovation. A limited grasp of the dynamics of social stability and change means a limited theory of educational reform. (A conservative position committed to system maintenance or a radical position committed to system disintegration present simpler theoretical problems.) However, the analysis of ecological and political frames of explanation holds two clear messages for innovation in schooling. The first

is to do with the range or comprehensiveness of the innovation. The second is to do with its location.

In ecological terms the innovation failed because its focus was on only one component of an interacting system of influences. Its chances of success would have been considerably greater if resources had been available to modify several key components of the system simultaneously. Perhaps the most successful innovation in classroom teaching in black schools in South Africa at present is that undertaken by the Science Education Project. The strength of its innovative practice lies in its simultaneous use of several strategies of influence and support. These include pupil laboratory kits, textbooks, pupil worksheets, teacher guides, forms of assessment and testing, teacher in-service education and support services, zonal teacher networks, support by principals, school inspectors and departmental officials, and substantial funding by the private sector. Not only does the Science Education Project act as a system of related parts but it is *perceived* by participants as an innovative system with its own supporting logic including the key term of better than normal examination results.^{1°} The approach is to develop an ecology of innovation with substantial supporting structures within the dominant ecology.

The important role played by supporting structures relates to the issue of the location of the innovative thrust. If the goal of an educational innovation in black education includes transformed commitments among teachers and pupils expressed in a changed pedagogy, then there is a strong case for the innovation to locate itself, and to be seen to locate itself, outside the formal system. Such a strategy has the substantial advantage of demonstrating to participants in a closed educational system the penetration of an alternative educational authority and logic, of enabling entry into the system of substantial new resources including those of new patterns of social co-operation, and of claiming a value position at variance with that associated with the state bureaucracy.

The approach would be that of an innovative project recruiting the participation of teachers and pupils in a process of development approved of or at least tolerated by the educational bureaucracy because of the substantial resources attracted into the system from private foundations and because of some overlap of reformist goals. Such an approach is highly vulnerable to right and left: to sanction as subversive from conservative positions within the state system and to opposition as crisis control or system maintenance from radical community groups. However, once again, the record of the Science Education Project in black schooling in South Africa shows that such an approach can be successfully negotiated and that considerable teacher and pupil commitment can be won for an innovative project that co-operates with a range of educational bureaucracies but consistently maintains its status as an independent educational agency.

Because the attempt at classroom innovation that provided the data for this case study was located in the preservice teacher education programme of a black state university and lacked the capacity to develop an innovative sub-system outside of but in interaction with formal structures it is tempting to see our view of 'failure' as resting on an overdemanding or even inappropriate view of success. It could be argued that a university education department engaged in a professional aspect of preservice teacher education is not responsible for the accomplishments or failures of its beginning teachers in classrooms. Nor should such a department feel constrained either to enable students to comply with the demands of a particular school system or to transform them. Its tasks are primarily of an academic and intellectual kind.

Such a position would enable us to see our work in teacher education in a much more favourable light. There is considerable evidence in students' accounts of their classroom experience of a growing critical awareness of prevailing norms, of a grasp of alternative value positions and teaching strategies and of a wish

to engage in innovation, as well as remarkable insight into classroom dynamics. Certainly, we can claim to have produced teachers with at least the conceptual tools for critical and alternativistic thinking about their professional tasks, however thwarted they were in applying them. Perhaps this achievement should not be undervalued.

The weakness of such a view, however, is that whilst appearing to do so it does not take seriously enough the responsibility of the university education department to prepare students to play a role in educational change, limited though this may be. Nor does it take seriously enough the university department's own location in the educational system and its actual role in system maintenance. The 'critical awareness' or 'vision of alternatives' with which it might arm its products could become easily discredited casualties of the pressures and routines of the first post in the school system unless they were matched by a grasp of the power and the rationality of such pressures and routines. A responsible preparation for limited innovation by teachers would take very seriously the obligations and the uses of conformity. It would probably begin with the closest study of prevailing classroom norms and procedures. And it would be part of a much wider process of institutional and curriculum development in which the university played its role. Furthermore, there is the distinct risk that such 'critical theory' might itself be seen by students as rhetorical or ritualistic - a 'course requirement' of a progressive department -to the great detriment of their commitment to developing a theoretical account of their own professional action.

Indeed, there is evidence at the University of Fort Hare (and this may be the case at other universities) of a poorly understood process of collusion between students and staff in reducing academic demands to levels of performance that maximize success -a process of curriculum dilution similar to that

encountered in black schools¹² and explored in the context of American college education by Becker *et al.*¹⁻³ In such a context nothing would be easier for students and staff than to engage in abstract and idealistic debate 'about what ought to happen in classrooms were there no obligation to assess what proposals for change meant in day-to-day practice. Perhaps the most important reason for upholding the discomfiting plea of 'failed' is that to do so provides the necessary terms for devising fresh approaches to the preservice education of teachers as persons who must cope with the demands of classrooms as they *are and* work strategically towards changes that they value.

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A PERSPECTIVE ON THIS WORK

Learning how to teach: Curriculum innovation in teacher education by Alan Penny

Introduction

Writing about Professor Clive Millar's work affords me a rare insight into his contribution to education. We were colleagues over the four years he was at the University of Fort Hare. They were formative years for both of us. We remained lifelong friends as we went our separate ways, he to the University of Cape Town as the University's first Professor of Adult Education¹³.

The three papers included in this section cover Clive's time in teacher education, focusing especially on his time at the University of Fort Hare¹⁴. Taking the papers as a whole, a notable thread is evident; from a belief and technical confidence in micro-teaching as a means to informed practice and reflection on teaching by novice teachers, to the evolution of an acute personal and experiential awareness of the significance of context. His University of Stirling studies had given him professional confidence and

¹³ I went on to Rhodes University as Professor of Education and then to the United Kingdom. In the UK, after a period in teacher education, I pursued a career as a senior education adviser within the UK Department for International Development (DFID) with a focus on education development throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

¹⁴ The University of Fort Hare was founded as a university college in 1916, largely as a result of Scottish missionary endeavour. As such it reflected missionary objectives of evangelisation and education, with both being seen as a key to assimilation into British values. To some extent it was also a microcosm of a non-racial society in the heart of Apartheid South African society, the roots of which lay in the racism and idealism of British colonialism. In 1959, following the recommendations of the Eiselen Commission, the South African government passed the 'Extension of University Education Act' whereby, amongst other things, Fort Hare became a segregated 'non-white' university college for the Xhosa ethnic group. To the South African government this move was a logical step in its drive to force all universities in the country to be particularistic, sectional and rooted in a people. Fort Hare became one of six tribal colleges. Black opposition to this policy was effectively crushed in the early sixties whilst Bantu (black) education was to be an inferior image of white education, preparing blacks for service in their own distinct communities (homelands).

competence in the area of micro-teaching which, at the time, was seriously considered as a significant means of improving teacher competence and quality. In 1973 the University of Fort Hare established a new Department of Teaching Science (not the teaching of science, but the science of teaching). At the time, they were also considering introducing the Postlethwaite audio tutorial system that was operating at the then University of Port Elizabeth. Clive's research into micro-teaching at Stirling University in Scotland was therefore attractive to the senior management at Fort Hare and it was a small step to offering the Professorship to him once he applied for it in 1974.

His decision to apply for and then accept the Chair at Fort Hare was not an easy one. As he wrote at the time, the decision to take up a position at Fort Hare was difficult for personal and professional reasons¹⁵. He had grown increasingly critical of his political marginality at the University of Cape Town and what he perceived to be his contribution to social change. Moving to an overtly Apartheid institution involved both personal and professional risks as such institutions were not highly regarded in the more liberal university community in South Africa. Moving from the elite atmosphere of the University of Cape Town, and the city itself where his family was comfortably settled, was also a major personal upheaval, yet, he was excited by the challenges anticipated. Later, however, he was to write that his first year at Fort Hare constituted the year of innocence; the second, the year of experience and the following two years a time of withdrawal. It was during the latter period that he flirted seriously with emigrating from South Africa¹⁶. Nonetheless, as he openly acknowledges, the years at Fort Hare were to impact on and inform his scholarship for the rest of his career. The friendships he and his family made during his time in Alice have endured.

¹⁵Unpublished personal memoir, Millar (2006).

¹⁶Unpublished personal memoir, Millar (2006).

Offering a perspective on his work during this period

It is necessary to declare at the outset that offering a perspective on Clive's published work thirty years on from when the papers included in this section were written is not easy. The benefit of hindsight and experience decidedly skew one's interpretations.

Entry

What characterised teacher training on his arrival at Fort Hare was an overloaded and very theoretical curriculum which, whilst it may have had some vertical coherence, had little horizontal coherence, especially as it related to teaching methods (pedagogy). Essentially a 'banking' view of training existed, as did the perception that education theory and not how to teach was the priority of teacher training courses. As Clive would later write in a letter to the late Professor Donald McIntyre, *Basil Bernstein would have pointed out that the model was both hierarchical and possessed a sacred/profane logic. Pedagogics was foundational and sacred - it provided a stipulative statement of the nature of education. Didactics, derived from such first principles, provided second-order principles of teaching practice, and the third was simply about practical application of such principles and could be safely left to secular non-believers who knew something about microteaching like Millar.* (Private communication, 2017).

The demarcation of 'subject' areas was jealously guarded, but in what was to come, Clive and his new department conceived teacher education differently and unconsciously inverted the divine order of things, except for possibly making occasional forays into didactics. The re-ordering of things was first made explicit when the department began drawing resources from the others. Whilst the establishment were initially perplexed, over time this became deep suspicion. The pleasant cross-cultural personal relationships that developed within the Department also attacked the 'legitimate' social order of the Institution.

Having come from similar backgrounds, the new white departmental staff took it for granted that an opportunity to reinforce ideas and concepts across subjects was required. In asserting this, we assumed our new black colleagues bought into our vision. This they soon did, especially as personal relationships and trust blossomed. In retrospect, we were guilty of behaving in a very colonial way, to the extent that a certainty existed that the new regime knew what was best for 'them' and the students. It was also evident that student teachers needed to have more control over their learning and to learn to ask themselves *What kinds of pupil understanding and learning am I promoting and encouraging, and why?* On reflection, the newcomers also failed to appreciate the threats this posed to staff and students alike.

Clive not only had to legitimise his 'subject'; (Teaching Science) but also negotiate its place within the Faculty's other 'subjects'. Apart from finding the name of his department an oddity, he strongly sought to create a legitimate identity for the department.

The first major public opportunity to do so was his inaugural lecture in May, 1976. Having spoken about the need to improve university teaching, he moved on to discussing the social function of Black universities, and how this might affect relationships between teachers and learners. The boldness of what he had to say, whilst courteously received, marked him as a person to be taken seriously, if not to be kept at arm's length.

All modern universities have to come to terms with what appear to be opposing or contradictory functions. At a university such as ours, shaped to give expression to an explicit political ideology of separate development, certain of the contradictions are heightened. A crucial one, as I see it, is that university education can be seen both as an opportunity and as a restriction.

On the one hand, admission to a university is, for a Black student, an achievement against unbelievable odds and a rare opportunity to achieve

professional status, a responsible position and economic security. Compared with those of his less fortunate peers his educational experience and prospects are attractive indeed. On the other hand, compared with those of White graduates, both his educational experience and his prospects seem frustratingly restricted by what appears to be a network of economic, political and ideological constraints acting to channel his aspirations into the service of ethnic 'homelands' rather than participation in a shared South Africa. And the very university that is seen as providing the opportunity for personal achievement is seen, at the same time, as an instrument of political control.

How do students with an awareness of this contradiction come to terms with it? They do so, I believe, by distancing themselves from the institution they are obliged to attend, by limiting their commitment to it, by showing in a variety of ways that obtaining a qualification does not entail submission to a system or acceptance of an ideology. This distancing is the mildest form of passive resistance, of working to rule, and can co-exist, as I have found, with pleasant staff-student relationships. But it may, of course, be fanned by some incident into overt rejection and protest. The consequences of this can be very severe for students and those who continue their studies probably do so with a deepened sense of their own insecurity. Millar (1976).

In the light of subsequent events on campus, what he had to say was certainly prescient¹⁷.

Soon after he took up his appointment as Professor and Head of Department at Fort Hare, Clive commenced the development and implementation of an initial teacher

¹⁷ Student 'unrest' led to the closure of the university for some time each and every year during Professor Millar's tenure.

education professional studies curriculum. It was structured around the development of teaching skills and competences using micro-teaching as the main delivery vehicle. As outlined in his paper *Microteaching for the Education Student* published in 1974 (paper 1), microteaching is a concentrated experience designed to assist student-teachers to acquire a range of skills in an environment simpler and more controllable than the average classroom. In delivering the programme a new ethos emerged across the department. This included working and planning together, joint teaching and creating an ethos of collaboration. Students were expected to question and to engage with their own learning and, indeed, question the tutors. This questioning of tutor authority did not happen overnight. External factors were to play a significant part in how some of us were perceived and, indeed, judged. I particularly remember events surrounding the closure of the University in 1976 after protests in support of the Soweto rioters. Clive and I had spent the previous evening ferrying students from the closed university to the railway station, with each trip being shadowed by the local special branch. Dr Thom, a lecturer in the Department of Theology, organised some of his local Dutch Reformed Church congregation to provide drinks and light snacks for students facing long and cold journeys home. It was a long night. The following morning Clive called a staff meeting. Without any agonising over the unpleasant events of the previous couple of days, he said to us; “Well, what are we going to do?” and there followed a number of actions which were ultimately to lead to the saving of the academic year for those students¹⁸.

18 We all committed ourselves to doing something. Heather Downing organised sending our teaching materials to each student, together with assignments to be completed. I undertook to redraft the examination timetable to fit it into as short a period as possible. Clive engaged the University Senate on actions needed to reopen the university to save the academic year. The late, the Honourable Arnold Stofile (former Minister of Sport in the second ANC government and former South African Ambassador to Germany) who was at the time a lecturer in the Theology Department and also chair-person of the Black Staff Association, agreed to mobilise the parent members of the University Council in getting the Council to agree to the revised examinations’ timetable.

Indeed, the curriculum was about a lot more than what occurred in the lecture room. Perhaps this is best illustrated in the following letter to Clive and the staff in late May 1976.

I doubt any of the students in the first two cohorts will ever forget spending a day being introduced to sailing or, indeed, the annual picnic on the Hogsback; both extremely formative experiences for all.

Consolidation

The Professional Studies programme was informed by Clive's research at the University of Stirling in

Scotland, an outcome of which is to be found in Paper 2, *Assessment of the quality of evaluations of observed teaching* (1975). That research asked whether and how student teachers improve in their capacity to evaluate observed teaching as a result of professional education. It aimed at operationalising what constituted 'good' evaluation at the time by addressing the specific phases of teaching within four master categories (motivating, explaining, soliciting and reacting) and their related sub-categories. The

INSTRUCTION IN SAILING:

1976

Monday 24 May ~~1976~~ will be remembered by Port Hare U.E.D. and H.S.T.D. students as a special day.

When it was announced that Micro-teaching on that day would end up with instruction in sailing on Rooikransdam, students' facial expressions were either blank or bamboozled. I guess I am not the only one who wished that this instruction would all be theoretical - I shuddered to think of the practical aspect of sailing.

The journey to the dam was pleasant and comfortable in a convoy of cars and one could see envious eyes of the group of students who witnessed the spectacle outside Stewart Hall.

I daresay that the experience turned out to be not so horrifying but, in fact, after a few ventures on the dam, everyone wanted to have some more! some of us were actually beginning to do the skipping-acted as skippers:- e.g. Mr. Makunda, I'm sorry I cannot pronounce or spell his first Ovambo name, rode the "Owl" like a sotho Pony. Bongani Stamper had a lonely "honeymoon" on the "Owl"; even Mrs. Molamu returned full of smiles and spirits from the "firewall".

I'm sorry that Raymond Khala could not go with us as he was unwell; Sthandwa Makulejwa missed the fun when his hydrophobia prevented him from the actual sailing on the dam. Mr. Makalima hid himself in the bush from the ghastly sights that never were. We only nearly saw Zoe Qavane doing a bit of a swim.

I can't help feeling that the objectives of this practical lesson were fully met both on the part of instructors and of learners because we all seemed relaxed, free, didn't mind our structured and shape even if they resembled the blackboard stick figures or French Polony - we were just ourselves for once!!

By the time we prepared for a return trip we had become so known to one another that I think I heard some of us talking of Prof. Clive; Dr. Ted; Mr. Alan; Sis Léle, Mr. Mack; Bhut'Zama Gebeda - not Mayola. etc.

All in all, I make bold, to say, on behalf of all the students - Many many thanks to our staff colleagues.

STUDENT

Four years ago, I was undertaking a review of Belgian financial support to the University of Limpopo. Presenting myself to the senior management at the start of the review, the Deputy Vice Chancellor looked at me and asked, "Have we not met before?" I hesitated, and then he said, "You were at the University of Fort Hare, not so, and with your Professor (Clive Millar) engineered the writing of examinations in the January and February of the following year. That saved my academic career. My parents were poor and repeating a year was beyond their resources".

checklist that was developed also dealt with areas such as the teacher's personal characteristics, the content and organisation of the teaching and learning, and pupil behaviour, both cognitive and affective. By dealing with the structure of evaluative statements such as the application of rules, comparison with criteria and the examination of consequences, an intended shift from rule governed behaviour to analytical behaviour was envisaged. As the paper notes, the research tools and procedures used could be used in a number of further ways, including evaluating ideologies of teachers and the evaluative styles of supervisors. It also warns that the framework for analysing evaluations of observed teaching may not be entirely suitable in all teacher education contexts, although they may provide a useful starting point. However, it did provide a rationale for the professional studies programme subsequently developed at Fort Hare upon which, Paper 3, *Curriculum Improvement or Social Innovation? A Case Study in Teacher Education at a Black South African University*, (1984) was based.

Clive was fortunate in being able to establish around him a team of teacher developers committed to his vision as well as sharing his values. These included experienced local people who over the course of their careers had developed strong links in the local community as well as respect for their wisdom and status. There is little doubt that his team were optimistic and expected that the investment they made at the time would lead to something of value in teaching and schooling in black schools. Instituting the micro-teaching programme was relatively easy and, as he acknowledges, generated considerable commitment from these colleagues. However, once he and then the rest of the team left the University for other positions, little was sustained.

On reflection, it is pertinent to ask why in *Curriculum Improvement or Social Innovation? A Case Study in Teacher Education at a Black South African University*, (1984) one reads that neither the skill competences nor the values underpinning the programme as a whole achieved much traction. Should this have been a surprise? Most

entrants to teaching, not only in South Africa, have low levels of academic training. Some may enter teaching in the hope that initial and in-service teacher training may lead to a career outside of formal education, or in the case of primary school teachers, an opportunity to move 'up' to secondary school teaching, or to enter university at some future point with the further possibility of exiting the teaching profession altogether. Further, the perception that teaching is not highly regarded generally could also be because of poor images of teaching; that teaching is essentially transmission based, reinforced by an examination system which rewards recall of information and little practical application. When the Professional Studies programme was creating profiles of effective practice, was realism and relevance evident in what was done? Indeed, did images and beliefs about teaching and teachers constitute the starting point?

We are much more certain now that if teachers themselves don't achieve 'buy-in' to the kinds of values underpinning the Professional Studies programme, they will fail to develop a deeper understanding of what constitutes good practice and how an incremental change in the quality of teaching and learning can be achieved. As the Orr study¹⁹ asserts, it is only when *"teachers see pedagogy as a kind of communication with students that their teaching practices become meaningful, leading to positive outcomes for their students. Conditions of service, poor salaries, poor working conditions and poor prospects, result not only in a lack of motivation amongst teachers and teacher trainees, but also low morale amongst them"*.

A core weakness of the Professional studies Programme was that the model of practice embodied in it was not reinforced in the context of the school, nor was it endorsed by

¹⁹*Pedagogy, Curriculum, Teaching Practices and Teacher Education in Developing Countries* (2013). This study was commissioned by DFID under the title of Education, Rigorous Literature Review.

the majority of teachers. The model required critical self-reflection and, as is known from all innovation in teacher education, such change takes place very slowly. As mentioned earlier in respect to the Fort Hare programme, most entrants to teaching in developing countries have relatively low levels of academic training, whilst some enter teaching in the hope that it might lead to a career outside of formal education. Strategies such as a thorough induction to ensure increased retention of teachers did not exist, nor strategies to make good some of their professional and cognitive weaknesses, especially, for example, weaknesses in English. Perhaps too, as Lewin (2003) has stated in the MUSTER Research Project report (www.dfid.gov.uk)

The intellectual horizons of many college staff seem out of date, narrowly cast, and parochially constrained, for reasons of history and economics. There has been a borrowing of ideas from high income countries, but there is little evidence of critique and adaptive development of key constructs and theories of professional learning. Without the stimulus of further professional development and an innovative working environment, it is difficult for tutors to pioneer more effective teaching and learning strategies and to create models of teacher education appropriate to local environments and educational cultures. (Lewin, 2003, pg. 178).

Another concern is that the study on which the paper is based took place after a year into the programme. The programme itself formed only part of the teaching diploma year²⁰. Further, in operationalising the Professional Studies programme it was only possible to provide very limited in-school reinforcement of the skills comprising it. Nor was it possible to provide in-service support once each cohort of students entered full-time teaching. A critical mass of teachers that had been through the programme was

²⁰The Professional Studies Programme formed only a third of the Post Graduate Teaching Diploma curriculum.

not established across the education sector. This is not to suggest that novice teachers are unable to acquire new ideas, techniques and knowledge, and there is plenty of evidence to show that they do, but as is more widely known now, this only occurs when what is being offered is owned by providers and receivers alike, when the training is not only relevant, but also specific enough to be seen to be relevant, and when the transfer of information occurs on an inter and intra-personal basis. It is also now more generally known that new ideas, changed practice and enriched knowledge can only take root when the organisational framework in which it is being acquired is supportive of teachers as learners.

On reflection, therefore, if the programme was to have stood a chance of success, it might have been better to have introduced the reflective focus of the microteaching programme once students were undertaking the B. Ed degree²¹ whilst working in schools. Teachers could then have framed the critical reflective analysis of their teaching on their practice and, as such, the programme could have formed the basis of their professional growth. By that stage teachers could be expected to be more secure in their subject teaching knowledge as well as more skilled in classroom management. Perhaps, therefore, the programme would have achieved greater traction had it been offered to teachers with some experience of general classroom practice and not focused on novice teachers.

Paper 3 examines the context of the time as well as the 'systems' or 'objectives' model of teaching, and its fundamental technological theory of planning and delivery. This ignored the 'cultural' context of the innovation. The department failed to appreciate adequately that working habits acquired in the early stages of schooling by persons

²¹ At the time, the B. Ed was a post-graduate degree in education often offered by universities on a part-time basis.

who become teachers – over-dependence on memorization, failure to identify symbols and to link them with their concrete manifestations, intellectual passivity and the uncritical acceptance of statements as facts – tend to stay with learners to some degree throughout their learning or teaching career. Lecturers on the programme probably failed to appreciate that all novice teachers, irrespective of where they come from, have probably observed teachers and ‘teaching’ for around 18000 hours by the time they enter teacher training. Habits learned over that length of time are very difficult to undo. As Michael Fullan²² and others have argued, the hardest nut to crack in teacher education is the learning core – changes in instructional practices and in the culture of teaching towards greater collaborative relationships among student teachers, teachers and other potential partners.

Stated differently, whilst the early attempts to introduce reflective teaching into the Department had some impact on the way students restructured and interrogated their lesson planning, they had very limited impact on re-culturing their teaching. To this one can add the impact of the strongly contested institutional politicising and allocative functions of Fort Hare and similar institutions. In addressing this in Paper 3, Clive produced what was and what remains as a seminal paper which should be required reading for anyone in teacher development or, indeed, in international development today. The paper examined the general model of teaching and the assumptions underpinning the professional studies programme. In particular the paper challenged the programme’s behaviourist model and, more significantly, the presupposition of a high level of teacher autonomy. Further, as the paper argues, the contrast between the vision and actual conditions in black classrooms which had provided the zeal for the programme required a far greater realism on our part. We failed to understand why

²²Fullan, M (1982) *The Meaning of Educational Change*, Teachers College Press.
This book is now in its fifth edition: *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, (2015), Teachers College Press.

student teachers ‘resisted’ aspects of the programme and conformed to perceived type, whilst our ill-informed discussions on the so-called passivity of the students and learners alike are now a source of professional embarrassment.

Taking a wider view, the paper provides a reminder to all involved in international development that challenges faced in development require deep analytical study, especially when on the surface they are reduced to simplistic solutions. The challenges faced in education in South Africa are not unique: they exist across sub-Saharan Africa, in spite of the support of national governments and the generous provision of additional support from international donors. Indeed, in resource rich South Africa the quality of teaching and learning in schools and in some universities has, if anything, worsened. Blaming the current parlous state of education on the legacy of Apartheid or more widely on the legacy of colonialism is to ignore the complex socio-cultural and governance issues involved. What is evident is that teacher education programmes and courses, like individuals, have their histories and are just as incapable of withstanding the ravages of time.

Clive’s legacy lives on in that 1984 *Journal of Curriculum Studies* paper.



CHAPTER 2

A NEW CURRICULUM FOR EDUCATORS OF ADULTS

Part 2 draws on Clive's 20 years as Professor of Adult Education and (to begin with) Director of Extra-Mural-Studies at UCT through the 1980s and 90s. These years saw the final collapse of Apartheid and they were ones that produced a huge amount of work committed to policy development in adult education for a New South Africa. Sadly, this work has proved to be almost completely ephemeral and has not been included here. Instead, the focus is on the professional development of educators of adults, and particularly on developing a professional curriculum for new kinds of educators. Four of the six papers that follow are devoted to this task. But policy has not been entirely neglected. Two papers on policy frame those on professional curriculum. These were written ten years apart, before and after the fall of Apartheid.

Barry Hymer responds to the four papers on crafting a professional curriculum for educators of adults in South Africa in the 1980s. He does this from his perspective as a key innovator in professional teacher development in the UK today.

Robin Mackie responds to the papers on policy development both as one who was there at the time as colleague and friend – he was Director of Extra-Mural Studies at the then University of Natal throughout the 80's and 90's – and as one now able to look back at what has actually happened to adult education in South Africa.

Six papers by Clive Millar on developing a professional curriculum for educators of adults in a changing political context (1986 - 1994 University of Cape Town)

1. "Curriculum evolution in university based adult education programmes" (1987)
2. "Curriculum negotiation in professional adult education" (1986)
3. "The Diploma Course for Educators of Adults: a case for reconstruction?" (1985)
4. "Educating the educators of adults: two cheers for curriculum negotiation" (1989)
5. "Critical reflection for educators of adults: Getting a grip on the scripts for professional action" (1991)
6. "The role of the adult educator: is there a professional identity in sight?" (1994)

“Curriculum evolution in university based adult education programmes” Clive Millar (1987)

Kenton Conference

Introduction

This is a brief account of an unusually long-established initiative in university extension - the work of the University of Cape Town in what has been known as extramural studies and adult education. In spite of the problems of learning from history it is presented in the hope that it may illuminate - necessarily in an oblique way - current policy debates on community related projects that have in common a university base.

The perspective on the U C T case will be that of a wide-angle lens, broad in scope and time and weak in detail, this in deliberate contrast to the perspective available to the many community projects just commencing. In the briefest possible terms, the study will deal with (1) the founding conditions of this particular university enterprise; (2) the successive curriculum forms taken by the project - stages in educational programming by directors and planners; (3) some of the dynamics of the enterprise over time - an attempt to get some grasp of the workings of internal and external agendas that have acted as an undertow to the planned curriculum.

The terms of the enterprise

The Centre for Extra-Mural Studies (now the Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies) is created by the University as a mechanism for delivering a form of community service. (Its formal establishment in the early 1950s is a sequel to a long period of semi-institutionalised provision of public extra-mural programmes beginning in the 19th century). Furthermore, The Centre is a management device for the institution as a whole to mediate educational resources to the community, itself as an undifferentiated whole. The obvious and unquestioned form of mediation - to begin with - is courses of public lectures (and the forerunner of the present Board of Extra-Mural

Studies - from the 1920s to the 1940s - is known as the Senate Extension Lectures Committee).

The Centre is outside the normal departmental and faculty structures of the university. It is in the nature of a project with ad hoc arrangements for internal accountability. The Director of Extra-Mural Studies - as this office eventually comes to be known - is an administrative officer accountable to a Board of Extra-Mural Studies, which is a joint committee of Senate and Council. This committee is to plan the extra-mural programmes of the University and to accredit them as academically worthy and community relevant. These founding conditions of the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies define the work of the Centre in essentially project terms - the work is marginal to the institution. In the absence of community definition or departmental location, the project is open to all possible agendas. It is also highly visible both inside and outside the university, and it is vulnerable to critique from multiple sources. Most important, the University has created an agency to solve an undefined problem for an undefined community but with tightly defined means.

Phases in policy and practice

A wide-angle view will identify three main phases in the university's extra-mural work:

- The provision of extra-mural programmes
- Engagement in community education projects
- The provision of professional programmes for educators of adults.

The following diagram depicts the sequence in which these phases of work were acquired and indicates the continuity of each phase.

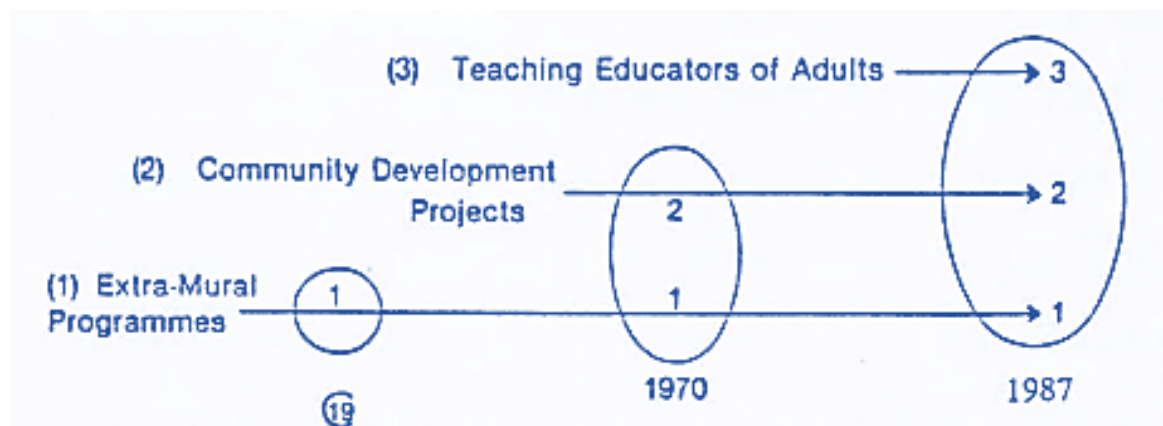


Figure I - Three phases of programme development

Each phase is in fact a complex and shifting curriculum that can be presented here only in very simple terms. Extra-mural programmes have become public, non-certificated courses concentrated in summer schools or spread across the year in extra-mural classes in the widest range of subjects. They are large-scale and well-established: they draw over 11 000 registrations per annum to their major courses.

(Over the last ten years, course registrations have easily topped the million mark).

Community education projects are a development of the late 60s and 70s. They were the Department's attempt to make the University's extra-mural work relevant to the interests of people who were black and poor and who - it was now accepted - could not and (more controversially) should not be drawn into the traditional extra-mural programmes. The major activity for departmental staff became co-operative, organisational and consultative work with innovative groups of people in creating new community projects and agencies with educational goals in response to genuine community "needs". Such work led to the establishment of Grassroots Educational Trust, the Community Arts Project, the Community Video Resource Association, the Community Education and Research Project and, more recently, the Adult Basic Education Research

and Development Project (to name only those agencies or programmes that continue to exist today).

Whereas phase one was about direct provision of education to a well-educated white public, phase two was about the generation of new forms of and capacities for educational engagement for new constituencies of users. It was also about establishing a consultancy and support relationship to a growing network of community organisations.

Education of adult educators: Programmes for the professional education of adult educators can be seen as a formalising of the supportive, consultative and organisational work of phase two. The Department devises a curriculum - however open and flexible - that formalises its commitment to the support of new forms of educational practice - especially non-formal and community based, drawing on its capacity to deliver and generate theory and to offer certification.

At present the Department offers a nine-month Community Adult Education Programme for community workers (without formal entrance qualifications); a two-year part-time Diploma Course for Educators of Adults; and a full-time Masters Programme in Adult Education.

Analysing project dynamics

The mission is chronically in search of coherence and framing. Its terms are so open as to require successive reinterpretations in the form of answers to the following questions:

- Who is the community?
- What university resource is to be mediated?
- What is the mediation process?

Of course, such reinterpretations take place within as well as between major frames: table 1 below depicts only the larger pattern.

	Who is the Community?	What is the Curriculum?	What is the University's resource?
Phase 1	the public	summer school extra-mural classes	Civic and literary culture
Phase 2	community organisations	counselling planning organising	access routes know-how finance
Phase 3	adult educators	diploma course for educators of adults Community Adult Education Programme	theory certification

Table 1: The evolution of the mission

Departmental praxis lives in the reconstruction of curriculum frames. Each major phase rests on a perception of the limitations or contradictions of an earlier one. The extra-mural programmes of phase one have the major problem of adding to the cultural resources of a privileged white middle-class. Attempts to draw black people into the programmes come to be seen as questionable educational moves and are, in any case, unsuccessful. Phase two is therefore a "second front", bypassing the exclusive high-culture curriculum of summer school and extra-mural class programmes and bypassing "provision" as the means of resource mediation. The Department's work in community education becomes participatory - sharing with community workers in the development of new educational projects and agencies geared to the interests of black adult learners.

Phase three is a retreat from the immensity of this definition of the departmental task given very limited resources; from the contested nature of "community" and community leadership; from recruitment to suspect or concealed community agendas; from chronic problems of accountability; and from the experience of ineffective use of key university resources. The result is a formalising of support for

community education through a university course. Instead of working co-operatively and intensively with a few community organisations the University will contribute or construct a curriculum that will serve as a resource to a very wide range of organisations involved in innovative community education and development. But organisations will appropriate this resource as students of adult education, within the formal frame - however flexible and progressive - of a certificated university course.

The above reconstruction takes place without the abandonment of earlier curriculum forms or of earlier stake-holders. In 1987 we have the interesting phenomenon of three broad formats of educational solution, crafted under very different social conditions (and each an exciting breakthrough in its time), existing side by side in the same department and subject to the discipline of a single departmental mission statement. This is because successful educational programmes tend towards institutionalisation: they generate routines, commitments, expectations and resources. They also generate symbolic capital and sustain important host agendas.

The maintenance of these programmes requires of the staff both complex management and skilful (some would say Jesuitical) theorisation to sustain any sense of a coherent departmental project. But while the staff may have a sense of sustaining work of quality within frames that achieve complementary effect, from the perspective of one or other of the community stake-holders the project will seem inherently contradictory. Clearly, the phase that strikes both internal and external viewers as the most problematic at present is the extra-mural programme itself. Most critical pressure is directed in this direction and it is this area that can be seen as the major site for reform or reconstruction - the node for the development of phase four.

There is an entirely different way, however, of construing the curriculum journey from phase one to phase three. This is as a ponderous but successful strategy for securing legitimacy within the university on university terms. The move is from the status of a

marginal, sub-professional, non-academic, service agency - the position in the 1950s - to that of a respectable, professorially-equipped, academic department within the normal faculty structure - the position in the 1980s. Or, to put it another way, the move is from academic sponsorship to academic hegemony - from administering extra-mural courses directed and accredited as university worthy by others, to engaging in educational practice automatically certificated by one's status as an academic department. The story is one of securing incorporation through the acquiring of academic turf. The issue of legitimation touches on a key problem in curriculum development in general and in innovative, university-based extension programmes in particular - the tension between projects and projections. To put it another way, it is the question of whether the innovative community project is to be understood in terms of manifest intention or latent function - programmatically or ideologically.

To pursue this question, it is necessary to bring into the discussion agendas outside both programme and department. These include university, donor and "community" agendas. The university is itself on a journey much more dramatic and crisis-driven than the tiny departmental one, but both have to do with finding safe anchorage in the sense of securing legitimacy and related resources. U C T trades as a university on an out-of-date licence issued by a discredited state; it tries to secure a new licence while necessarily retaining the resources of the old authority. (Minister Clase is telling the University that it has to make up its mind what it wants - moral legitimacy or money).

Progressive community projects give both these resources now. They are powerful legitimations of the university's claim to be a politically engaged and change-oriented institution; they secure substantial donor funding; and they act to prevent the erosion of U C T's sense of membership of an international university community.

Behind and beyond university agendas are the opaque worlds of international donors and multi-nationals. Shuttles of American academics and foundation representatives inspect our Community Adult Education Programme and approve its capacity to draw

some 50 Black community workers annually into non-certificated academic study, or our literacy project for Black farm workers. Such programmes signal the power of American investment in social reconstruction and the legitimacy of opposing divestment. At a very small outlay U S foundations and academic institutions become themselves indirect instruments of social transformation. The amount of project funding available to us at present is a measure of the range of agendas our projects serve. Of course "the community" is not innocent of creative exploitation of the universities' new outward-bound tendencies. University based community programmes can, for example, become sites for a specialised kind of trade-off whereby a small segment of the community engages in a process of rapid capital accumulation (jobs, bursaries, degrees, overseas trips, donor funding, etc.). in exchange for confirming the relevance of a small group of university people to social transformation.

The exchange depends on the beneficiaries projecting solidarity with the dispossessed and the providers' solidarity with progressive forces. For both, the project becomes a self-sustaining site whose major priority is not the achievement of external objectives but the maintenance of a rewarding internal culture. University based extension programmes, therefore, have considerable capacity for exchange value of various kinds. Their value as commodity is necessarily in tension with their value as educational process.

Let me escape from an increasingly puritanical mind-set to consider a different kind of tension we have experienced in the course of project development. This is the tension between a departmental or project mind on the one hand and an institutional mind on the other. When a university commissions an interventive programme (or a small group of university staff themselves institute such a programme) those at the programme core may quickly develop a theoretical grip of their work critical of the founding orthodoxy. Characteristically, the world appears more complex than it did when the project was conceived of, its implementation draws informed critique from a range of participants, and the departmental (or project) mind develops an increasingly critical understanding

of its practice. This understanding runs ahead of institutional common-sense. Furthermore, it becomes vulnerable to the critique of institutional - or community - common-sense.

Phase two of our work is one example of this tendency. The innovative engagement in community development projects in the 1970s rested entirely on departmental theory. In the eyes of the University - and of the Board of Extra-Mural Studies - the work of the Department was about summer school and extra-mural classes. (And these were, of course, sustained at high levels of performance). The point is that the extra-mural programmes had the backing of the entire university community: they were known as incontrovertibly good things and U C T was justly proud of its reputation in this field. The community development work, by contrast, lived beneath the protection - and to some extent the concealment - of this established orthodoxy. The Department's theory of practice was not accessible to the Board of Extra-Mural Studies, to whom it owed the account of its work. It was the Department's task to win, slowly, wider university recognition for a deviant form of educational engagement. But it has taken the invention of a new kind of professional curriculum - a recognisably conventional packaging - to secure not simply recognition but the resources necessary for this work.

Conclusion

Given the present interest in university extension initiatives a question that might usefully focus a brief concluding comment is: which of the concerns that justified the move from phase two to phase three (from community projects to formal programmes for adult educators) seem to have retained substance for the Department and are part of its current theory of practice?

I think that two concerns persist: these are about location and ownership, and they are inter-related.

The first point is that our location is the university not "the community". This is the institution that gives us protection, judgement and reward. It also, as an institution, possesses specific resources and capacities. The achievements in phase two were brought about by the work of one or two people as individuals, whereas phase one - its possible anachronisms notwithstanding - represents a mobilisation of resources across the entire university. And phase three, too, significantly impacts the university as an institution: its forms of mediation are certificated, it draws a new cadre of students on to the campus, its resources align themselves to the project of professionalisation and in the process the composition and politics of one faculty of the university are significantly altered. In this connection, the really encouraging feature of the present development of university extension work at the University of Cape Town is its degree of diffusion throughout the institution. Behind this point is the old disquiet that projects may act as projections, protecting from critical pressure the real work of the institution: that they are often small in scale and in delivery though large in symbolic effect. And this disquiet leads us to the proposition that being located as we are, our major project is the reconstruction of the university itself.

The second point is to do with project ownership. Our experience of phase two is that joint missions are inherently problematic. The overlap of interests between community organisation and university that constitutes the founding condition for the project is difficult to sustain over time partly because it marks a degree of suspension of normal accountability processes. Any crisis in policy, relationships, resources or credibility with stake-holders can fracture the project on institutional lines. Rather than achieving a co-operative process of exchange benefitting both, the project becomes a mechanism for competitive blocking of interests. And autonomy becomes the only base from which to renegotiate possible co-operation.

Our present policy, therefore, is to formalise the terms of community service and co-operation, to establish clearly who carries responsibility for what and what the

accountability procedures will be. This leads to a limited role for us in community development policy and practice; in contrast to the 70s such engagement is off-limits. The tendency is for the Department to be commissioned by community agencies for tasks restricted by their policy frames - to plan an educational programme or carry out an evaluative study, for example. Similarly, an adult education curriculum frame like the Diploma Course for Educators of Adults signals very clearly the terms on which a particular university controlled resource is to be mediated.

We are wanting to argue, I think, that for the university to deliver to the community in hard currency - qualifications or skills or materials or knowledge - requires the discipline of a formalised educational frame or contract -and that our own major developmental task lies in the reconstruction of just such frames. These serve to protect the autonomy of both university departments and community organisations, to recognise strategic interests, and to specify the terms and benefits of their co-operation.

October 1987



“Curriculum negotiation in professional adult education” Clive Millar (1986)

Journal of Curriculum Studies

Clive Millar, Tony Morphet, Tony Saddington University of Cape Town

Introduction

This paper is an account of what we have called 'curriculum negotiation', the process whereby learners take responsibility for and shape a course in which they have agreed to participate. The learners in the course in question are all adult educators engaged in various forms of education, mainly in non-formal settings. They are experienced people with a wide range of academic and professional qualifications, and range in age from 23 to 67 years. The course is a professional one in adult education itself, leading to a university diploma in adult education. It is offered on a part-time basis over two years by the University of Cape Town. What we are concerned with here is the first four weeks of this course, constituting some 30 contact hours. This account is of the opening stages of a long educational engagement; a study of the full course is being undertaken at present.

We have three purposes in writing this account. First, as staff responsible for creating not only the opportunity but the imperative for curriculum negotiation, to record and analyse our experience of this process. Second, to make this record and interpretation available to other members of the course, as a reflection on a group process in which all have shared; in this context it will serve both as a learning resource and as a point of view to be contested and debated as a means to better theory. Third, to contribute to academic discussion on the theory of adult education, especially that related to curriculum development and experiential learning. The decision to engage

in a process of curriculum negotiation rested on our experience of a previous professional course for educators of adults. This course had all the characteristics of a typical university programme, though students' needs and interests probably shaped course content and assessment more than is usual: staff were in full and undisputed possession of the course content; the lecture programme was decided in advance and delivered on assigned dates to attentive audiences; the tutorials and seminars pursued animated discussions of topics raised in lectures or of immediate concern to students. Students engaged in long-term projects as well as short-term assignments. There were repeated periods of evaluation and assessment, all scheduled and co-ordinated by staff. We were aware of problems and complaints and adjusted accordingly. It was judged by most a stimulating and successful course.

As the course drew to a close, however; we become increasingly aware that in an important sense its potential value was being limited by the strength of a hidden curriculum. This curriculum took the form of sustained student dependence on staff— for knowledge, for course design, for validation of achievement and for leadership. Though our students, as professional adult educators, carried substantial responsibility in their own areas of work, this responsibility did not extend at all deeply into their participation in the course. With staff fully in control there was no reason why it should have: the staff— student relationship was a complementary one.

But what this relationship was doing was denying students access to precisely those areas of control and responsibility that they required if they were to engage fully and seriously in the course.

Compliance, or doing things to please others, had become the barrier to full engagement. It had undermined the capacity of our students to take responsibility for their own learning. Staff had come dangerously close to doing their learning *for* them. As a result of this experience we reached a decision that we would not enter our following course for educators of adults as the owners of a curriculum or the designers of a programme. Our first obligation would have to be an extended negotiation with students about what we all wished to do. Our theoretical position in making this decision could be summarized in the following terms:

- a) Adult education requires adults to take responsibility for their own learning. This is the truism in adult education theory_. It was our conviction that in our previous course we had created a latent process of dependency that had acted to oppose this principle of personal responsibility for learning. The decision to create a curriculum through negotiation was thus a decision to give radical expression to this principle, in what we saw as structural terms.
- b) Personal responsibility for learning is blocked or diminished to the extent that control is located outside the learning group itself. In broader terms, we took the view that the nature and location of control constitute a major force in any curriculum.
- c) The benign and voluntary nature of liberal adult education masks the operation of such external control while inviting student collusion in a relationship of dependence. Blunt and visible control can be opposed; not so, control that is embraced as freedom. No form of control is more rewarding to both parties and, therefore, more likely to be defended.
- d) This collusion erodes the seriousness and the quality of the enterprise of learning. In essence, this collusion entails a substantial surrender to others of responsibility for learning, sustains a

relationship of 'being provided for', and prevents both processes from disturbing the surface of classroom activity.

- e) Therefore, the control and development of an adult education curriculum should not be accepted as a unilateral staff responsibility but as the shared responsibility of all members of the learning group.
- f) And the continuous processes of negotiation in shaping the curriculum, including issues of control and responsibility must be themselves visible aspects of the curriculum.

We realized that the above argument begged many questions and could be seen as a partial and extreme response to the concern for genuine learner responsibility. Nevertheless, we saw it as a justifiable starting-point for what was essentially a cooperative and open-ended experiment in course development. Accordingly, we informed intending students that the new course would have no staff-designed curriculum; they should contemplate registering only if they were prepared to engage actively in the process of curriculum negotiation itself. We interviewed all intending students to discuss our sense of this undertaking. Although this theoretical position was articulated within a specific context of practice and in reaction to a specific curriculum problem, it was consistent with a number of recent attempts to reformulate the practice of teaching in ways particularly relevant to adult education. These attempts have all rested on the proposition that education cannot adequately be conceived of as a process of management framed in technicist terms. Thus, drawing on Habermas's work on critical theory, and influenced by Freire and Bruner, Mezirow has proposed that the distinctive feature of adult education might be seen as its capacity to enable 'perspective transformation' to take place, this resting on a developing capacity for critical reflection on one's own process of socialization.' He has developed

what he calls a 'charter for andragogy', task prescriptions for adult educators that will enhance self-directed learning.

These include the following:

- Progressively decrease the learner's dependency on the educator.
- Help the learner understand how to use resources - especially the experience of others, including the educator, and how to engage others in reciprocal learning relationships.
- Assist the learner to define his/her learning needs - both in terms of immediate awareness and of understanding the cultural and psychological assumptions influencing his/her perceptions of needs.
- Assist learners to assume increasing responsibility for defining their learning objectives, planning their own learning programme and evaluating their progress.'

Implicit in such prescriptions is an unusual degree of learner responsibility for his/ her curriculum, including the responsibility to conceptualize the curriculum in personal ways that may contest dominant definitions.

A second way of conceiving of teaching relevant to our case, one grounded in an analysis of modernization, is that developed by Bowers.³ Bowers's central concern, like that of Mezirow, is with teaching and learning that encourage 'communicative competence'. Bowers defines this as 'the individual's ability to negotiate meanings and purposes instead of passively accepting the social realities defined by others.' This leads to his interest in curriculum development that has as its purpose 'cultural literacy' - the 'ability to read or de-code the taken-for-granted assumptions and conceptual categories that underlie the individual's world of experience'.⁵ He sees the intellectual resources of such curriculum development as the sociology of knowledge,

especially as developed by Berger and Luckman.⁶ The curriculum content is one's own taken-for-granted cultural map. The task of the teacher is to assist learners to obtain that grip on their own language and culture that will allow them to negotiate actively the essential tension between tradition and autonomy. Clearly this grip would include, in a central way, their own experience of education.' The work of Lawrence Stenhouse has also consistently addressed issues of authority and contro1.⁸ Particularly important for our case is his insistence that classroom or learning groups require the logic of their learning task to be expressed in formal terms: 'I wish to argue that successful participant small groups in education are likely to be formal rather than informal; they call for rules and conventions. Many seminars fail because tutors see them as informal occasions.'⁹

The public availability of rules or conventions makes for 'lawful' teaching and learning. Furthermore, the critique and development of such principles of procedure as they are tested in action is the task of the fully professional teacher and researcher." In the light of these observations, it seemed that our emphasis in the context of adult education should be on the importance of learner engagement in the construction and development of principles of procedure, i.e. on a learner—researcher as well as a teacher—researcher role. Our curriculum practice was in no sense an implementation of any of the above positions but it was certainly shaped in part by the terms these three writers used in their formulation of both curriculum problems and solutions as they apply to adult education. We believed that our task was to engage reflectively in an open-ended process of curriculum negotiation. The analysis that follows is a formal expression of such reflection. Its focusing question is: How are we to make sense of this process?

Our perspective is interpretive: we are concerned primarily to explicate the meanings of action for the actors, including ourselves." As used in educational evaluation this approach has been labelled the 'transactional viewpoint', 'a dialectical interaction of people and their environment that results in perception. Individual perceptions are a focus of study, and active participation is essential to knowing.⁺¹² The intent is critical: critique and revision of the theory on which a project rests. We draw, where it seems appropriate, on the language of role theory and group dynamics, and our interpretation rests on cross-checked participant observation and detailed records over the 30-hour period.

Prevention, resistance and counter-resistance

The social processes of groups are notoriously complex and any attempt to isolate themes within the total process faces severe difficulties. Nonetheless, this and the following sections of the paper attempt to identify and analyse what we judge to be major themes within the total process of group development that emerged in our course during the first 30 hours. Each of these themes can be seen as flowing from the unusual and dramatic way in which the course began: there was no curriculum prepared by staff; there were no staff prepared to teach in the conventional sense. Given normal expectations of how courses begin, the experience was that of entering a vacuum. Although each student had accepted the principle of a negotiated curriculum during prior individual discussion the experience of absent curriculum and unfilled teacher roles was one of deep discomfort.

The first theme is what we have called 'prevention, resistance and counter-resistance', terms that need some explanation. When the staff, at the start of the course, refused to 'perform' the actions which the traditional role expectations of learners required to confirm them as students, our students set in motion three related reactions. The first was *resistance*, at first submerged but later

fully articulated, to the disturbance of the established complementarity of staff and student roles. The second was a continuing *prevention* or *barrier* exercised by the group against the emergence of any alternative leadership within its members. The third was a process of *counter-resistance* engaged in by staff in an attempt to maintain and defend a position under attack. All three were complementary parts of a process of coping with the initial event of staff abdication.

The act of abdication exposed the staff role with striking force, although not in a way which could be coherently grasped and understood by the students. A complicating issue was that the staff did not leave the room — they merely refused the recognized actions of their role. They were thus there and not there. As students began to work towards overcoming the difficulties abdication caused, the process of 'prevention' emerged powerfully. Student after student made proposals on ways to begin. There was, in fact, a very considerable consensus among the group about what should be done. The striking fact was that no proposal was accepted as a basis for action. In an important sense no one was listening to the proposals, or receiving them. Two students at different points made strong bids to gain acceptance for their proposals but these were specifically resisted. During the procedure it was clear, and the point was made, that if the staff had put forward proposals in any form these would have immediately provided a basis for action. It seems, therefore, that what was happening was that the staff role remained empty, though present, and that no student was allowed to fill that position and function.

At the same time, while the staff role was unoccupied, it seemed that students were unable to assume their accustomed positions and functions, which explains why there was no audience to receive proposals and respond to them in action. In a situation in which all roles were suspended no basis for decision and action existed. It was in this condition of unlocated activity that the first signs of the

'resistance' process began to emerge. In the early phase the signs hardly merited the term resistance since they appeared as 'innocent' questions requiring answers in terms of information and clarification. The important point about these questions was that they were attempts to reactivate the suspended role system. Questions were put to staff that expected answers to be made to students about 'correct' procedure or about what staff intended should happen.

A deeper questioning of the role suspension emerged soon after the first questions when it became clear that some students saw the abdication as part of a concerted but hidden plan. There were half-joking references to a 'plot' and to the cleverness of 'the plan' in starting the course as it did. It became evident that students were calling on the staff to show their hand and reveal the 'hidden agenda'. These assertions turned on the notion that the staff role, though apparently empty, was only an illusion; that in terms of the accustomed patterns the staff really were in control and were using the dummy emptiness as a means of control. Students expressing these views were attempting to return to their own traditional roles and were asking the staff to do the same. The semi-playful manner in which these exchanges took place should not mask their character as part of the resistance process. When the major challenge came at a later stage the charge of 'hidden plan' formed a major component of the attack. In a further development of the resistance process students began to make effective use of the accumulating evidence of confusion, frustration, and the apparent aimlessness of group activity. The characteristic form of this phase of the process was student questions to staff that were intended to recall them to their responsibilities. Such questions had the effect of reconstructing the staff as the people who controlled and possessed the knowledge, experience, and understanding which would resolve the confusions and frustrations. The staff abdication was identified as the cause of the difficulty confronting the group, the implication being that, because the people 'who knew' had abandoned the class to the people 'who did not

know', chaos and confusion were the inevitable result. The traditional forms of teaching and learning were thereby implicitly affirmed.

However, beneath this sporadic resistance, through pointed questioning, lay a broader and more potent form of defence. It is a form of resistance common in most forms of learning situation, though in this case, by being more visible, it assumed more power. Its obvious characteristic is silence. In the case of the course it was the silence of dissent. The silent people acted in compliance with the governing process of undirected discussion but it was plain that they were withholding their commitment to that procedure. Their withheld commitment rested in part on a genuine lack of understanding about what was taking place, but also, in our view, on a dissatisfaction with the apparent aimlessness. Their statements, when made, frequently took the form of: 'I did not come to the course for I came to be taught.' The effect of the silent resistance to the disruption of teacher-student roles was to make others, and in particular, staff, responsible for the condition of the group - thus exercising considerable pressure upon them. Possibly the most inclusive form of resistance, which subsumed the other forms mentioned and which was widely experienced as a basic feeling underlying the questions and the silences, rested on a wish 'to get down to work' or 'to get started', 'to be practical' or 'to be plain and straightforward'. Implicit in these feelings and their expression was the assumption that the role dislocation was an interference with real purposes, an unnecessary preparation developed out of some remote theoretical interest pursued by staff and some students, and that it has nothing to do with the *real* tasks of teaching and learning. The concept of 'real tasks' implied here conformed closely, of course, to the patterns of traditional teaching and learning.

The most important moment in the resistance strategy came towards the end of the first 30 hours, just after students had made their final decision to register for the course. Registration clearly indicated that resistance, however strongly felt at times, did not outweigh the wish to continue. However, immediately after registration the resistance process reached its fullest expression and its clearest focus in the form of a powerful challenge to the governing process delivered by a student who by training, experience and current work was strongly committed to traditional forms of teaching and learning. The substance of her charge, delivered articulately and with emotional force, was that she had felt manipulated through a 'technique' which she did not understand and over which she had no control, that staff had not taken her into their confidence by explaining this technique and that she felt excluded by the staff and some students through their use of jargon and unclarified concepts. She questioned the relevance of the technique used to her needs and she felt that staff were out of contact with students. She said that she spoke for more than half the group.

The articulateness, potency and comprehensiveness of her charge, as well as its justified claim to representativeness, drew together into a single unified focus all the processes and forms of resistance described earlier. The core of the challenge was unmistakable in its reference to the difference between the current group practice and the traditional model of teaching and learning. In an important public form, this speech brought to the fore the hidden context over roles and role dislocation. It amounted to a direct challenge to the staff to resume their 'proper' functions. The staff response was to give a full account of the opposed perspectives on teaching and learning implicit in her charge and to affirm her freedom from staff manipulation: there was no staff 'plot'. Resistance faded as a force within the group after this climax. Some possible reasons for this will be considered later.

What has been absent from the analysis until this point is any account of staff reaction to these various forms of resistance, the process we have called 'counter-resistance'. Staff reacted to student pressure on them to shoulder traditional teacher responsibilities in a number of ways. Their most obvious response was a sustained refusal to take more than a limited and shared responsibility of the problems or tasks continually identified as rightly theirs, a refusal to fill the leadership vacuum. The more the group invested staff contributions with special authority or converted their suggestions into prescriptions, the more staff tended to limit their contribution. Linked to this was the tendency of staff not to register questions or requests as directed at them (as they clearly were) but as questions that any member might be able and willing to respond to. The desire of staff to contribute fully and freely to course development was blocked, especially in the early stages of the 30-hour period, by their awareness of how this would prevent the growth of student responsibility for leadership roles.

A second form of staff counter-resistance was to share with the group their reflections, not on the content of group discussion, but on the underlying dynamics of group development. In doing this they were (without being fully aware of it) beginning to fill or confirm their role as teachers but in a way very different from that expected. Their behaviour in reflecting on group process (rather than giving information) served inevitably as a model of an unaccustomed form of teaching and learning, one that in being advanced by staff was seen to carry strong expectations for complementary student behaviour. Staff reflection thus worked as a critique of student pressure for orthodox teaching. It must be stressed that staff reflection was not intended as a form of critique or counter-resistance; it was so in its consequences. Its purpose was to assist the group to increase its awareness of its own processes of development.

To support their performance of 'reflection on process' staff added another dimension to their counter-resistance - the deployment of glimpses of

Grand Theory. The professor, for example, in response to the explicit student challenge, gave an explanation of the meta-theory of the course, and staff at various times made what could only have been received as gnostic statements about 'experiential learning', 'reflection', 'process' - about 'what really mattered' in the course. In doing this what they were claiming - certainly in the eyes of several students was a deeper grasp of the enterprise than others. Such statements probably served, therefore, to strengthen the belief of those students who viewed the course as being firmly in the hands and minds of staff. Authority at the deepest level still rested with staff. (They knew what everyone was doing and in time all would be revealed.) From the staff point of view, such statements were intended to assist students to widen the exercise of their freedom as learners and teachers.

The final form of staff counter-resistance was simply a spontaneous expression of feelings. Staff, like students, showed irritation and hurt which rested on a sense of being misunderstood, unfairly judged, or subjected to intense pressure, and they expressed these feelings very occasionally in direct terms. Staff were by no means unsupported in their counter-resistance. In many cases students assisted them and aligned themselves with staff positions, for probably complex reasons. Indeed, in one sense the process of resistance and counter-resistance was a process of recruitment as much as a process of negotiating terms for co-operation.

The analysis thus far has deliberately ignored any account of the considerable growth in co-operation and in assumption of responsibility for curriculum development and teaching that developed within the group despite, and even through, the processes of resistance and prevention just described. This will be dealt with in the following section.

Co-operation in sharing a common task

The first step towards developing a curriculum was taken when an elected student chairperson requested all students and staff to list for public display their expectations of the course. This was followed by the formation of small groups to study the wide range of expectations recorded and attempt some structure or synthesis. A small group of volunteers took this process further by producing a curriculum statement with expectations consolidated within several major areas of interest. The processes of proposing chairpersons, creating small-group discussion groups, and commissioning a volunteer group gave the class a document that was seen as a starting curriculum, acceptable to all, or at least not opposed by anyone. When this stage was reached there was strong pressure on the staff to order the curriculum content in sequence and then deliver it. Staff resisted this, and two students volunteered to assume the task of sequencing the content. Following this, the students formed small task groups to work on the content of the first five areas chosen. These groups spent considerable time on the process. Providing leadership emerged as the major task facing the class. Early attempts by individual students to exercise leadership in various ways were rejected until the role of chairperson became established. In the main, chairpersons gave the sessions direction and ordered the agenda. Though various attempts were made to find ways to make decisions by consensus, decisions continued to be made by seeking support for proposed ideas.

A new phase in the exercise of leadership was reached when a student chairperson went beyond a group management role to introduce educational materials or concepts. This was a smoothly accomplished student advance into 'staff-teacher' territory, a fusion of student, chairperson and teacher roles that opened the way to fuller participation for others in the class. A further student initiative took the form of sharing

the results of private investigations. Books and articles were reported on and in some cases extracts were photocopied for distribution to the class. 'This was a further demonstration that anyone, students or staff, could 'teach'. In interpreting this process of assuming responsibility for group tasks the Tannenbaum-Schmidt leadership grid is helpful.' ³ An important question in any learning group is the appropriate relationship between teacher authority and student responsibility. This relationship is expressed in a simple form in Figure 1, where the diagonal line suggests a 'ratio' between such authority and responsibility.

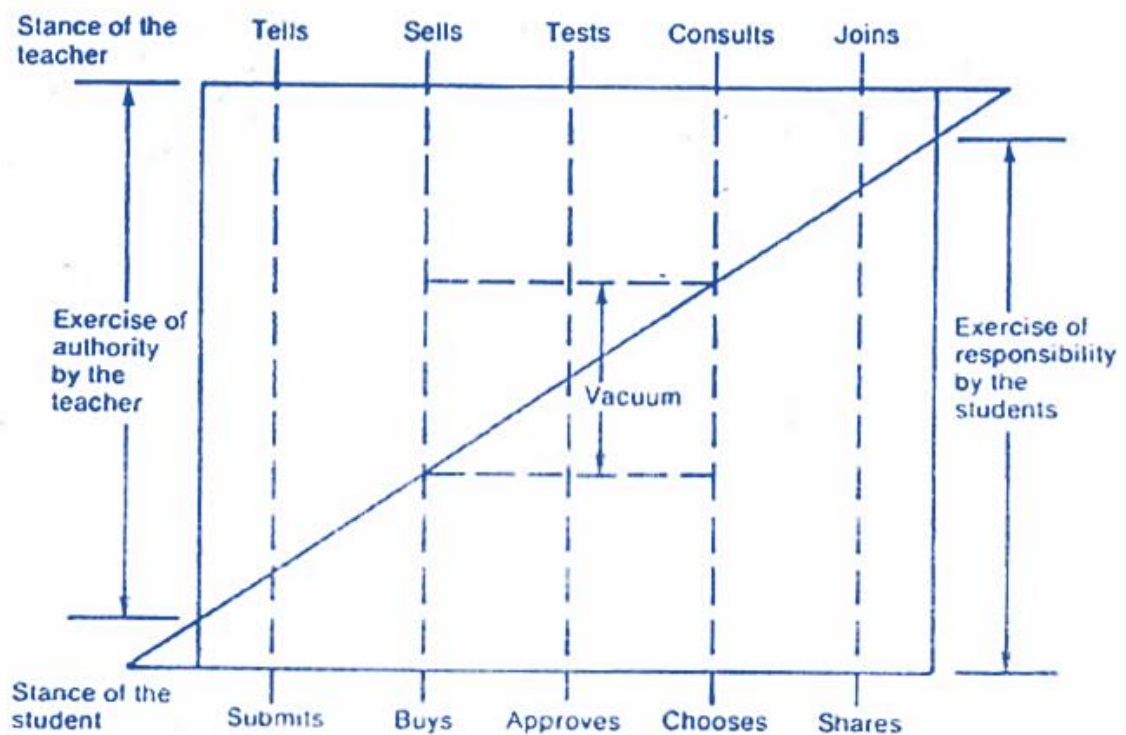


Figure 1 (based on a model by Tannenbaum and Schmidt – see note 13)

Clearly a tension exists when the teacher wishes to be at the point on the diagonal described as 'consulting', while the students are at a point on the diagonal which requires of him the stance of 'selling'. The gap created can be bridged by a change of stance and action by students and teacher.

What this model suggests is that initially the students saw themselves at the point of 'submitting' themselves to the course and its staff, whilst the staff placed themselves at a point of 'joining' and 'sharing' responsibility. Though the position taken by the staff was seen as an abdication it is clear from the way in which the staff engaged themselves in the course that at no time were they uninvolved in the tasks being done. On the contrary, it can be argued that by holding firm their original position they strongly influenced the complementary movement by students.

Co-operation through pluralism: 'task' and 'process' agendas

Two kinds of group processes have been analysed in the last two sections: processes of resistance and blocking, and processes of co-operation in sharing a common task. Co-operation in sharing a common task included the definition and assumption of shared responsibilities in a wide range of leadership, task, and teaching areas, as well as the growth of agreement about the appropriateness of such actions. But cooperation also rested on agreement to differ and on maintaining the opportunity to differ. This is what is meant by 'co-operation through pluralism', the focus of this section.

It is helpful in analysing this way of dealing with disagreement to see the initial staff abdication as holding three expectations of students: the expectations that they share responsibility for planning the course, for teaching, and for learning. The first of these expectations was most easily met by the students. Within the first six-hour session several students had contributed to the planning process and by the end of the first 30 hours of the course everyone had played

some role in course design. it appeared an acceptable commitment. The second expectation, to share responsibility for teaching, clearly caused some qualms but it came to be accepted by students. The small groups planning the teaching of a range of content areas all undertook to engage in teaching roles of various kinds, though with the comfort of knowing actual teaching would only take place sometime in the future. (There was a strong reluctance on the part of all groups to go first.) The third expectation, sharing responsibility for learning the one that might have appeared to be the most 'natural' expectation - was the one that caused the deepest problem and provoked an explicit challenge from students.

The problem several students faced with the third expectation was that staff, through their process of counter- resistance, had given it a content or shape of a peculiar kind. They had modelled a particular form of learning, that of reflecting on group processes, and they and others had actually used the term 'experiential learning' as a label for the mode of learning they appeared to favour. This evidence of staff preference for a peculiar learning mode (shared by certain students), added to the experience of initial abdication, and supported by such jargon words as 'experiential learning', 'reflection', and 'process', was experienced by several students as a pressure to submit to a learning technique they could not understand and therefore support. An explicit student challenge was delivered, and received an answer from staff in theoretical terms. But at the same time the conflict about the kind of responsibility held for learning that the challenge expressed, was being managed in quite a different way - by means of changes in group processes, in particular by a shift in the dominant agenda governing group action.

There were two broad agendas within which the group operated during its first 30 hours. These could be labelled 'task' and 'process' agendas. The logic

of the task agenda was that of 'getting things done', of planning for the future, of negotiating the framework of the course. It was the logic of constructive, goal-directed action. Both curriculum planning and the discussion of future teaching roles fitted into this task agenda. The logic of the process agenda was quite different. Its focus was inward and backwards in time; its mode reflective and analytical; its goal learning through insight into actual group processes. Rather than planning for learning it was engagement in learning. The curriculum was a present reality rather than a future construction.

The shifts from one agenda to the other included a sequence of four phases:

- a) Student experience of the leadership vacuum: bewilderment, prevention and resistance.
- b) Engagement in a task agenda -- the development of a core curriculum - this finally expressed in the form of a curriculum contract.
- c) Through processes of resistance and staff counter-resistance, movement into a process agenda. The bewilderment and exclusion experienced by several students led to resistance of an extreme form. No resolution was possible within the terms of the process agenda but confrontation broke the dominance of this agenda.
- d) A return to the task agenda in which all could co-operate and to which all could give commitment.

Stages *(b)* and *(d)* both represent the same solution to the problems of stages *(a)* and *(c)*: the return to an agenda that could accommodate all participants.

Such an agenda played a crucial role in enabling groups and persons to work together who held firmly to conflicting views about learning. In this sense shifts in the dominant agenda enabled co-operation through pluralism to take place.

The return to the task agenda in stage *(d)* marked a return to work in small groups. The membership of these groups reflected positions taken up during stage *(b)*, when the process agenda was dominant, suggesting that groups served a need for people with similar views to draw together. Furthermore, work in small groups had the added advantage for some students of being free from exposure to staff and thus to any accountability to the 'process' norms that staff appeared to represent. Within these small groups students were free to develop curricula within the overall curriculum that could preserve conflicting orthodoxies about learning and teaching.

The latent orthodoxies

Underlying both resistance and co-operation in the process of curriculum negotiation lay strongly held and opposing theoretical positions. We have called these positions 'orthodoxies' to indicate their degree of entrenchment and to distinguish them from the complexity of other theories of an educational kind diffused throughout group discussion. Our account of these orthodoxies will necessarily take the form of an over-simplified 'ideal-type' presentation of positions. These positions could remain submerged for the most part during group involvement in the task agenda. They surfaced and moved towards collision when the agenda shifted to one of process.

The first conflict of orthodoxies lay in very different answers to the question: 'Who owns the course?' The second conflict lay in different answers to the question: 'What kind of responsibility do I have for learning?'

Who owned the course? The first answer (the 'new orthodoxy') was that *all* members of the group did: students and staff. All were teachers and all were learners. All shared the task of creating a curriculum and building a learning community. It was a real task, not a learning experience that some had devised for others. No one owned the course or the theory on which it might rest. The

curriculum contract had been freely negotiated and entered into by all. It was a real contract and not a staff technique. The staff held this view, as did those students who had either assumed responsibility for course organization and teaching or aspired to do so in the future.

The second answer (the 'old orthodoxy') was quite different: it was that the *staff* owned the course. Staff and student 'co-learning' and 'co-teaching' were fictions, to be accepted only as an opening gambit in a progressive educational programme that wished to emphasize student responsibility. All that was happening was planned by staff. The curriculum—contracting stage was a method of learning selected by staff. Sharing responsibility was a technique. Students had not really been free to negotiate a curriculum; they were working *within* a curriculum. The curriculum contract itself was part of *staff* technique, not a real contract. Behind it lay the real contract. This, then, was the first conflict of orthodoxies in its simplest terms. Each position confronted the other with the following incompatible expectations:

Table 1. 'Who owns the course?'

The 'new orthodoxy'	The 'old orthodoxy'
We are free within the terms of our contract.	We are controlled by the course design of the staff.
a) Take your freedom to learn and teach.	a) Give us freedom by explaining your rationale, sharing your theory.
b) Assume the responsibility undertaken in the curriculum contract.	b) Exercise your authority of office and expertise. Teach us.

The second conflict of orthodoxies lay in different but not necessarily opposing answers to the question: 'What kind of responsibility do I have for learning?'

The first answer stressed the view that to learn was to engage in reflection on experience. The second stressed the view that to learn was to acquire previously constituted, mediated knowledge.

Table 2. 'What kind of responsibility do I have for learning?'

The 'new orthodoxy'	The 'old orthodoxy'
I am responsible for transforming my understanding through reflection and experience.	I am responsible for appropriating previously constituted knowledge.

'Reflection', the key concept of the new orthodoxy', establishes a particular stance in relation to experience. It is essentially a process in which the individual or group looks 'backwards' over the experiences which they have passed through collectively or individually. What is involved first in such reflection is a careful identification of what took place. Sequences and patterns of events are identified as they occurred and became evident. The kind of events observed in this way vary very widely across strict definitions of intellectual and emotional categories.

Similarly, the sequences perceived will vary widely from individual to individual. Joint discussion of perceived patterns becomes not only essential but a powerful stimulus to perception. The goal of this early procedure in reflection is to identify the processes which were operating within the group experience and to relate individual events within the overall process. Developing out of the identification of what took place is a deeper form of inquiry. The questions of how the sequence occurred and why they took on particular forms and expressions lead toward the location of meanings and explanations. From the basis terms of the procedure (because the subjects are dealing with their own immediate and unique experience) the

establishment of meaning and explanation can only be tentative, exploratory, and open to critical discussion. There cannot be any preconstructed charts or learning maps which provide definitive accounts of the events. The activity of uncovering meanings and creating explanations draws into active play the layers of assumption, previously constituted knowledge, and attitudes and values of each participant in such a way that they become directly visible, open to question and change. It is this process of increasing consciousness of the assumed layers of knowledge and the readiness to submit these to critical scrutiny that is termed 'learning' in this context. The process is akin to Meziroi's concept of 'perspective transformation'.

This procedure of reflection, as it has been sketched here, was something almost totally closed to a majority of the students. It is not difficult to see why, if one starts from the very different assumptions implicit in the second position. Thus, learning, as perceived in the terms of the 'old orthodoxy', is something a person does. He learns, or acquires knowledge. Any consideration of learning must, therefore, focus on knowledge, usually conceptualized as a 'field'. This field or body of knowledge exists outside of and ahead of the student. Furthermore, it is something already known by others, whether in books or in minds. Learning is essentially the gradual appropriation of this pre-constituted knowledge. It is progress forwards through the study of external materials, and the most efficient form of progress is generally believed to be under the guidance of someone who 'knows the field' — its content, its structure, its levels of difficulty and abstraction, its basic concepts and its derived meanings, and so on. Furthermore, learning in this context is an intellectual procedure locating itself within an intellectual tradition. The self of the student is constituted as an intellectual practitioner and all other features of the self are seen as private and outside the reach of the learning activity.

It is not difficult to see why there should have been tension and difficulties within the group when people were attached to such different interpretations of so deep a concept as learning. For the group interested in experiential learning any experience, including aimlessness, confused searching for direction and decision, even conflict and disagreement, were important sources of meaning. For the group committed to the more traditional view of learning such conditions were a disastrous waste of energy and time and deeply demoralizing into the bargain. 'Reflection' and 'learning', therefore, remained central issues for the individuals and the group to negotiate over in order to reach a degree of clarity and a working consensus. And these issues seemed embedded in deep and complex ways in the previously discussed collision of convictions as to who really held responsibility for the course.

Critique in conclusion

The purpose of this section is not to push towards 'conclusions' — the course is ongoing and we have not achieved sufficient distance from our experience - but to begin to reflect critically on the account of the course we have just given. The second stated aim of our paper was to make our record and interpretation available to other members of the course, both as a learning resource and as a point of view to be contested as a means to better theory. This we did and their critical responses—typified by the four extracts that follow—shape the substance of this final section.

To my mind, one situation was simply exchanged for another - 'staff were in full and undisputed possession of the decision not to have “a typical academic programme”'. This was never open to negotiation, at least definitely not at the start of the first six hour sessions.

I believe that we were not free to choose— staff had made the choice of the process for us. The argument that at the beginning of the course the

group could have opted for the traditional teacher-learning situation is not, in my opinion, true. The group was not (and is not) a group; it was (and still is) leaderless; there was confusion and little understanding on the part of the students. Under these circumstances, we were not in a position to make choices. We did have a say in the curriculum, but the experiential learning mode had been chosen for us. This is what we were engaged in and I believe that staff had a commitment to trying to make this approach work.

Staff education as such might not have been the major problem, but rather the manner in which it was done. As 'educators of adults' we possibly understand the desire to 'join' and 'share' the learning experience, but the void/vacuum that remained when the traditional staff—student relationship was suddenly withdrawn left us as a group that was not yet a group, with no process (acceptable to the whole group) by which to move forward.

Are we not involved in a process of discovering that roles of responsibility (in our case teaching roles) can never be fully removed without a basic alternation of the hidden power structure implicit in these roles? Staff/lecturer teacher remain staff/lecturer/teacher regardless of the Educational Theory, and it is impossible to totally abdicate this role, which in fact is defined by factors outside of Educational Theory.

A major student critique was directed at the issue of staff control and at what appeared as a naive view of an 'open' curriculum. An essential argument was that it was not within the capacity of staff to constitute the curriculum as a space freely available for negotiation. Staff and student roles were framed in historical and

institutional terms that continued to operate despite all attempts to escape them. Behind any contract we might negotiate lay a deeper and more resilient one that locked us in staff and student positions. Furthermore, students as a group were in no position to work effectively towards a negotiation of the curriculum that might contest staff perceptions of its appropriate form: the group lacked any cohesive identity or strategic capacity. There was, however, a more substantial argument lodged in the student critique than that the power of social tradition and the weakness of group dynamics constituted student vulnerability. What staff possessed, and students did not, was 'curriculum theory'. The staff were in fact operating in a classically staff-like way by themselves holding - inevitably and without a consciousness that required apology - the underlying theory of the course. The 'absent curriculum' was, therefore, a contradiction in terms, being itself a most powerful form of curriculum structure, requiring students to engage in a demanding and unaccustomed educational task whether or not they understood or accepted the rationale for so doing.

To see the 'curriculum-free' course as actually imposing in emphatic structural terms a staff-owned theory of learning requires a reassessment of the meaning and value of what we have called student 'resistance' moves and their defence of *the 'old orthodoxy'*. Given their traditional theory of learning, uncontested acceptance of the 'new orthodoxy' would have meant a form of intellectual capitulation, a yielding to the hegemony of staff theory quite at variance with the intention of the course. Students were defending their right to be taught in an appropriate way. They were doing so in terms of a firmly held and coherent educational theory. They could negotiate the form of the new curriculum - as invited to do by staff - only from the starting-point of this position. However, this position was radically undercut by the condition of staff 'abdication' that constituted their entry experience of the course. 'Staff

abdication' was not neutrally providing an arena for them to argue for a conventional course structure; curriculum negotiation was not a neutral communicative opportunity.

'Abdication' and 'negotiation' were powerful codings of the staff theory of learning and teaching: to invite to participate was to invite to value participation. But why were students who were committed to a more conventional theory of instruction to value this? Even if eventually judged valid, staff theory was not, and could not be, accessible at the start of the course; there was no way in which students could achieve an instant ownership of their position. The absent curriculum, like any present one, had in fact to be taken on trust.

What staff were expecting was not simply a commitment to a democratic form of curriculum development (in an institutional context that made this problematic) but a commitment to a particular understanding of learning and a particular form of reflective conversation about learning. It was this staff-held theory of 'experiential learning' that was the threshold, in terms of understanding and commitment, to participating in the process of curriculum negotiation that gave this course its coherence. Once the logic of experiential learning had been accepted, the problems experienced in the practice of negotiation - and the very contradictions implicit within it - became grist to the learner's mill. Indeed, any adequate reflection on one's own learning could not take place without the experience of cultural and institutional blocks to its development.

It would have been more accurate, therefore, if the course had been projected not primarily as an open space to be filled through negotiation but as an invitation to engage co-operatively in a project of research into adult learning - one that could be explained and justified in terms of staff-held theory. As long as only staff, or only staff and some students, conceived of the course as the resource and the

process for such inquiry, others remained alienated from an experience of a most stimulating and engrossing kind. For the course held the unusual capacity, in spite of acknowledged and revealed constraints, for active *constitution* by its members, in the sense that shared and contested reflection on experience gave the course its value and meaning and shaped the changing sense of the total project. What was established over the period of 30 hours and developed over the entire course was *a conversation* about learning that shaped present understanding and future tasks. We take the view that the grip on educational theory this conversation provided - making sense of past experience and arguing for future action was radically different from one where such theory is presented by a teacher as significant knowledge, where such significance is not constituted by its relation to experience or to action.

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“The Diploma Course for Educators of Adults: a case for reconstruction?” Clive Millar (1985)

A paper presented at an informal seminar at UCT

Introduction

This brief paper is an attempt to widen critical discussion of our Diploma Course for Educators of Adults. This discussion is parochial and intra-departmental and very much needs outsiders' critical scrutiny. The problem is how to make a family conversation public enough for this to happen. The curriculum of any course is complex and slippery. Our new Diploma Course in particular needs detailed and careful explanation, and this is being carried out, but what I shall do here - in order to engage discussion - is short-circuit much of this by beginning with a proposition about the course that has been gaining credibility within our department. This is that the reason why the Diploma Course is so important to us (witness time, effort, worry, research) is that it is our major vehicle for reconstructing the role of the educator and through this finding a place for ourselves in a changing South Africa. It is a prime place for achieving a theoretical grip on vocation. To say this is to produce amused discomfort within the family. Throughout the six years of the Diploma Course we have leant over backwards (at times with dislocating effects) not to construct, instruct or induct anyone. Furthermore, the notion of "reconstruction" implies some degree of clarity, some firmness of grasp of task involved and desired shape, and this we would not claim to have. And such a reconstructive calling seems inflated and a bit absurd: who are we to engage in it? Nonetheless, it is priests who work out their theology in their pulpits who agonise most over their sermons. And perhaps this is what we are up to. What I want to do now is look back at the Diploma Course and attempt to examine the nature of this possibly reconstructive process. I shall look at two facets of the course and these in the briefest of terms:

- curriculum
- assessment

This examination will hopefully work towards a rationale for the next Diploma Course - the one that gets it right!

Curriculum

The study of the curriculum processes of the first three Diploma Courses would suggest immediately that the last thing the staff wanted to do was shape any approved educator role and induct anyone into it. On the contrary, what seemed to give the course consistency was a sustained and deliberate attempt to avoid role construction of any kind. Along with a conscious absence of prescription of course content and professional role went an emphasis on the value of learner experience, on critical reflection on that experience, on participation in the development of the course itself. Explicit instruction and explicit advocacy were consistently avoided by the staff. Students had difficulty in identifying the "core" of the course. It was certainly not content: it was rather a strange conversation, backward and inward-looking, that seemed to have no clear external reference points (except to be oppositional to bureaucratic and technological forms of education). Perhaps the kindest word most students would have used to describe the course was "experimental".

Certainly, the curriculum was unusually free from external definition. There was no profession and no employer to impose criteria. There was no definition of professional practice for the adult educator. There was no established theoretical knowledge that constituted "adult education" as a subject. And there was no curriculum model at any South African university to draw on. In short, the normal range of external definers of a professional curriculum were silent on the proper use of new educational space. The internal definers - the staff of the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies - therefore had the opportunity to develop an entirely new curriculum. But at the same time they were engaged in a process of institutional development, transforming the old Centre for Extra-Mural Studies into a new Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies, with normal university teaching and research functions. And this process of institutional development was part of the deeper task of locating the work of a new department and the individuals in it within a responsible reading of an historical situation. It is not surprising, therefore, that the course was experimental and reflexive - it became the site for departmental homework of the most basic kind. And a deep reconstructive task - for the department - ran its own strange and hesitant agenda through the course itself. If at this level, then, the Diploma Course was about reconstruction it was difficult for it

not to work as a process of student recruitment into the staff's agenda. And in the context of a "professional" course it was difficult for this recruitment not to take the form of an induction into some implicit or ideal adult educator role, this irrespective of the curriculum structure in any one year.

Staff constitution of this adult educator role - despite contrary intentions - probably worked in the following way throughout the first three Diploma Courses.

- In 1980/1 the course rationale was exposure to a range of theoretical perspectives. The learner role was "banking". Staff constitution of the educator role was through content selection, informal discourse and assessment.
- In 1982/3 the course rationale was the deconstruction and re-construction of the course itself: it began with the deliberate absence of a curriculum - the task was to create it. Learner roles were defined in relation to this constructive task. Their major forms were participation, opposition and silence. Staff constitution of the educator role was through ownership of the reconstructive theory, informal discourse and assessment.
- In 1984/5 the course rationale was exposure to theoretical perspectives in the first year and display of stock in the second, this as the outcome of student groups "owning" sections of the course. Major student roles moved from "banking" to production, presentation and audience. Staff constitution of the educator role was through major academic stockholding, informal discourse and assessment.

In each of the courses staff were fully in control of assessment and informal discourse. Both processes were powerfully constitutive and at the same time powerfully protective of staff positions — the ongoing conversation because of its capacity for irony and assessment because its real bite was terminal. Neither needed to spell out unequivocally what becoming an educator meant.

The informal discourse is probably the more important coding of this meaning but certainly the more difficult to analyse. End of year assessments tell a clearer story.

Assessment

The following passages are extracts from staff reports on student projects submitted for the purpose of final assessment. They have been altered only where necessary to preserve anonymity. They are presented as evidence of the kinds of judgement that staff consistently make relevant to the adult educator role.

Extract 1

The study succeeds as a personal report on a small-scale investigation into the possible development of a literacy course. The approach is low-keyed, drawing well on the detailed knowledge of working context. Findings and interpretations are clearly expressed. The interview data is particularly valuable - we know so little about how people perceive literacy/illiteracy. The checklist of questions is well thought out and sensitive. The problem of the study is its over-simple theory of what taking responsibility for a literacy programme is about. You don't problematise important concepts in your study, e.g. "felt needs" and "community leaders". You don't question whether the hospital will be a suitable venue for literacy classes. You don't reveal a grasp of the debate about what literacy is or should be all about. In other words, you tend not to ask probing or awkward questions and stay within your commonsense view of providing patients or clients with an additional form of supportive service."

Extract 2

"This study does a number of things well. It gives an insight into the perceptions of teachers of adults - into their working theory - an area about which we know next to nothing. It gives evidence of having been a vehicle for personal learning. It clearly and carefully justifies a particular method of obtaining information and frankly explains procedures used. It is expressed with clarity and precision of language. It is unpretentious and honest.

Its weakness is that it is under-theorised: it is simply too empirical. This presents two problems. The minor one is that the extent to which your own interview method relies on your own listening ability, memory and interpretation - not to mention the very limited sample of interviewees.

The major one is that you do not have or develop a theory of the problem you are investigating. Instead, you take as given both the commonsense difference between adult and child teaching and the world of teacher perceptions as the real world to focus on.

But can your questions be pursued in any depth without analysing what the major processes taking place at ... are? What is "uplifting" or "compensating" all about? What does it mean, for example to be a black adult with a child's education or less? What do the ... teachers understand by their strange role, especially as whites? In other words, you need a sociological grasp of the educational processes taking place at ... in order to pursue the question of appropriate teaching for adults. Such theorising should have preceded your study. It should also have followed your study in the way in which you interrogated the data produced by your interviews."

Extract 3

"The study succeeds well as a personal, reflective account of the series of educational events. Changes in course structure are clarified, materials usefully collected and presented and learner responses recorded, edited and interpreted. There is a firm sense of assurance about the worth and nature of the entire process - a sense of being "comfortable" and "natural" in the developing work. All this gives the reader a very clear sense of an insider's commonsense perceptions and understandings of the courses. The study is clearly and systematically presented and documented. The range of bibliographical references might have been wider.

Its weakness is its inability to ask probing questions and therefore to analyse the courses at a level of theory beneath that of taken-for-granted common sense. The study therefore holds no capacity for "perspective transformation" - for grasping afresh the entire project of the house church and of the role of leadership within it.

Examples of such probing questions would be the following:

- What are the competing theories about the role and functions of a house church today? Is there nothing controversial about this engagement? Has a house church particular opportunities and responsibilities in our present South African political and economic context?*
- What roles do house churches play in church and parish dynamics, i.e. in major movements within the church? Are they neutral or do they have a very clear but not necessarily explicit function?*
- What roles/ meanings/forms of Christianity do house churches emphasise, protect, conceal?"*

Extract 4

"The problem of the study as educational research is that it does not explain anything. It presents an account of which it then judges against moral and theological criteria. By doing this it works towards a "better" version of But we never analyse how ... works.

Related to this, and more fundamental, is the study's incapacity to make visible and explain its own form of enquiry. It lacks self-awareness about what it is trying to do and trying not to do. Hence there is no introduction that explains method. This results in a natural or intuitive method where the writer moves between, empirical description, exhortation, historical interpretation, theological assertion, personal reflection and rhetorical questions without clear hand signals. The force of the project is as a theological position with an educational content. Its weakness is that it is unable to explain how social and educational processes work."

Extract 5

" The study appears to have been sharply biased and conducted for the purpose of unmasking the deficiencies of the whole project.

The serious weakness of this approach is that it refuses to allow any of the principal actors the possibility of strategic decisions and actions. The data gathered during research (interviews and records) is "read" and interpreted from an undeclared ideological point of view hostile to the enterprise.

What this does is call into question the concept of evaluation that has been practised. What is such an evaluative report-for? It cannot be used for improvement of project performance. It can only be used to confront executive staff. However, it must do so in the form of a moral denunciation because it does not have any explanation of the organisation and its history to put forward. This is the key point: the project is a sustained and consistent moral assessment. It bypasses the need for the social explanation of action that educational research requires. The word "flabbiness" is indicative of this judgemental process. What is needed in such evaluative research is not an absence of robust judgements of a moral kind but the provision of an explanation of social action against which such judgements can be justified."

It is important to say that that the judgements made above "arise" or "happen" in the sense that we discover our criteria in the process of assessment itself. We do not - or have not - spelt out in advance what capacities or consciousness or whatever we seek in our students and encourage in our teaching. Nonetheless, there is much coherence in our evaluative messages and it is not difficult to construct from them qualities and capacities we value.

These include, first, the capacity for understanding social location. We seem to emphasise "explanation" a great deal, grasp of structures and processes that contain, limit or run through social action. We want our students to be sociologists. They

include, too, asking questions that expand and problematise meanings of personal action, including questions about language: We want our students to be philosophers. And they include acting in ways that are honest, self-aware and disciplined by commitment. We want our students to be virtuous.

These are heavy burdens to shoulder. Perhaps a part-time professional course is not the framework to contain them properly. But the burden is eased by our emphasis on the inward nature of the curriculum - on personal development and on the-development of the culture of the class itself. Re-construction, such as it is, has received its major framing in our curriculum in personal and interpersonal terms. The somewhat old-fashioned "citizenship" that our assessments seem to value has been protected from the massive burden of engaging with social institutions. It is this dimension of "reconstruction" that we have most neglected.

"Getting it right next time"

Our present approach to the next Diploma Course rests on the perception (1) that as a department our major task is one of educational reconstruction and (2) that we have been pursuing this task in a subterranean way in the context of the Diploma Course. Both the processes of constituting the educator role and the criteria that prescribe this role have remained tacit and *loosely* and uncritically grasped. What would it mean to get it right?

First, it would mean "coming clean" - making it clear to students that we as staff engaged, however inadequately, in a particular kind of reconstructive task and that the course has, or seeks to have, a particular kind of reconstructive logic. This should be the subject of exposition and argument - of formal discourse.

Second, and much more fundamental, trying to get the course right means trying to get reconstruction right. And we have only the most tentative ideas about this task. We think it is about understanding our historical inheritance, including its breaks and dilutions, that it is about the critical appropriation of this tradition and about putting it to work creatively. In this view

reconstruction is the reconstruction of our own tradition. For this to be adequate the reconstructive task must work at the levels of personal action, institutions and systems:

Action	What I am What I think	I
Institutions	What I do Where I do it	Educator
Systems	Location	Historical Action

In curriculum terms this will mean giving much more importance to students' positions — as historical actors and as persons within institutions. And the task of the Diploma Course will be to give content to the role of the educator here and now in personal, institutional and historical terms.

Finally, to return to "coming clean", the staff will need to argue for and towards a reading of the task of the educator in South Africa today. The course rationale would be the coherent development of this argument. Major learner roles would be engagement, opposition, silence and the ubiquitous "banking".



“Educating the educators of adults: two cheers for curriculum negotiation” Clive Millar (1989)

Journal of Curriculum Studies

And now good morrow to our waking soules,
Which watch not one another out of feare;
For love, all love of other sights controules,
And makes one little roome, an every where.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone,
Let Maps to others, worlds on worlds have showne,
Let us possesse one world; each hath one, and is one.

John Donne, 'The Good-Morrow'

Introduction

How are adult educators who are preparing for professional work through university programmes to be equipped with the resources of curriculum theory? More particularly, how are adult educators who are responsive to a call to engage in critical and reconstructive educational practice — to be 'transformative intellectuals' in Aronowitz and Giroux's (1985) phrase—to be thus equipped? One available answer is by 'curriculum negotiation' as the underlying process of their own professional programme (Boud and Prosser 1980, Millar *et al.* 1986).

Curriculum negotiation in adult education is an attempt to make a radical move within a liberal tradition. Its purpose is to secure an organizing principle for teaching and learning that will give expression to learner autonomy (or, to put it negatively, oppose learner dependency). This organizing principle is to have emphatic structural force, not simply rhetorical influence. Hence its

operation at the most basic level of social contract: the class is to construct the terms of its educational practice.

The fact that learners' freedom to negotiate their curriculum is usually a sponsored freedom, won *for* the learner by the efforts (shrewd or reckless) of an unconventional formal teacher, should not detract from the striking impact on learners of entering and taking possession of unaccustomed educational 'space'. To find the role of teacher/manager 'empty', to proceed to fill it in complex and contested ways, to draw on one's own experience and understandings to craft words and terms for doing so, and to reflect on this task and process, is itself a form of adult learning with great potential. But it is also one with inherent problems that need to be better understood. Our own published attempts to understand this endeavour have been largely empirical — a grasp of the 'classroom' dynamics that seem contingent on curriculum negotiation (Millar *et al.* 1986). The present paper attempts something different: to assess curriculum negotiation as an educational argument and, through this assessment, to push towards an adequate grounding for curriculum practice in professional adult education, including graduate teacher education.

The paper falls into three sections.

- The first views curriculum negotiation as a democratizing of educational practice necessary for the development of the adult educator's professional autonomy.
- The second deals with a major problem encountered in putting this theory into practice — the problem of 'containment'.
- The third attempts to widen the conception of curriculum negotiation to include the social transactions that constitute the

curriculum — this as a step towards defining terms for the professional adult education curriculum.

Democratizing the curriculum

Curriculum negotiation is a practice that problematizes the framing of educational transactions. Its primary move - and its containing metaphor - is political. Its primary enemy is social control through predetermined categories of knowledge and relationship. It is an educational practice that falls within the general project of critical theory and within its loose subset of educational thought and practice developed by Bernstein (1977), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), Carr and Kemmis (1986), Freire (1972), Giroux (1983), Young (1971) and others.

Authority to decide what is to be learnt and how it is to be learnt is not to reside in institution or in office. Such authority is to be located within the adult learner group itself, where its legitimacy is secured through public discourse. The forces— structural, cultural, institutional — that shape any curriculum are to be encountered within this 'classroom', not managed or reconciled by specially commissioned experts outside it. Class ownership of the curriculum carries with it a continual engagement with the question 'What is to count as education for us, here and now?' Curriculum ownership, therefore, is seen as the condition and the capacity that makes the process by which a curriculum is framed accessible to learners. Such accessibility requires a dual mode of participating in the course or class — committed action and critical reflection. Giroux (1984) captures this stance in the following way:

theory must be seen as a distinct analytical moment, which while connected to empirical work and practice, cannot be collapsed into the latter. Theory must be seen as abstract and anticipatory in character. It is rooted in a dialectical logic that makes the concepts of understanding and possibility its central moments. Put another way, theory and practice never stand in an

immediate unity, for theory must be informed by an oppositional discourse that preserves its alienation or critical distance from the facts and experiences of the given society. (Giroux 1984: 306)

On the one hand, participants are arguing for, and working towards, the kind of course they value: they are the classically autonomous subjects choosing and debating goals and strategies. On the other hand, they are themselves the determined objects of social processes whose behaviour is in need not of justification but of detached explanation. And such explanation requires a particular kind of sustained reflective conversation on the commitments of practice, a capacity to be at once inside and outside the course or class. The sustaining of this conversation can be seen as the core of the adult educator's professional task.

Clearly, the 'democratization' of the curriculum implied above is to be no simple transfer of management from 'teacher' to 'learners'. It is a case, rather, of a radical extension of professionalism where the moral and strategic judgements acknowledged as belonging to professional or expert terrain are themselves to be 'democratized'. What is entailed can be illustrated in part by reference to the concepts of extended professionalism held by two curriculum theorists, Stenhouse (1975) and Thomas (1983). For Stenhouse, extension lies in the teacher developing the commitment and capacity to reflect critically on his or her teaching— to become, in short, a 'teacher researcher' in conversation with other teacher researchers in the shared process of improving practice. For Thomas, extension lies in creating a counselling-type 'learning conversation' with students in which they come to develop an awareness and critical stance towards their own habits, beliefs and practices as learners in various courses. What curriculum negotiation as developed above would attempt is the incorporation of both these extensions into day-to-day classroom discourse. Learners would be

expected to join teachers in Stenhouse's critical reflection on practice; and Thomas' learning conversation' would take place within the classroom and curriculum frame itself and include a 'teaching' conversation, about which Thomas remains silent.

Implicit in the argument for curriculum negotiation is the view that the adult learner (and future adult educator) is himself or herself the *producer* not the consumer of the curriculum and, moreover, that such production requires the fullest awareness of the relationships, terms and constraints that shape the process. The curriculum, to change the metaphor, is to be a 'writerly' not a 'readerly' text, in Barthes' sense of the term:

Where readerly texts (usually classics) are static, virtually 'read themselves' and thus perpetuate an 'established' view of reality and an 'establishment' scheme of values, frozen in time, yet serving still as an out of date model for the world, writerly texts require us to look at the nature of language itself, not through it at a pre-ordained 'real world'. They thus involve us in the dangerous, exhilarating activity of creating our world now, together with the author, as we go along. (Hawks 1977: 114)

The problem of containment

Our experience of curriculum negotiation in courses for adult educators is that the assumption of management responsibility is achieved in a number of ways but that the sharing of discursive ownership — the production of a 'writerly text' — is inherently problematic (Millar *et al.* 1986). The problem has to do with the intense preoccupation with classroom culture generated by the obligation to negotiate each move in the development of the course; with the suppression of the intellectual traditions that justify the innovative nature of the course itself — the theory in staff heads; and with the unintended restriction

of that very sense of social context that the negotiation is expected to illuminate. The three issues need elaboration.

In the first place, curriculum negotiation has the effect of generating an intense concern with the internal culture of the classroom, of 'making one little room an everywhere'. The educational 'work' required by the course becomes the construction of group norms and practices and this is pursued through a sustained and increasingly exclusive conversation. The casualties of this conversation are the contexts of 'real' work: the world of practice outside the course tends to retreat. Rather, as in micro-teaching, a simplified and protected site of practice is constructed that tends to substitute 'group' for professional workplace as the site of educational practice.

The second problem is more fundamental: the staff own the educational discourse that gives legitimacy to their decision to construct the curriculum through negotiation. At the same time, the ethic of negotiation insists that staff theory should not be privileged at the expense of learner knowledge and experience. The two positions are in contradiction. Whilst wishing to support learner autonomy in the most radical of ways staff are at the same time insisting on a form of group action to which not all students are able to give rational assent. Staff theory is, in fact, being privileged in the most emphatic of ways by its enactment through social arrangement. Students, baffled by the experience of empty teacher roles and a curriculum that lacks shape or content, and suspecting that they are being deprived of legitimate teaching in the interests of some suspect and inaccessible educational doctrine, will have the strongest sense of dependency and manipulation. Only those similarly baffled, who nonetheless trust the course designers to know what they are doing, and to be doing it in the interests of learners, will be able to participate with personal commitment in the co-operative experience. And under such circumstances it

could be argued that learner dependency is greater than in conventionally understood teaching transactions.

The third problem that curriculum negotiation presents has to do with the possible suppression of the structural field that frames and makes possible this unusual educational process. To put it more sharply, the givenness of negotiation as the key term of the educational transaction may actually serve to conceal a key sociological question: How is it *possible* that such freedom can be achieved? What enables a university department and its staff, for example, to declare curriculum content and process as open for group determination?

Clearly, specific answers to this question will vary greatly from situation to situation where negotiation is practised, but the analytical categories within which any explanation would need to be attempted are probably widely applicable. They are the categories of knowledge, profession, institution and social order. In the South African context in which this paper is grounded, a sketch of the answer to the question of what makes radical negotiation possible would probably take an extreme, rather than an unfamiliar, form.

First, in respect of knowledge and curriculum content, it could be argued that, internationally, educational theory — reflecting its foundations in social theory — is in a state of disarray, with no position able to claim legitimacy, with only the broadest categorization of frames of educational thought and action available, with strong positional advocacy, and with dramatic shifts of allegiance (for examples of attempts to give coherence to current social theory see Bernstein 1976 and Fay 1975; for examples of similar, and related, attempts to give coherence to educational theory, see Carr and Kemmis 1986 and Aronowitz and Giroux 1985). Furthermore, in the South African case, orthodox

theoretical positions in educational studies' have only recently crumbled through exposure of their ideological support for State power, leaving the discursive field to poorly articulated and competing technological, liberal and radical calls. Add to this the theoretical limitations of that subset of educational theory devoted to 'adult learning'¹² and there is no compelling case for any obvious content for a professional course for adult educators.

Second, in considering the power of a profession to shape or specify the curriculum providing access to it, the key point to be made in the South African situation is that there is no profession of adult educator to play any determining role whatsoever. In the absence of professional status or resources or statutory body, the university has total freedom to construct the 'professional' curriculum. And just as there is no profession, so there is no employer of professionals — no education department or state or provincial authority — to determine appropriate qualifications for appointment. Another set of potential curriculum definers is silent.

Third, considering the possible institutional determinants of the curriculum, do the staff responsible for the negotiated curriculum really have to keep the university as an institution at bay, with its formal teaching and learning roles, its technological conceptions of education and its patterns of dependency? Or is it rather the case that the university as an institution has no interest in monitoring marginal experimental work on the smallest scale in a low-status, community-service-oriented sector of a large and established enterprise? Departments of adult education, continuing education or extra-mural studies are traditionally about loose forms of engagement in community education programmes and projects of various kinds — reactive, strategic and peripheral. They do not engage in the university's central task of social allocation through accreditation.

Finally, social instability itself — implicit in all the above determining frames—plays a particular and direct role in enabling university staff to have unusual freedom in respect of the adult education curriculum. The condition in present-day South Africa is that government is increasingly by coercion, not consent; the State suffers a chronic and deepening legitimacy crisis. All public institutions, including education, are casualties of this condition; all, to varying degrees, lack legitimacy and are themselves sites for contesting claims to legitimacy. Under such conditions there is a groundswell of popular support for any moves towards the suspension of traditional practices, especially if they involve alternative forms of social relationship and if these are characterized by democratic norms. This deep and widespread erosion of the legitimacy of all educational systems in South Africa strongly favours the capacity of university teachers to engage in curriculum negotiation. This protection lies not just in widespread distrust of traditional practice but in the equally diffused tendency to classify any democratizing of education as a politically progressive project.

The point of the above illustration and argument is that the project of curriculum negotiation, in so far as its educational purpose is to disclose through reflection on practice the *conditions* of the production process itself, fails if this disclosure is unable to include in its account the social context that makes negotiation possible. In this case negotiation itself becomes mystificatory, its own concern with *making* obscuring its own sense of *being made*. MacIntyre (1981: 201) puts the general point in the following way:

But the key question for men is not about their own authorship; I can only answer the question, 'What am I to do?' if I can answer the prior question, 'Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?'

A commitment to curriculum negotiation alone provides no adequate base for grasping this prior question and the prior narratives it recognizes. In the absence of this prior question the pervasive and pressing text of interpersonal transactions, group dynamics and andragogics scripts progressive adult educational practice. And only the most rigorous framework of social theory can expose the educational limitations of these terms.

Grasping the social contexts of educational practice (or keeping the world complex)

To show the inadequacy of negotiation as the grounding move in curriculum development in no way discredits the practice of reflection on the shared project of learning and teaching. Curriculum negotiation captures a concern central to the professional education of educators — consciousness of, and critical participation in, the framing of educational transactions—and in so doing points towards a more adequate base for conceptualizing the professional educator's curriculum than one defined in process terms. This conception rests on a sociological understanding of the framing of educational practice, one that includes an understanding of the traditional forms of educational discourse that are thus called into service.

The elaboration on this proposition that follows is restricted in two ways. First, the proposition, though put forward above as one applicable to the professional education of *all* educators, will be developed here in the limited case of the adult educator. Furthermore, this will be done in an essentially exploratory way that highlights the 'non-formal' nature of much of adult education. Second, the discursive traditions that I suggest are available to be 'called into service' in a given social context are not discussed at all, important though their role is in providing the educational 'master texts' that script specific practices. What I have in mind are those broad traditions of educational

practice which receive such convenient labelling as liberal, technological, humanist and reconstructive (Darkenwald and Merriam 1982)

What I shall call for convenience a 'sociological' understanding of adult education curriculum and practice will recognize that adult education is often non-formal education — practice outside or on the margins of the formal educational systems of schooling and tertiary education. Formal education is seen as practice that has achieved a significant degree of institutional autonomy, practice that is encoded and protected in institutional structures, including professional roles and cultures. Non-formal education is seen, by contrast, as a practice unprotected or only partially protected by such structures. Its key characteristic is that educational work is carried out in social sites not sustained and critiqued by educational discourse—commerce and industry, military service, the practice of politics, etc.

In such locations adult education has to confront and engage with a logic other than that of educational 'productivity'. This is not to say that schooling, for example, inevitably delivers 'education' it is rather that non-formal education achieves its educational framing with a particular kind of difficulty. This is so because a problem constructed by contradictions in a dominant institutional agenda (winning wars or making profits, for example) is in the process of conversion into educational terms. The firm, or army or political grouping, engaged for its own institutional goals in the process of transforming social problems into educational transactions, is creating new learners and new teachers.' The discourse and practice of non-formal education is therefore adaptative, strategic, experimental and—most of all — fragile.

Underlying the above discussion is a perhaps absurdly heroic role for the adult educator. He or she is seen as practising education as a critical,

emancipatory profession, asserting individual agency through rational understanding, which includes the capacity to grasp the terms and conditions of agency in given situations. It is to make of the adult educator the kind of critical theorist that Basil Bernstein (1975: 13) holds out as characterized distinctively by a sociological imagination:

To be aware of the various forms constraints can take is not to diminish the possibility of man, is not to see man as passive, it is not to underwrite the stability of power relationships, *it is to raise to our consciousness its own shaping*. That is to experience the sociological paradox which is the crucible in which the imagination is forged.

A commitment to the development of such consciousness would see education as a chronically endangered practice, its commitment endangered most of all by the functional agendas of institutional hosts, whether these are to produce tools, soldiers, believers or followers. In terms of social role, the pressure would be on the adult educator to relinquish his or her critical task and become functionary or technician. The thrust of the adult educator's professional enterprise therefore characteristically involves the prevention of slippage into structural agendas, meaning by this the loss of the degree of autonomy won for the educational transaction in a given context. In a condition of slippage, education characteristically misunderstands itself — it claims identity as an educational project and it explains itself through educational discourse, but it functions as a form of social control. It becomes, in fact, a dummy educational process.

What makes the professional task of the adult educator particularly demanding is not the slippages into obviously dehumanizing forms of training and manipulation; these are easily seen and opposed. The really demanding discriminations are called for by enterprises close to the adult educator's own core commitment to emancipatory action. The most obvious of these is political mobilization. Another is the nurture of supportive and therapeutic communities.

The practice of politics and the practice of therapy are areas of commitment with magnet-like attraction for adult educators, especially under conditions of social crisis. Within each, adult education as critical practice is vulnerable to the maintenance of defensive orthodoxy and solidarity.

The above discussion refocuses attention on that sense of the professional task of the adult educator that curriculum negotiation wishes to confirm and emphasize. This includes two major commitments and capacities:

1. Understanding the social processes that drive and contain educational transactions.
2. Sustaining educational ethics within such processes.

These capacities and commitments imply giving the highest priority to reflection on the processes of the professional curriculum and to the negotiating of rational consent to the steps in its development. However, it would be absurd to see the practice of democratic negotiation as *sufficient* for this development. Any professional adult education curriculum will initiate learners into traditions of social explanation and of educational action. This will be done tacitly or explicitly. Curriculum negotiation will tend to make this explicit. But this in no sense substitutes for the obligation on the part of the 'educator of adult educators' — often the most suspiciously invisible agent in the professionalizing enterprise — to argue in the most systematic and explicit way the rational case for the sense of the adult educator's task — the tradition of educational practice — that drives his or her particular curriculum.

Notes

In South Africa, there have been two explicit educational orthodoxies, the first, 'Christian national education', achieving wide public diffusion, and the second, 'fundamental pedagogics', being a creation of the academic domain (see Beard and Morrow 1981). I am thinking of the large flow of work

associated with Malcolm Knowles's foundational categories of 'andragogics' (see, in particular, Knowles 1970). I am drawing here on Tony Morphet's important analysis of curriculum production non-formal education (see Morphet 1986).

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“Critical reflection for educators of adults: Getting a grip on the scripts for professional action” Clive Millar (1991)

Studies in Continuing Education

This paper reports on a particular approach to the teaching of "foundations of practice" within a graduate program for the professional education of adult educators. Foundations are viewed in discursive terms as master texts that act to script the actions of adult educators. A grasp of these texts and their regulating capacity is seen as an important component of "critical reflection" directed at professional development. A brief account is given of a course structure that requires the formal 'mapping' of major discourses. Finally, the capacities and limitations of the approach are reviewed.

The term "critical reflection" has come to hold a dominant place in current conceptions of teacher education. As Grimmet (1988) has pointed out, the term has a long and complex lineage and has a range of interpretations. Within these are two main emphases - a pragmatic, problem-solving or "practical deliberation" emphasis derived this century from Dewey and refocused by Schwab (1969) and Schön (1983, 1987), and a more philosophically inclined European tradition of ideological critique which has impacted teacher education theory through the work of Habermas in particular. Carr and Kemmis' work on the professional development of teachers reflects this critical tradition (Carr and Kemmis, 1986), where it is seen as an essential extension of otherwise restricted craft deliberation. In the field of adult education "critical reflection" has been given coherence and practical thrust in the field of adult education in a recent paper by Brookfield on *Developing critically reflective practitioners: a rationale for training educators of adults* (Brookfield 1988). The coherence is attempted through a synthesis of a number of approaches that claim critical reflection as a central concern including work in cognitive psychology, on moral judgement and work derived from Habermas' conception of "emancipatory" action. This leads to the proposal that four component

elements can be seen as central to critical reflection in adult life. These are identified as "assumption analysis", "contextual awareness", "imaginative speculation" and "reflective scepticism". (Brookfield 1988: 325)

The practical thrust of the paper lies in its prescriptions of purpose and method for graduate adult education programmes. The purpose is stated as follows:

"The purpose of graduate adult education should be to develop critically reflective practitioners; that is adult educators who can recognise their own theories in use in adult learning and education, who can articulate the clear and informed rationale as to why their practice is organised the way it is, and who are open and ready to evolve new forms of practice appropriate for the different contexts in which they are called on to facilitate adults learning". (Brookfield 1988: 327).

The method advocated for developing these capacities includes a process of sustained negotiation of the "content, method and purposes" of the graduate programme itself, a process of "peer learning" whereby all encounter the contrasting experiences of work and life learners bring into the course, the use of learning contracts" as part of the curriculum, and the design of student assignments that require structured analytical tasks. These curriculum specifications are a dear formulation of what may be an emerging consensus on progressive practice in graduate adult education. They mark a claim to a particular form of professionalisation of adult education - one that sets high value on the professional autonomy of the adult educator through his or her reasoned accountability to contextually understood traditions of educational practice, rather than to technical or bureaucratic role definition or to doctrinal position.

The purpose of the present paper is not to analyse this position in general terms - I see it as of central importance for a field of practice such as adult education where practitioners are typically unprotected from workplace pressures and prescriptions by

any developed and organised tradition of professional practice but to take a step further the practical thrust of Brookfield's paper. I shall do this by focusing on a particular feature of his curriculum specifications and develop an argument for a way of giving this feature intellectual content and structure within the graduate curriculum. The key passage in Brookfield's paper relevant to this purpose is the following:

"Central to adult education is the recognition that disagreement, divergence and challenge are endemic to learning; that we are all enclosed in our own paradigms and histories and that we can frequently only be prompted to examine these critically by an external source challenging our habitually accepted and comfort; able ways of thinking and acting." (Brookfield 1988: 328).

This paragraph is important because it runs counter to assumptions about the consensual, co-operative and eclectic nature of the adult education profession-and acknowledges the reality and legitimacy of conflicting theories of educational practice and the need to devise ways to engage with these in the graduate curriculum. Brookfield suggests a number of principles of procedure for such engagement. These include sustaining a process of negotiation among *staff* and students about the development of their curriculum; freedom of staff to challenge learners' perceptions of suitable "curricula, activities and evaluative criteria"; exposing learners to the contrasting contexts and experiences of adult education practice reflected in the composition of their peer group; and testing conventionally accepted wisdoms in adult education against untidy personal experience.

All the above will have the important effect on keeping visible competing conceptions of educational practice but they will tend to do so informally insofar as participants in the programme identify with these principles and pursue them in planning, discussion and critique. What I wish to describe here is a form of graduate curriculum that goes further than this in giving structural force and intellectual content to such a

commitment. It does this through conceiving of part of the curriculum - probably an introductory part of it - as the study of education as forms of practice in contestation.

Master scripts for educational practice

Many graduate adult education programmes will draw practitioners from what may seem to be mutually incomprehensible worlds. The perspective on practice of an industrial trainer, for example, may be contained within a systems and competency-based model grounded on the logic of the production line. That of the community activist, by contrast, maybe scripted by a story of organisation and mobilisation directed at conscientising and awareness-raising. Both offer compelling accounts of what counts as adult education practice - each account rooted in a different social context and secured by different institutional and social interests. In fact, the professional adult education field can be seen to be *constructed* by such accounts of appropriate practice. It is not sufficient for the "critically reflective practitioner" to be taught simply to work more efficiently within one or other of these systems of thought; nor is it sufficient to encourage him or her to draw eclectically on attractive components of different systems. The first approach would leave uncontested the legitimacy of the form of practice that has achieved dominance; the second would underestimate both the internal coherence and the oppositional nature of the forms of practice, as reflecting competing social interests and commitments. What does seem necessary in the graduate programme is for each learner to engage with *each* form of practice in such a way that its pressure and internal logic are clearly felt and its assumptions analysed and assessed. This may well contribute to increased effectiveness "within" one form of practice but it will no longer be possible to see that form as given or unproblematic.

Such critical engagement requires that practice (or practices) be seen in *discursive* terms -as master narratives that script educational action. This position has been given terse and cogent form by Alisdair MacIntyre:

"A central thesis then begins to emerge: man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal. He is not essentially, but becomes through his history, a teller of stories that aspire to truth. But the key question for me is not about their own authorship: I can only answer the question '*What am I to do?*' if I can answer the prior question, '*Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?*'" (MacIntyre 1981: 201).

In this account, to reflect critically on practice requires consciousness of the story or stories that script one's own practice as well as of those that may script the practice of others. This essentially critical hermeneutical approach to professional adult education is by no means a familiar or established one. Closer to the mark is Griffin's wry assessment that when professionalism "moves to the centre of the stage the concept of adult learning need and possible structures of provision for it become objects of organisational strategy, no more and no less." (Griffin 1983: 61).

Nevertheless, within the field of adult education there have been a number of loosely related moves in *this* direction including the work of Mezirow (1981) on the importance of perspective transformation; of Usher (1987) and Usher and Bryant (1987) on theory and practice relationships in the professional education of adult educators; of Welton (1987) on the weakness of dominant adult education paradigms; of Candy (1989) on metaphor in adult educational research; and of Zinn (1990) on the identification of philosophical orientations. The most developed argument for the centrality of a hermeneutical understanding of adult educational practice is that of Usher and Bryant in their book *Adult Education as Theory, Practice and Research: The Captive Triangle* (1989). Their dialogic understanding of critical reflection within (but with the possibility of being beyond and against) a traditional canon, derived from the work of Gadamer in particular, has the important implication for the education of adult

educators of sustaining an essential tension between "informal theory" and "formal theory". Taken-for-granted "theory-in-use" confronts more structured and explicit conceptual frameworks and the development of both in the process is central to professional education. (Usher and Bryant 1989: chapter 8).

Clearly, representing educational practice in terms of a number of master frames is problematic. Such frames are highly abstracted and simplified and their internal coherence is achieved at the expense of complex overlaps and tensions. But the argument here is that such frames *do* work to script the terms of current practice- that they are master texts and should be seen as such. Having made the primary move in the course design the construing of practice as discourse, an assumption has to be made about the nature of dominant discourses, however provisional and simplified. The assumption in this case is that a particular educational programme will live without too much discomfort within one of four major discourses - technological, humanist, liberal and radical. These four are seen as the root stories that educators draw on to make sense of their actions and that are used to call their actions to account. They usually operate at a submerged or taken-for-granted level: they script what seems obviously appropriate practice.

The *technological discourse* is perhaps most familiar. It is education understood in assembly line terms - as the production of human skills and capacities. The specification of educational objectives in performance terms becomes the key task of the educator/ manager - and learners are assessed and programmes evaluated in terms of their achievement of these objectives. This is a powerful and pervasive story of what counts as education, especially in commercial, industrial and military contexts. Its great attractions are extreme simplicity, close-fit with productivity ethics, its ability to appear to deliver the goods and its powerful capacity for social control.

The *humanist discourse*, by contrast, is to do with personal integration and wholeness, with psychological development including interpersonal relationships. Here the educator is a facilitator and supporter and the key metaphor is that of growth. It is education that

has a lot in common with healing and it lives most comfortably in therapeutic contexts, encounter groups and counselling.

The *liberal discourse* is austere by comparison. Education here is about initiation into established forms of knowledge - mathematics, literature, history - and what is most valued is the production of a broadly educated person with a capacity for informed opinions and autonomous judgement. To take a more soberly historical view of it, liberal education is essentially an education for membership of professional elites. It is the form of education that traditionally secures - or blocks - penetration into the professional classes.

While the other three discourses are all political through different forms of innocence -they are naively political - the *radical discourse* makes its central commitment explicitly political: education is part of social transformation. It is about engagement in social change that transforms one's awareness of the world. Action and thought are dialectically related in practice. This is the form of education that engages most directly with problems of organisation, historical understanding and political commitment.

Tentative as the above sketch is, there is considerable grounding for it in the language of both everyday practice (course claims and descriptions, for example) and academic and professional texts. Students of education, including adult education, will have some exposure to major theorists within each tradition - Tyler (1949), Rogers (1969), Peters (1967) and Freire (1972), for example, offer starkly contrasting accounts of teaching and learning. And in the case of adult education, introductory texts attempt coherent accounts of major traditions of practice similar to those above (Apps 1979, Elias and Merriam 1980 and Darkenwald and Merriam 1982).

The learning task: mapping the major discourses

What students will probably not be aware of is the extent to which their own practice and assumptions about practice - is "prescribed". The task is to make such scripts explicit and accessible to critical reflection. The technique we have devised for doing it is a process of "discursive mapping", which works as follows.

Students are exposed to a series of case studies - concrete instances of adult education practice selected for their accessibility and their contrasting assumptions about what counts as education.

Typically, practitioners in the field are invited to give as practical a portrayal as possible of their work. This may be anecdotal, through visual representation, through the simulation of conventional practice or through observation in the field. Practitioners are interviewed by the class and there is much loosely structured questioning and informal discussion of each case. Cases include skill training in industry, leisure-time liberal arts courses, group counselling and therapy and community action programmes of political organisations.

The study of such cases is supported by related readings and the initial informal discussion of each case is sharpened by the introduction of a series of formal questions something like the following:

1. What social problem is taken most seriously by this form of practice?
2. What metaphor best describes the nature of *the* educational process?
3. What is the educator's task?
4. What counts as "knowledge" here?
5. What would characterise an "educated" person?
6. What theory of social development does *this* form of practice rest on?
7. What is the key value in this form of practice?

Engagement with these questions enables the construction by the class - a slow and contested task - of discursive maps something like the following:

Adult Education Practice: Constructing A Discursive Map				
	TECHNOLOGICAL	HUMANIST	LIBERAL	RADICAL
What social problem is taken most seriously by this form of practice?	Production	Meaninglessness	Barbarism	Oppression
What metaphor best describes the nature of the educational process?	Moulding	Growth	Initiation	Empowerment
What is the educator's task?	Instruction	Support	Conversation	Conscientisation
Each form of practice has its own understanding of what really counts as 'knowledge'. What is this?	Performance	Wholeness	Judgement	Praxis
An educated person is one who is?	Competent	Integrated	Responsible	Liberated
What theory of social development does this form of practice rest on?	Modernisation	Dialogue	Incorporation	Social transformation
What is the key value in this form of practice?	Efficiency	Acceptance	Reason	Freedom

What matters about this map is not the precise words selected - the class will have generated contending terms capable of displacing any entry - or even the tendency to caricature in some of the entries ("barbarism", for example) - the map is an extreme form of abstraction - but the intellectual *process* of constructing it and the *structure* of the product. Throughout this process the strength and coherence of different traditions of educational practice are encountered; their description is contested and provisional; students' own location is in one or more of these

traditions -or possibly in tension between them - is experienced and discussed; and the absurdity of conceiving of practice as somehow in opposition to theory is evident. As a final stage in the course the co-operative classwork outlined above gives way to a number of individual written assignments designed to consolidate the work done both in class and in the associated reading programme and provide a form of student assessment. These assignments deal with issues of students' own location within or across the major discourses; the historical and political location of the discourses themselves; critiques of the capacities and limitations of different discourses; the particular ways in which different discourses regulate professional practice (including what counts as "unacceptable" practices); and such meta-theoretical issues as the power of "regimes of truth" (in Foucault's phrase) in institutional practices.

The capacities of the curriculum

Experience in implementing this approach to the education of adult educators as part of a graduate programme has assisted us to clarify certain of its major capacities and limitations. First, the capacities.

This curriculum strategy renders untenable a "practacist" position, one that claims the position of being "practical" as against being "theoretical". All practice lives within discursive traditions. In this way the approach breaks with long-established conception of educational practice as the *application* of theory. There are indeed foundations of practice but these are to be found not in such traditional packages as introductory courses in psychology or sociology but in the analysis of the discursive frameworks that constitute meaningful action. The task of educational theory is the articulation and critical development of such master texts.

Second, the approach both requires and enables a clarification of personal positions. Students are confronted with the question: "Within which story of educational practice am I most at home?" as well as more interesting further questions that may reveal pulls towards complementary or competing discourses -

or strong opposition to the terms and claims of others. The construction of a discursive map assists self-description and self-location to take place. Such self-description is crucial for the development of critical reflection or practice. It serves Gadamer's task of "rehabilitating prejudice" (see Usher and Bryant 1989: 31) by recognising commitment to a taken-for-granted theoretical position as the precondition for intellectual development.

Third, not only do personal locations become visible and explicit and the forms of practice themselves accessible to critique but participation in a discourse about discourses becomes possible perhaps for the first time in the case of some students - opening the way to a range of intellectual tasks that require a meta-theoretical stance. Dearly, such a stance holds the capacity for progressive "re-description" of one's own practice, for exploration of possibilities for professional commitments different from those constructed by one's own location.

Finally, though the constructing of discursive maps reveals the range of partisan commitments within the graduate class the process of this construction attempts to remain critical and analytic. What is important about the questions that produce the master terms of each discourse is that none encourages students to judge the cases studied in simplistic terms - is this good or poor adult education practice? Instead, the prior interest is in the logic of the project - its assumptions and claims about what counts as 'good' or 'poor' - thus providing a perspective that resists quick or glib allocations of praise or blame and recipes for improvement.

The limitations of the curriculum

Alongside these possible achievements, however, are certain costs or limitations implicit in this approach. First, it must be accepted that the notion of practice as discourse offends commonsense thinking. Neither theory nor practice is delivered in recognisable form there are no foundation courses to be presented and there are no teaching skills to be acquired. Instead, there is a strangely structured conversation about language that all students are expected to participate in. The

series of case studies helps to ground this conversation but it soon becomes abstract and philosophical as the recognisable world of practice retreats. The course seems to favour the more articulate, formally educated and theoretically inclined members of the class. Having one's own protest construed as an interesting practicist text is simply incomprehensible and excluding.

Second, and closely related to the above, strong personal positions on what counts as educational practice are not smoothly channelled into the analytical frame provided for their description and contestation. Bids are likely to arise to suspend the formal curriculum "game" in favour of one or other of the discursive positions. The attempt to slowly analyse the ground rules of different forms of practice then yields to advocacy and recruitment to one particular position - and this tends to be followed by defence and counter attack from others-and the formal analytical task then needs to be reconstituted.

Third, the task can be seen as "over-constructed", in the sense that the task of students -though through a long and untidy process of analytical argument -is to produce answers to predefined questions within a tight procedural frame. The frame holds scope for endless play within it but none for its abandonment or reconstruction.

Finally, the approach is as weak on advocacy as it is strong on analysis. Its thrust is, in fact, to disturb and suspend advocacy. It wants the terms on which advocacy is based to be as fully articulated as possible and commitment to be fully tested and grounded. This is a necessary but by no means a sufficient move within a professional training programme for adult educators. The approach described above can be seen therefore only as a part of any comprehensive programme.

In conclusion

It must be stressed that the above is something of a progress report it provides an account of one current curriculum move in the education of adult educators for comment and criticism. And the move, as the sketch of its limitations indicates, is open to substantial critique. Its significance is its attempt to engage students in a formal analysis of the discursive nature of the foundations of their practice. A sense of one's practice as located in and scripted by tradition is seen as grounding any critical reflection directed at developing that practice.

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“The role of the adult educator: is there a professional identity in sight?” Clive Millar (1994)

A paper presented at a colloquium at the University of the Western Cape

The authority of policy I need first to identify the origin of the above question. It arises from the experience and location of university work in adult education. The anxious note of the question arises in part from the history and psychology of this location. University departments of adult education are suddenly overtaken by the possible success of a hitherto utopian mission. Adult education, largely within the description of adult basic education and training, has arrived as a political and economic priority, and seems about to become a bureaucratic reality. One consequence of this arrival has been the collapse of a certain form of monopoly, admittedly of limited visibility and doubtful significance, over what could be called the discursive field of adult education - the theorisation of practice and the qualification of practitioners. This is a process that parallels the experience of NGOs as key providers in the adult education field.

Such displacement is a function of relocation of political authority, of bureaucratisation and of scale - the construction of a system with a political centre and with political accountability. It is in the nature of this complex resolution of interests in constructing a new adult education "settlement" that the universities' anxiety lies. What place will universities have in this settlement? Will their particular form of contribution to adult education development over the last 10 to 15 years be at all recognised and, more important, built on in constructive ways?

But the question derives, too, from the habit of entitlement to ask theoretical questions directed at professional practice. The significant thing

about university work in the 80s in adult education, as opposed to school education, is that it engaged with a site of oppositional practice outside the state system - the non-formal education of a project and community organisation world. Critique therefore could be policy and practice implicated. And the question is also about the legacy of such work under transformed social conditions. We are not unaware of the forms of unlearning present and future work may require. In the 80s non-formal adult education practice was celebrated within the university itself. Diploma courses for educators of adults at Universities of Cape Town, Wits, Natal and UWC were microcosmic of processes of reconstructive social action, disrespectful of system, formal qualifications, canon texts, formal assessment and of hierarchy - all this while at a structural level maintaining the legitimacy of the university adult education sector within the rubric of contribution to the struggle. Clearly, the social conditions no longer obtain for either the continuation or the simple expansion of the mission of the 80s. Such changing conditions impact on all aspects of adult education practice (Millar, 1994) and centrally on the role of the adult educator.

It is on the current reconstruction of this role, especially the role of adult educator as professional, that this paper wishes to initiate debate. Clearly universities have a particular stake in professionalisation. Internationally, they are the prime institutions for the education, training and certification of the established professions - institutions for sponsored admission to the professional classes. Even our small-scale programmes for educators of adults during the 80s can be seen as early professionalising moves, of an anticipatory kind, with the tension between forum and classroom, between accountability to the people and accountability to professional knowledge claims, between experience and certification always active within the curriculum. The virtue of these classes rested precisely on their sense of difference -

difference from the processes of recruitment to service within an apartheid educational system. The form of vocation of the 80s, then, was not a construct of a certification process with progression and exchange value - the award of an advanced diploma, for example - as much as membership of a special category of social actor - a community or adult educator. The now classic satire of rituals associated with this role recruitment or role formation (Aitchison 1987) emphasises the "special" nature of professional culture, and the reinforcement of membership of a group of persons engaged in transformative, morally committed work. Such university programmes for educators of adults assumed and communicated a unitary conception of the adult educator role. Such a role was not a feature of work location or job specification - it might well contradict such locations and specifications. It was an occupation of an identity operating in direct relation - albeit in an educational channel - to an imperative call for social change. Such a role was confirmed within the host of projects and organisations in which the adult educators found themselves.

Such an identity - though it would not have labelled itself "professional" - had classic marks of professional arrival - a body of knowledge, a teleology of commitments, membership of a form of association, chosen forms of adult education practice, repertoires of skills, a degree of autonomy in task conception - and certification. Those thus certificated moved in and out of leadership positions in the project world. But, interestingly, the 'non-formal' nature of practice - in the sense of anti-formal and alternative - was where the basic claim to vocational commitment lay.

What is happening to this role of adult educator now? In particular, how is the adult educator role being structured through the matrix of current policy initiatives? This is an extremely complex process much in need of critical

analysis that has as yet attracted little research attention (Cooper, 1993). And this present paper is little more than a sketch of an analytical approach to the task.

I want to bypass deliberately any detailed or systematic account of the current process of constructing and reconstructing policy and practice in the adult education/training field. My guess is that the process will be adequately gripped only retrospectively. The power of interested participant roles and the pace and exclusiveness of policy politics work to discourage analytical distance or even critical commentary. Instead, I want to proceed by proposing necessarily abstracted readings of the current processes, selected for their implications for the shaping of professional adult educator role and identity. I will label these the authority of policy, the principle of integration and the doctrine of competency. The "authority of policy" is shorthand for the central place that policy formulation has come to hold in this stage of political interregnum as both codification and mechanism of reconstruction across a range of social sectors. The volume of paper work has been phenomenal. A sedimentation of policy frames and principles has marked the slow construction of future state policy, this through broad and abstracted consensualism and with consequent losses and benefits for various stakeholders at some point in the future.

A feature of this negotiation of interests through the medium of policy has been processes of deferral and blocking. It has been professional matters that have been deferred - curriculum issues in particular - pending the securing of the broad framework of operation. Institutional structures and authority have been viewed as prior to and containers of educational transactions. Similarly, institutional and programmatic interventions have been blocked if seen as premature or pre-emptive of desired policy outcomes

of political negotiation. This construction of new educational ground rules has acted to defer the operation of professional authority - the claims of the field of teaching and learning and curriculum in particular. Elaborately articulated frameworks stand empty of educational content. Professional educators have co-operated in this process of deferral, partly because they accept the priority of political agreement on frameworks and partly because their participation has itself become a form of attempting to secure professional interests, assumed consequential on negotiation. Nor is it only professional authority that has experienced deferral. The same is true of critique - the *raison d'être* of progressive academic work in education of the 70s and 80s. The pressure and pace of organised policy production requires dramatic processes of intellectual retooling by newly placed managers of the process.

The principle of integration

"Integrated" has become an obligatory term in current policy discourse, operating with doctrinal force. It speaks both against apartheid exploitative division and for an inclusive unitary educational system. It acts to incorporate non-formal, into formal education, adult education (as ABE) into a relation of equivalency with schooling, and workplace training with general formative education. "Integration" operates as a grounding principle in all this. There are no exclusions from this rule - as yet. Its correlates are equivalency and articulation; the system of educational currency must be inclusive across all sectors and exchange rates properly legislated. Failure to ensure this will perpetuate deracialised forms of apartheid education. The systemic expression of integration is a national system of equivalency of qualifications, with exchange value defined in access terms.

The question for this paper is what the principle of integration may mean for the professional identity of the adult educator. Fortunately, we already have

an answer to this question in policy terms that we can work with. This is the new role definition of the educator/trainer/development practitioner (ETD) Practitioner put forward by working group 3 of the National Training Board (NTB) National Training Initiative, and endorsed by the commission itself in its main report (April 1994). The conception could not be simpler. Because a new system for the education of adults will be integrative of the work of technical and industrial trainers, organisational development and adult basic educators the new role model should be designated by a synthesis of all such work. A new integrated system deserves a new Integrated educator. Where the complexity of the model lies is in its acknowledgement of work site specificity and role differentiation. The conception of professional identity will be a composite one; the enactment of the role will be specific to site and function.

The question this raises - and this is not pursued by the NTB is whether professional identity can thus be constructed. It may be named in this way - as a symbolic as well as bureaucratic move - but professional identity is inevitably grounded in institutions and in social practices, and these are likely to remain in pragmatic and historically structured terms unintegrated except by massive social engineering efforts. I am thinking of the inherited differences between the industrial training sector, an NGO based or community based adult basic education sector and a DET night school sector, however transformed. The disaggregating forces of such specific historical locations are considerable. The NTB's mechanisms for engaging such factors are twofold: a common career path and qualification structure and a generic curriculum for the pre- and in-service education of the EDT practitioner. These are extremely important forms of development -and the curriculum specifications are specially original and interesting. But they will not only be insufficient to construct this composite identity; they may well act to emphasise specificities of site and practice as conditions of professional effectiveness. This for two reasons.

First, adult education practice in its non-formal mode is typically exposed to forms of direct accountability to learners and clients. In its formalising mode, too, it will face demands for relevance and delivery unprotected by such inertia systems as school or university curricula backed by embedded authority. Second, integration - at present a political /policy concern - will in the future be a regulatory/bureaucratic responsibility. It is not primarily a professional concern. An emerging profession is more likely to exploit sectional differences in its pursuit of interests than to submerge these in a national educational project whose integrative logic escapes their day-to-day sense of work and practice.

In fairness to the National Training Board working group, they have insisted that their model needs to be tested. Its initial testing took place in the negotiating process in the NTB itself. But how is to model to receive any adequate testing? Where is the night school sector voice? Where and when is the vision of the new ABE sector to be heard? Where are transformed conceptions of literacy development as part of broader social and political development strategy? Where are the voices of established or embryonic social movements? The crucial point is that testing at a level of model-building in policy discourse has neither teachers nor learners present to contest its assumptions. Their task is to arrive on the scene later and occupy the reconstructed frame. The real tensions therefore lie ahead.

In the face of such absences the present agreement is circumscribed to the most extreme extent. It is essentially, a bid to build a new adult education sector on an industrial training model. It rests on a new, strategic and possibly precarious settlement between key or progressive segments of industry and labour. Within the threefold conception of professional role the identity of "trainer" is therefore powerful and constitutive. The roles signalled by "development" on the one hand and by "education" on the other are by contrast empty of content or committed social project.

The doctrine of competency

The arrival of "competency" as a central term in the national education policy deliberation is partly explained by the grounding logic of economic development and relationships of production, by the international resurgence of a competency movement in education giving a sense of international role models through expert advice, by a deeply justified sense of the gross inadequacy of public schooling in particular in meeting even reasonable standards of learner achievement, and by a need for a new and simpler grip - by assessment of outcomes - on the levers of educational management required by a new, equitable and efficient national system. Competency signals the central place of learner assessment in current planning. It is in the definition, assessment and certification of outcomes that educational authority concentrates, with professional practice occupying the status of an appropriate means. The dominant discourse of educational planning and policy is a technological one - the pursuit of predefined ends by the most efficient means. At a time of rapid centrally managed social reconstruction such a model has no competitors. What of its implications in a new adult education system for practitioner identity?

For trainers in commercial and industrial contexts it will appear the obvious discourse: training is a sub-set of processes of production and is framed in technological terms. For experienced educators in other contexts - especially those accustomed to the worlds of school, universities and NGOs - it will seem an inappropriate even baffling description of their practice. And it will be engaged with as a discourse of management not as a discourse of professional practice. Its terms will be met strategically where enforceable and the discourse will, retain an external and ritualistic identity. Most important, a technological discourse will not have the resources to exercise authority over professional practice. This is because technological descriptions of

educational practice are simply not sustainable in the face of untidy and intractable reality and because the educational project itself rests on the shared achievement of meaning and commitment - not reducible to competencies. At an early stage of professional development adult education practitioners will inhabit a technological account of practice in reasonable comfort. As they develop contextual, epistemological and social theoretical understanding of education, the frame will become a restrictive and contested one.

I am aware that this paper has done little more than sketch one starting point for pursuing the question of how current policy shifts may construct the profession - and the vocation - of adult education. And I am aware, too, that the paper has been limited by the perspective of university location and experience, though I would not want this perspective to be dismissed as nostalgic. The drift of the paper has been towards the recognition that policy orthodoxy, technological discourse and bureaucratic structure have the capacity - and obligation - to set terms for adult education practice but not to generate professional identity. This is a more deeply grounded phenomenon, grounded in different sites of practice and different historical trajectories.

So, the question *"Is there a professional identity in sight?"* must receive a negative answer. What is in sight is a range of professional identities.

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Perspectives on this work

Adult education policy in South Africa: vision and reality by Robin Mackie

Prologue

Given the purpose of this book as a tribute to Professor Clive Millar's work, it is perhaps appropriate at the outset to make explicit my connection to this work and to Clive himself.

In my early twenties, I found myself developing an extra mural programme for the University of Natal.¹ I came armed with an undergraduate degree in economics and a postgraduate degree in law and absolutely no experience in education. Having succeeded in this task, I soon understood the need to move beyond this point but my ignorance of academic process was an obstacle. I was in need of a mentor.

In 1979, at a conference in Johannesburg, the discussion in one of the plenary sessions became circular and bedevilled by political gatekeepers – mild though by contemporary standards. A man in his early forties at the back of the hall with a deep sonorous voice and wearing a corduroy jacket addressed the conference from the floor and in a calm and measured way and without any posturing pointed a way forward. Such was my introduction to Clive Millar. The University of Cape Town, where Clive was the newly appointed Professor of Adult Education and Director of Extra-Mural Studies, led the field in university adult education. It had a long and established track record and had created the first academic department and chair of adult education in South Africa. The University of Natal, where I was the Director of the Centre for Adult Education, was

¹The University of Natal became the University of KwaZulu-Natal when it merged with the University of Durban Westville in January 2004.

more recently established and although it began teaching an academic programme for educators of adults from 1984, it did not enjoy the status of an academic department until much later. The University of the Witwatersrand was another player. With limited staff and resources in each of these institutions, it was natural in this new field that a small country-wide community of university adult educators should emerge for mutual discussion, debate and support. The contact took many forms: conferences, meetings, seminars, consultations, and contact through common membership on trusts and committees. The curriculum of our courses leading to the Diploma in for Educators of Adults loomed large in our discussions as did the nature of community projects and their relationship to the university²; the dynamics of university engagement; and, the impact and appropriate responses to the events and developments in the country as they affected adult education. In short policy and curriculum intertwined as concerns of common interest.

Clive was a central figure in these events. His contributions were particularly valuable for his acumen in distilling the nature and source of the social and political forces at play in any situation and presenting these in almost symbolic form, often through playful use of metaphor; then always moving on to understand the educational implications, opportunities and limitations. These discussions spilled over into an ongoing conversation between Clive and myself spurred in part by the common management issues which we faced in our respective positions. They provided me with insight and I was very grateful for this advice though I fear I was not always able to act on it with the same aplomb which Clive himself would have managed. This conversation continued in the spaces between formal discussions, on mountain walks in the Cape and in Natal, by post and through telephone calls, the latter eventually being

²The relationship of projects to the university is present in the first paper in relation to community.

supplanted by email. Over the years, they have grown in range and scope and to this day I scan my inbox in pleasurable anticipation of Clive's latest interest.

In all these interactions, one of Clive's gifts, which I suspect is a pillar of his teaching, is his ability to draw his audience up to his level. He does this by assuming an understanding on the part of his audience which is often in advance of where that audience is. (He will tell you that this is not a conscious technique but it is nevertheless very effective.) By maintaining the conversation at this level, he achieves, through interaction which is simultaneously gentle and rigorous, an understanding on the part of his listeners and learners which approaches that of his own. The papers which follow show evidence of this.

Introduction

*There was no policy to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. This must be definitely understood, or nothing wonderful can come from the story I am going to relate.*³

This is the first point of departure. By the end of this story we find a plethora of policy. How we moved from the first state to the last, and the effect this had on adult education practice, is the focus of this perspective. The second point of departure is that the concern of the two papers presented here is on policy in two separate, albeit related, contexts. The first paper is primarily concerned with university policy for adult education; the second paper, while still concerned with university policy for adult education, understands that national policy is now a key determinant.

³With acknowledgment to Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*.

Adult Education in South Africa before 1990⁴

Adult Education in South Africa has a chequered history with many disparate initiatives which often faded after briefly flourishing but arguably contributed to an emerging consensus centred on literacy and adult basic education. The earliest forms were sponsored by women's organisations in the early decades of the 20th century. The Communist Party introduced night classes in the 1920s; a night school movement was initiated in the late 1930s and was a significant provider before it was closed down by the National Party government in the 1960s; in the early 1960s the South African Institute of Race relations established the Bureau of Literacy and Literature; Operation Upgrade, a Natal based literacy organisation, began its work a few years later. Besides the focus on literacy and adult basic education, education opportunities for adults were provided in many diverse organisations and contexts including in-service training, agricultural extension programmes, book clubs, bible study classes and the like.

During the Second World War a well organised adult education programme was established for armed service personnel. Beginning in the 1970s and reaching a crescendo in the 1980s a myriad of small community based organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) provided education largely directed at social and political awareness. Also in the 1970s, the government opened adult education centres which provided little more than second-chance schooling for adults. There was much more besides.⁵ Much of this work was initiated and undertaken by social activists and volunteers who brought huge energy and commitment, and the contribution that they

⁴ I have chosen 1990 as the watershed for the point at which things begin to change in anticipation of the events of February 1992 and April 1994. It marks the beginning of a process rather than any specific change.

⁵ Adrienne Bird (1984) gives a detailed account of the development of the night school movement on the Witwatersrand from the 1920-1980; E.G. Malherbe (1977) includes a section on adult education in the second volume of his *Education in South Africa*; John Aitchison (2003a, 2003b) gives an account of the history of adult education in South Africa from 1960 to 2002.

made should not be underestimated. All this work was of a non-formal nature, and some of it may not even have been understood as adult education. It was guided by no common philosophy or united by any common goals; it was not co-ordinated in any way and did not feed into any overall system. The first attempt to introduce a national policy for adult education in South Africa derived from the experience of the armed forces adult education programme and eventually led to the establishment in 1948 of a National Advisory Council and Division of Adult Education within the National Department of Education. The ethos of the initiative had largely socio-political and cultural undertones not unlike the liberal arts programmes of universities, and took a narrow view of the complex field of adult education. The timing of the initiative was unfortunate. It coincided with the coming to power of the National Party government which had no great interest in sustaining it. The momentum slips, and a course is steered to the safe waters of cultural upliftment, to a point where in 1970 the National Advisory Council was abolished and a National Cultural Council established in its place.

This is at best a lukewarm initiative which falters. In so far as it can be claimed as policy it should be read alongside a growing distrust on the part of the National Party government for any independent provision of adult education as evidenced, for example, in the closing of the night schools, and in the severe restrictions in the 1980s on non-governmental organisations and the individuals who ran them. Seen in this light emerging policy must be understood as antithetical to adult education. The only exception to this view is in the area of training. Faced with a growing skills shortage, the government set up a series of related commissions (Wiehahn, Riekert and De Lange)⁶ which led *inter alia* to the introduction in 1981 of the Manpower Training Act.

⁶Wiehahn Commission of inquiry into labour legislation in South Africa, 1979; Riekert Commission of inquiry into legislation affecting the utilisation of manpower, 1979; de Lange Commission – HSRC investigation into education in South Africa, 1981.

Adult Education at South African universities was, unsurprisingly in the absence of any policy, similarly sporadic and diverse. The University of Cape Town traces offerings of extension lectures back to the 19th century with an advisory committee established in the 1920s and a structure in place to deliver programmes from the 1950s. The University of Natal, at the instigation of Mable Palmer, instituted a programme of classes for 'non-European' students in the 1930s, which though tainted by its segregationist nature and though largely formal in its offering, was nevertheless to some extent informed by the Workers Education Association experience of Dr Palmer (Brookes, 1966). There is a twenty-year gap before the University of Natal established, in 1971, what became its Centre for Adult Education. The University of the Witwatersrand, also in the early 1970s, adopted the Institute of Adult Studies, a Workers Educational Association established sometime before the First World War (Wentzel, 1973). Each of these universities evolved their programmes of adult education in much the same fashion, following the path traced by Millar in his first paper. A fourth university, the University of the Western Cape established, as it were, a ready-made Centre for Adult and Community Education in the mid-1980s.

These four universities, through their common practice and like-minded philosophy, constituted a loose coalition of university adult education interests. This is not to say that the other universities were absent from the adult education arena but, as will be seen, they brought different understandings of the purposes and scope of university involvement in adult education. Policy for university adult education was equally undeveloped. At the first Universities Seminar in Adult Education held at the University of Cape Town in 1973, only three universities, the Universities of Cape Town, of Natal and of the Witwatersrand, had dedicated adult education units which in each case, as already indicated, took the form of an extra mural programme. Extra mural provision was the premise on which they were founded. Service to the community, loosely defined, was the underlying notion to the extent that, at least initially, the primary university functions of teaching and of research were considered beyond the bounds

of their mandate. All 16 of the then South African universities were represented at that seminar and it is a measure of the policy vacuum that they brought differing views on the nature of adult education, the conception of the university, the understanding of community and the relationship between the university and social change (Tobias 1973). It is worth noting in parenthesis that the seminar was also attended by representatives from other southern universities namely, the University of the then Rhodesia and of Malawi. These universities had already then moved ahead of the domestic universities, illustrating the powerful restraining influence of an apartheid education system even on this peripheral site of education. These differing perceptions of the role and scope of adult education played out for many years in a sub-committee of the Committee of University Principals (CUP). Funding for adult education in its non-formal offerings was not part of the university state funding formula. These programmes were either self-funded, such as the extra mural courses, or donor funded as was the case with the various the community orientated developmental projects. To this end in 1975, the CUP established a sub-committee known as the Sub-Committee on Continuing Education. The choice of “Continuing Education” as the master term⁷ reflects the varying understandings of adult education but the committee nevertheless adopted, at least initially, a broad definition expressed as “Extra-curricular education for persons above the compulsory school age”.

The Committee had no formal terms of reference but took as its task “(the identification) of the role of universities in adult education ... and the practical considerations relating to that role”⁸. The committee spent the next 15 years attempting unsuccessfully to discover and agree on a measure of adult education

⁷This CUP sub-committee was initially the Sub-Committee on Adult Education but recommended a change of its name to ‘Continuing Education’ at its fifth meeting in June of 1977, albeit with a qualification that this was not meant to imply a narrow connotation.

⁸Minutes of the first meeting of the Committee of University Principals Sub-Committee on Adult Education, 2nd May 1975.

output which might be used as an element for funding non-formal university adult education provision.

Policy development, as Millar points out, had to be driven by these university practitioners often against resistance. There is a sense in which the suggestion made in the early 1970s by Robert Tobias, then Director of the Centre for Extra Mural Studies at UCT, to his Board that the programme should be driven by policy rather than *ad hoc* decisions and happenstance was met with initial bemusement⁹. Nevertheless, the persistence of Tobias and his painstaking efforts in moving the curriculum from its purely extra mural course format to engagement with other communities in various forms and his argument to establish the Centre as an academic department was a pioneering step which led the way for the development of university adult education in South Africa. The appointment of Clive Millar as the first professor of adult education in any South African university was a seminal moment for university based adult education in South Africa. It marked the coming of age of the university adult education enterprise and opened the way to serve the field by moving one step back from direct provision and focussing efforts on practitioners in the field, developing their understanding and expertise. Within two years of Millar's appointment the University of Cape Town introduced the first postgraduate diploma course in adult education. The Universities of Witwatersrand and of Natal followed suit in 1983 and 1984 respectively. As the four papers on the diploma course suggest, the curriculum for the diploma was a site of innovation, with excitingly tense and often contested engagement. The as yet unfettered field of adult education bereft of policy determinants gave scope for exploration and experimentation which at times could be playful but was always underpinned by a commitment to the imperative of social change inherent in the field.

⁹I infer this from the remarks of Professor A.W. Sloan, then Chairman of the UCT Board of Extra Mural Studies, made in his introductory address to the University Seminar on Adult Education in 1973.

The 1980s were dark days in South Africa but they were heady days nonetheless for adult education. Growing protest throughout the country was met by growing state repression and education was a major site of contestation. As the formal system was de-legitimised so non-formal education became the site for the construction of alternatives, 'Peoples Education' being the most prominent expression. Projects of various kinds proliferated. Some were initiated by the university adult education centres, others were adopted, and in some cases the centres may have been adopted by the projects. University Adult Education centres were obvious hosts both because of their core focus on non-formal education and because in a climate of severe repression and restrictions the universities, while not immune, were to some extent seen as safe-havens. But the majority of projects were outside the universities and were constituted as NGOs. Many developed, through association; a loose affiliated status such that they drew on university units for support and resources. The projects were directed towards community development, redress, particularly in the area of literacy and basic education for adults, and alternative support for the formal system. Students who joined the diploma course in adult education were often the same people who staffed these projects and NGOs, which neatly bridged the non-formal and formal programmes and brought a richness born of practical engagement to the curriculum.

This interaction coupled with the early stages of an emerging field of study, as yet uncluttered by settled theory or any consensus as to what constituted knowledge in the field, gave vibrancy and vitality to all aspects of the work. This was also a reflection of the vibrancy of civil society generally at this time. NGOs and community-based organisations were swelled by people who might otherwise have been engaged in the public sector but who were denied those opportunities either by legislation or by political principle. This *avant-garde* condition together with the links forged by these departments with community organisations and activists lent to these departments a status valued by their universities which were increasingly learning to understand the limits of their traditional constituencies. This status offered a degree of protection and

privilege for what were otherwise vulnerable initiatives in the absence of state recognition for funding purposes.

Adult Education in the 1990s: The Arrival of National Policy

As South Africa began its transition from apartheid in the early 1990s, critique, which in education had been the dominant mode of intellectual and political engagement through the 1980s, ran dry and, as if from a bottle uncorked, policy proposals flowed like a heady wine. Prominent amongst these proposals was the creation of a National Educational Policy Investigation (NEPPI) and the ANC's Policy Framework for Education and Training. The general import of these policies was summed up succinctly by Pam Christie (2006).

What was envisaged by the broad democratic movement was the integration of education and training in a system of lifelong learning that would articulate adult basic education and training, formal schooling, and learning programmes for out-of-school children and youth. Structures representing civil society stakeholder interests would ensure accountability and participation at all levels of the integrated system. A national qualification framework (NQF) would plot equivalences between qualifications, maximise horizontal and vertical mobility. New policies would articulate changes across the whole of the existing education and training system.

These early policy proposals worked themselves out through the following 20 years, pushed and pulled by competing interests and by political and practical constraints. They are expressed in vast array of policy documents and legislation most notable of which are the *Norms and Standards for Educators*, the *National Qualification Framework*, the *South African Qualifications Authority*, the *Higher Education Qualification Framework*, and the *National Policy Framework for Teacher Education*. And with particular reference to adult education, the *Adult Basic Education and*

Training Act, the *Continuing Education and Training Act*, and the *Further Education and Training Colleges Act*. What emerged, though not fully integrated, was nevertheless mediated through a long-contested qualification framework whose object was to create an integrated education system with mobility and access over ten levels each with prescribed level descriptors. The nomenclature of the sub-frames¹⁰ which are articulated through the NQF is revealing of the understanding accorded to adult education and evidence the strong influence of the training sector. Liberal, humanist and radical traditions of adult education are submerged by this frame.

There are many explanations for this explosion of policy, some even perhaps Machiavellian, but what is evident is an underlying belief in the primacy of policy and the conviction that improved practice flows from, and is dependent on, the formulation and promulgation of optimal policy. There have been unintended and unfortunate consequences. The introduction of outcomes based education, for example, failed to take into account the realities and constraints of the resources and infrastructure which were needed to sustain it. Gifted practitioners were diverted from delivery to focus instead on developing policy or at very least to devote time to understanding and absorbing the changing demands flowing from policy changes. Worse still, the prescriptive dictates of some aspects of policy stifled imaginative practice and curriculum innovation and general uncertainty about curricula and qualifications led to a sense of paralysis while practitioners and students waited for policy to be finalised.

The consequences for adult education were far reaching. The social and moral imperatives for wider access to educational opportunities for adults were generally

¹⁰The three sub-frames are:

- General and Further Education and Training Sub-Framework (GFETQSF)
- The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF)
- The Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF)

understood and accepted and adult education had at least rhetorical political support. In practice this support was very limited, leading at the one end to adult basic education as a form of adult primary education and at the other end to further education as a form of vocational training. Both these forms of provision became, as it were, second chance formal education for adults rather than adult education and were devoid of any adult education ethos of personal and social development directed towards political awareness and empowerment. They were also devoid of flexibility.¹¹ One of the consequences of the new policy dispensation and particularly of the NQF was to undermine non-formal education provision as a mode of delivery both by requiring the registration of all forms of delivery (including, in theory at least, extra mural courses run by universities) and by attempting to locate all provision on the qualification framework, the latter impulse necessarily implying the 'non-formal' becoming 'formal'. In practice, of course, non-formal offerings in myriad forms continued but the policy nevertheless eroded a core component of adult education provision.

These policy implications were compounded by other developments. Civil society, which in the 1980s had been so vibrant, diminished and the NGOs and community organisations withered. In some instances, the *raison d'être* for these entities as anti-apartheid organisations evaporated; in other instances, shrinking funding led to their closure. Government antagonism, particularly evident in the Mbeki era, may also have played a part in their demise. Many of the people who in the pre-liberation phase had staffed these organisations now moved to the public sector. The Extra Mural programmes were also affected though in a different way. The advent of the internet and other technological advances in the media broadened the opportunities of educational access and many small organisations and societies offered dedicated

¹¹This may seem at odds with the impulse to integration explicit in the NQF but the prescription of levels and in the NQF and in the qualifications accredited by SAQA, works to circumscribe flexibility

programmes in their specific area of interest and expertise. The near monopoly which university extension programmes had earlier enjoyed fell away. Extra Mural Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal was abandoned²³ and replaced with a new initiative directed to in-service course for commerce and industry, while at the University of Cape Town though a limited Extra-Mural Programme continues, Adult Education ceased to function as an academic department.

By the end of the first decade of this century, university adult education was a shadow of its former self. The Centres and Departments of Adult Education were closed and staff absorbed into other academic structures. The diploma courses were no more, the non-formal programmes were at an end and, deeply ironically, partly in response to university performance norms, the bulk of the work remaining in isolated pockets was focused at the higher ends of the post graduate spectrum.

²³ *The abandoned programme was subsequently resurrected by a public spirited retired lecturer and is now run privately.*

The Perspective applied to Clive's papers

Any commentary written 30 years after Clive's papers themselves were written is hugely privileged by the perspective provided by the passage of time. And yet the two papers under consideration in this section are not trapped in time. The first paper holds lessons for any enterprise caught in a tension of accountability and there is a prescient quality in the analysis, particularly evident in the second paper, which, while not predicting the subsequent history, does leave open the directions which could later be seen. The preceding narrative was essentially descriptive; the two papers which follow provide a tight analytical account of the same narrative. The papers are separated in time, with the first speaking to the pre- policy era and the second responding to the emergence of policy. What follows highlights and comments on salient points in an attempt to relate the description to the analysis.

Curriculum Evolution in University Based Adult Education Programmes

This first paper is a case study of the UCT experience. The organising principle is the curriculum, a paradigm which may have been obvious to Clive but which would have occurred less immediately to other actors. Its major contribution is to provide a robust analytical framework for understanding the work and development of adult education in universities at the time, an understanding which runs deeper than the more superficial everyday assumptions on which, at a formal level, this work was predicated. Of particular assistance is the casting of relationships in transactional terms both in relation to the community and to the university.

The crux of the paper is the relationship between the extra mural programme, community engagement and the teaching of adult education. Though the Cape Town experience is unique, it was mirrored in other universities, most notably the University of Natal and the University of the Witwatersrand. The essential difference was the period of time over which this evolution occurred. At UCT the move from extra mural course provision to community engagement takes place after twenty years and the

move to adult education provision takes a further 10 years. This can truly be seen as an evolution. By contrast at the University of Natal the move from the extra mural beginnings to community engagement is made in under 10 years and then to teaching of adult education four years later. The experience of the University of the Witwatersrand is very similar. Interestingly the University of the Western Cape which enters the field much later, in the middle of the 1980s, omits entirely what in the other three universities was the first stage comprising an extra mural programme. The resultant coincidence of timing in all four universities suggests the significant influence of contextual drivers. The “(near) Jesuitical theorisation required to sustain a sense of a coherent departmental project” across the three phases of work at UCT, most particularly in relation to the extra mural programme, was similarly experienced in Natal. It was too large a burden for a mission statement. UCT had the advantage of a long and well-established extra mural programme which included a summer school of national and international renown which held prestige for the university. Moreover, the transition from phase to phase at UCT was negotiated in a fashion which attracted additional resources²⁴. Working from a less-well established base the transitions between the phases in Natal were accomplished by drawing down resources from the preceding phases. Ultimately the logic could not hold in either institution; at UCT the Extra Mural programme floated free, at Natal the programme simply came to an end.

The alternative reading provided in this paper of seeing the transitions from each phase not in terms of resolving contradictions and limitations in the curriculum as expressed in the previous phase but as a strategy for securing legitimacy, strikes a chord and the

²⁴ *The Centre for Adult Education at the University of Natal was more cavalier in its approach, often taking on work way beyond its capacity. This was often inspired by my colleague and friend, John Aitchison whose clinching rejoinder to arguments for more modest approaches was that if we didn't do it, some other entity with more questionable motives would.*

tension which this raises between intention and function in relation to programme or curriculum innovation is real. Both were certainly present and were perhaps seen as complementary, particularly at Natal where legitimacy was more tenuous than it was at UCT.

Finally, the notion of reform of the university from the coal-face work of adult education may seem a trifle megalomaniac but I can attest to it as an experienced reality. It flows both from the necessity and experience of having to drive innovation and development from the programme working from a very limited mandate and in a manner which was in many respects ahead of university practice. It is salutary that several curriculum innovations and concepts and practices adopted in the new era were first extant in the adult education arena. The base at the University of Natal was not sufficiently robust to imagine any project as large as the reconstruction of the university and even the adult education department at UCT with its more secure and established base would probably have found such a project beyond its means, but in both universities, and at UCT more particularly, adult education was called on to contribute to the wider process of university reconstruction

The Role of the Adult Educator: Is there a professional identity in sight?

This paper is located at the historical point where adult education is almost overwhelmed by its own success, perhaps even mesmerised. The pioneering efforts of the individuals, groups and universities who led adult education through the dark days of the 1980s with their brave constructions of alternative forms of education in non-formal mode are in the process of being eclipsed by other actors who see adult education in more instrumental terms and have as their objective the opening of opportunities for the education of adults as opposed to providing adult education. The social reconstruction element, at least in the liberation sense, loses ground as political emancipation is actually achieved. It may even be seen as undesirable. All this is grasped in this paper.

Looking back, the diploma is understood as “microcosmic processes of reconstructive social action, disrespectful of system, formal qualifications, canon texts, formal assessments and of hierarchy... and certification – not so much about progression and exchange value as much as membership of a special category of social actor – a community or adult educator.” By contrast the (then) current conception as expressed in the emerging policy is seen as dominated by ‘the authority of policy’, the centrality of competence as a founding principle of curriculum, and the imperative drive to integration of the education system (both between education and training and articulation throughout the qualification structure). An important consequence of the priority accorded to policy development is that curriculum content and structure – key elements of professional authority - were left vacant for later development. Curriculum content was later centrally determined, there was no opportunity remained for professional authority to be asserted. The policy proposals and subsequent practice placed competence at the centre of the curriculum and raised it as the standard against which the curriculum should be measured.

Clive’s paper understands the complex of forces driving the ascendancy of competency with something akin to empathy. But it understands also that from the point of view of traditional adult education practice it is a foreign discourse unfamiliar to practitioners outside the world of training and predicts that although it may have initial acceptance, ultimately “the frame will be a restrictive and contested one”. This view assumed that there would be scope for the untidy and intractable reality which rests on “the shared achievement of meaning and commitment.”

Sadly, as things have transpired, there is very little evidence of the survival of the form of education that meets such a description. The imperative for integration stands in sharp contrast to the *laissez faire* approach which had characterised adult education hitherto. There is an ironic dichotomy to be observed here. The rationale for constructing a system of adult education at this point is incontestable and the impulse

towards integration is almost inevitable for reasons which are well understood in the paper. Nevertheless, the systematisation of adult education in a manner which sought to make it integral to mainstream education entailed the demise of all that was most valued in the traditional practice of adult education. Through the paper, Clive is in search of signs of an emerging professional role for the adult educator and by extension pondering the university role in preparing these educators. The hope rests in the development of the new concept of the “Education Development and Training Practitioner “(ETDP) – a vision of an integrated professional role. Clive wonders whether this integrated conception can hold against the site-specific nature of practice and suggests that what might emerge is a range of identities. The truth is that no professional identity has yet been able to emerge. As far as I can see the ETDP concept has sunk without trace.

And twenty-three years later there is still, alas, no professional identity in sight.

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Who owns the curriculum? A response to the work of Clive Millar by Barry Hymer

‘O this learning, what a thing it is!’

(*The Taming of the Shrew*, act 1, scene 2, line 159)

Introduction

It is a privilege to respond²⁵, with the advantage of hindsight, to a selection of papers from Clive’s backlist of academic publications. It has been stimulating to read papers written by a committed educator during the last years of apartheid-era South Africa but filtered through the lens of my own experience in contemporary teaching training and continuing professional development (CPD) practices in the UK. Stimulating as this opportunity has been, it has not consisted in undiluted pleasure. Alongside Clive’s gift comes despair. Bear with me.

The gift

There is pleasure to be found of course – and a good deal of that: Clive’s writing style has always been admirably spare, elegant, and unpretentiously lucid, and these papers capture all those qualities. (Is it really an accident that he is a former colleague of J M Coetzee’s?!) Moreover, it is always a delight to sense a congruence between form and content, and Clive’s academic writing reveals at a meta-level the consistent subject and nature of his work: a profound respect for the student (or reader) and the need for that individual to take responsibility for his or her own learning, a finely tuned capacity for problematising easily accepted norms or understandings, and a searing openness to the apparent limitations or contradictions imposed by and expressed within his own

²⁵ In this response, I draw in part on work published in Hymer *et al* (2015) and Boyd *et al* (2015)

stance. A good example of the latter quality is to be found in the concluding passages of his paper on *Curriculum negotiation in professional education* (Millar *et al*, 1986) – the “critique in conclusion” that follows a masterful compare-and-contrast illumination of old and new theoretical orthodoxies in education – specifically the observation that the ‘absence of curriculum’ constitutes a contradiction in terms, being in itself a hugely powerful form of curriculum structure which *cannot* absent itself from the dynamic between staff and students.

From this reflection, the consequent improvement suggestions for curriculum negotiation in this paper are also given shape and form in the trajectory of models for adult education outlined in their different iterations in the unpublished in-house discussion paper, *The Diploma Course for Educators of Adults: A Case for Reconstruction?* (Millar, 1985). It is this capacity for reflective self- critique – to the point of lacerating self-doubt – leading to consequent actions, that to my mind is characteristic of the true educator (and academic), since a facility for tolerating doubt and uncertainty nurtures the generation of new meanings and experimental possibilities for action. (It is no surprise that Clive himself refers to the description of his courses as ‘experimental’.) The generative quality of doubt is also highlighted by the late physicist and educator, Richard Feynman, in his work, *The Meaning of it All*: “... doubt is not to be feared, but it is to be welcomed as the possibility of a new potential for human beings. If you know you are not sure, you have a chance to improve the situation. I want to demand that freedom for future generations.” (Feynman, 1999: 136). Clive demanded that then, and in his most recent work (*A Practical Guide to Classroom Research*, 2016), clearly he still does.

As for Clive himself, so to for his students: if learning is as Clive sees it, a dynamic, light-footed dance between multiple actors engaged in the task of knowledge or skill construction, then challenge, doubt and complexity are to be valued and pursued as fertile territory for the construction of both deep *and* surface meanings, for the asking

of new questions and the exploration of new lines of enquiry. Because teaching, like medicine, law and any advanced profession is *not* an exact science, 'Uncertainty is the parent of professionalism and the enemy of standardisation' (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012: 107). Or as Lawrence Stenhouse, put it years earlier, 'Education as induction into knowledge is successful to the extent that it makes the behavioural outcomes of the students unpredictable' (Stenhouse, 1975: 82).

Beyond his writing, I have a personal memory of Clive's capacity to synthesise self-doubt with a profound respect for others' capacity to make their own meanings. Years back, with all the partial expertise of an 18-year-old first-year undergraduate, I had a conversation with Clive about the conflicted role and status of liberalism in apartheid-era South Africa. I was and suppose still am a liberal by background and by conviction, but I was struggling with its capacity to offer solutions to a society that seemed from another stance (thank you Political Science I at UCT, circa 1979) at least to be a *victim* of liberal assumptions and policies. I think I was looking to Clive, who acknowledged then – and explicitly in the papers in this book – his own liberal credentials, for some authoritative answers to my own doubts. What I received were no answers, but several layers of additional probes and questions that compounded my confusion – and which taught me not to look to be saved by someone else from my own unique search for meaning. As an aside, I remember in that conversation throwing in, completely gratuitously, the word *weltanschauung* to the conversation – a desperate attempt to earn some intellectual regard from someone whose opinion I deeply valued. I recall there was not a flicker of condescension or even amusement in Clive's response, though he would have been entitled inwardly to be howling with laughter!

There is one final source of delight in Clive's work that I'd like to signal at this point, and that is his remarkable capacity both for analysis and synthesis – the very model of high quality academic output – and that which I strain to solicit from many of my own

postgraduate students. I would identify just one example from this set of papers, and that is from the paper, *Critical reflection for educators of adults: Getting a grip on the scripts for professional action* (Millar, 1991). As part of this work, Clive describes how he and his then colleagues would inductively map the major discourses with their students, progressing from a detailed explication of each student's practice in the field of adult education, via selected readings, to a semi-structured discussion of each case, supported by critical questions of the form, 'What social problem is taken most seriously by this form of practice?' and 'What counts as 'knowledge' here?' Engagement with these prompts enables the co-construction by the class ("a slow and contested task") of discursive maps – and an example is provided on p20 of that paper.

I have seen many attempts at drawing distinctions between, as here, technical-rational, humanistic, liberal and radical stances on core ontological and epistemological spokes, but few that hang together with such simple elegance as that revealed in this table. Engagement in compare-and-contrast exercises and other tasks requiring high levels of conceptual abstraction is a recurring feature of the most powerful influences on student achievement, as revealed by the great meta-review synthesisers of educational studies, such as Robert Marzano, Margaret Wang, John Hattie, Robert Coe and others. And when a key feature of such tasks involves also *the (co)creation of the parameters through which these tasks are constructed*, the intellectual tariff – and consequent educational benefits – becomes commensurately high. It's worth noting in relation to Clive's own experiences, especially as recounted in his papers exploring curriculum negotiation, that the response from students to tasks of this nature – at least initially – is very frequently resistant, even antagonistic: who wants to work so hard and with such few indicators of successful 'resolution' and closure? The exercise described in this paper strikes me as a very model of brave and exemplary practice in this domain.

The despair

With all that brings pleasure in Clive's work, what is there that brings me down? My response is to shift focus from the generic qualities to the specific content of his work, and in this to draw attention to a lightly-drawn invitation that Clive extended to the contributors to this book. He suggested that we might wish to highlight *innovation*, in tricky social contexts as the theme that gives a unity to all his papers. Hegel's truism that we learn from history that we do not learn from history is never more acutely felt than in the field of education. So, there is something at once invigorating and enervating in reading Clive's papers through the lens of innovation. Invigorating in that recurring themes, motifs and practices buttress the sense that not all practice is equally good, and never has been. That which is truly good is revisited across time and across context – the necessary agency of the learner, the realization that quality learning and teaching is difficult, messy and contested, that practice can and should be theorised, not seen as something bleakly instrumental or formulaic.

But enervating too: these uplifting educational verities also reveal the darker side – the knowledge that dominant educational practice frequently rejects what we already know in favour of something very different. The gap between the curriculum offer (or non-offer) of Clive and his colleagues during those years and the expectations of their students of what constitutes an acceptable diploma experience is mirrored today in schools and universities throughout the UK. I would like to identify four particular elements from these papers that in the Quaker phrase 'spoke to my condition':

1. Constructivist education is not laissez-faire permissiveness

In his papers, Clive is sensitive to the mythology surrounding non-traditional practices. Deep learning doesn't come easily. In a book I co-wrote with two colleagues a couple of years back (Boyd et al, 2015), we were explicit in acknowledging that new teachers in many countries enter a profession in which the dominant forces at play in their training and their practice tend to align with the traditional vision of learning: learning

= being taught. So, it follows naturally that learning to teach = being taught to teach – and it's the job of the people teaching the teachers to keep things simple, rapid and efficient. This is the world of pre-established and standardised 'learning objectives' driving every lesson to normative outcomes, and the logical conclusion to this vision of learning and learners is 'scripted lessons'. Like learning, teaching comes down to the acquisition of certain approved skills, techniques and 'worthwhile' knowledge. It's a technical and relatively straightforward process. Do what's always been done and KISS – Keep it Simple, Stupid.

However, we also identified for novitiate teachers the more ambitious, more evidence-based, but also more challenging conceptualisation of learning. This underpins that book and our beliefs as educators – and those of Clive and his colleagues back then too, shot through as their papers are with the ideas of Stenhouse, Piaget, Schön, Kemmis and Carr, Vygotsky, Bruner and others. Learning can also be seen as the *co-construction* of knowledge, skills, values, dispositions, etc. through experience, practice or indeed 'being taught'. This implies a much more active role on the part of the learner, and a complex and multi-directional interplay between the learner, that which is learned (the curriculum) and the learning environment. It also implies that the relationship between the teacher and the learner is not one of simply 'giving' them knowledge. The relationship between teacher and learner in this perspective is more like that of collaborators who are exploring the curriculum subject discipline together. The teacher may act as a guide or mentor, providing expert guidance and suitable enquiry-based activities to challenge the learner and help her to become a member of the subject discipline community – e.g. a mathematician, an historian, scientist or educator. The key features of learning through construction include identification of initial ideas leading on to exploration of possible explanations. With time to think and working within a social situation the learner constructs new explanations and often comes to construct her own curriculum.

Of course this second conceptualisation of learning has a strong theoretical pedigree, as outlined above. Despite this hefty theoretical hinterland, or perhaps even because of it, it can be viewed with some suspicion by many politicians, press columnists, practitioners and even researchers as a relic of a former ‘progressive’ or ‘radical’ era – perhaps at or around the time Clive was writing these papers. There has always been considerable resistance from some to making a shift from considering teaching as transmission towards considering learning as construction. In part this resistance is linked to the ever-increasing levels of accountability in education that are based on measurement of achievement using test results – it is easier to measure learning within the ‘transmission’ metaphor for learning. Moreover, ‘theory’ seems less immediately functional: theorists haven’t always been very good at making the links between theory and day-to-day real-world practice: “When faced with 9Z on Friday afternoon, it’s trench-lore and experience that matter, not some theoretical mumbo-jumbo!” Little wonder that we often fail to see the truth of Kurt Lewin’s words, that ‘There’s nothing more practical than a good theory’ (Lewin, 1952: 169). The practical wisdom of everyday practice in school is underpinned by interpretations of learning theory. When a theory is incorporated into practice it becomes ‘common sense’.

Researchers who adopt a positivist perspective, such as the psychometrician John Hattie, can see educational constructivism as representing woolly, learner-led and teacher-lite approaches, rather than embodying the intense rigour that should underpin all constructivist practice. This is because constructivist practices aren’t always easy to operationalise in research terms: almost by definition, constructivist approaches don’t lend themselves well to tightly-controlled empirical studies – there are too many complex variables at play. And richly nuanced qualitative studies on classroom learning don’t compute in vast meta-study syntheses of the research evidence base. (It’s an irony however that the most powerful influences on learner achievement as identified by researchers like Hattie are all strongly dependent on teachers using outstanding constructivist practices.) But genuinely constructivist

practices are exceptionally disciplined – even formal – in their strictures. Clive and his colleagues acknowledge this in their paper on *Curriculum negotiation* (Millar *et al*, 1986: 3-4), citing Stenhouse’s call for rules and conventions in seminar work in pursuit of ‘lawful’ teaching. They go on from this to emphasise in their work in adult education the need to stress the importance of learner engagement in the construction and development of principles of procedure – ‘i.e. on a learner-researcher as well as a teacher-researcher role’ (ibid: 4). Good learning is a struggle. We do well to remember this.

2. Learning should make the invisible visible

It’s worth noting here that the constructivist’s synergistic interplay between teacher and learner is beautifully captured by Hattie himself in his influential book, *Visible Learning* (2009). ‘Visible learning’, for Hattie, is what happens when the teacher sees learning through the eyes of the learner, and the learner becomes her own teacher. This Hattie believes is what we should be aiming for as teachers, as it characterises the most powerful influences on achievement. I argue that visible learning is most likely to be found in high-quality constructivist exchanges, and will be least in evidence in those learning encounters which are essentially transactional in nature, from teacher to learner. It is ironic therefore that Hattie himself is sceptical about constructivism – perhaps because what has sometimes passed for ‘constructivist teaching’ has been undeniably weak – overvaluing learner licence to ‘explore their own learning’ with minimal support and structure from the teacher. For the reasons outlined above, I see these instances as examples of poor teaching, not as exemplars of constructivism at work. Yet years before Hattie wrote *Visible Learning*, Clive was writing this:

The activity of creating meanings and uncovering explanations draws into active play the layers of assumption, previously constituted knowledge, and attitudes and values of each participant *in such a way that they become directly visible* [italics added], open to question and change. It is this process of increasing consciousness of the assumed layers of knowledge and the

readiness to commit these to critical scrutiny that is termed ‘learning’ in this context. (Millar *et al*, 1986: 12)

This is not just a theoretical assertion. It is given life in the feedback/critique provided to students – such as this example: “... more fundamental is the study’s incapacity to make visible and explain its own form of enquiry ...” (Millar, 1985: 6). Good teaching was not first made visible by Hattie. We do well to remember this.

3. Education should not be about efficiencies

I commented earlier on the ‘discursive map’ presented in Millar (1991), and its compare-and-contrast synthesis of four paradigmatic discourses in education. A prompt in this map asks, ‘What is the key value in this form of practice?’ The suggestion for the ‘Technological’ paradigm is *Efficiency*. I believe this remains the dominant discourse in education within the UK. As described in an earlier paper (Hymer *et al*, 2015) since the creation of a national curriculum for state schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland via the Education Reform Act of 1988, teachers in these countries have been operating in high-pressure, high-accountability, high-support, and low-autonomy environments. These environments are governed by finely-grained national policy directives, buttressed by a strong inspection framework, which are intended to drive up teaching standards and improve school effectiveness.

With the election of a national coalition government in 2010 and a Conservative government in 2015, specific initiatives such as the extensive (and expensive) National Strategy frameworks have been discontinued, but the requirement for teachers and teacher-educators to adapt to new and detailed policy requirements and inspection schedules has continued apace – but now in an age of austerity, with mounting budgetary pressures too. Underpinning the teaching, assessment and surveillance practices of the past quarter-century is a set of technical-rational assumptions (Schön, 1983, 1987) which are normative and hierarchical, and rooted in the tenets of positivism and structuralism. The characteristics of these assumptions have been

articulated by Lester (2001) and are elaborated here: knowledge is regarded as being essentially reified, objective, stable, general and divorced from the 'knower', and amenable therefore to classification and transmission within taxonomies of subject-specific knowledge-bases. In other words, pedagogic understandings and practice are predicated on the belief that *knowledge precedes and shapes action*. Consistent with these understandings, analytical and deductive thinking is applied rationally and convergently in the pursuit of problem-solving efficiencies and capabilities. Pupils and their teachers are seen as players of discrete yet also generalized roles ('pupil' vs 'teacher'), rather than as unique and complex individuals and agents of their own learning – learning which, like learners themselves, can be equally complex, idiosyncratic, and messy. Considerable status is given to apparently 'robust' and measurable but in reality deeply abstract and ill-defined concepts such as *ability*, *intelligence* and *talent* as predictors of scholastic achievement and as stable constructs around which classrooms can be organized – e.g. streaming, setting, even the concept of *mixed-ability teaching*. Consistent with this epistemology of practice, subject or pedagogical experts define *what* is to be learned (in the form of curricula, syllabuses, units of study, core competences and skill sets) and, via theories as to what constitutes good practice, even *how* it is to be learned. Though exceptions to the dominant epistemology of practice will continue to be evidenced in classrooms which foreground learning over performance (cf. Hart *et al*, 2004; Watkins, 2005; Watkins *et al*, 2007), the teacher and pupil are ultimately subservient to the prevailing technical-rational assumptions of a 'banking model' of schooling (Freire, 1996): both teacher and pupil operate *within* systems rather than *on* them (Lester, 2001). Clive invokes Freire's banking model explicitly in his papers.

The effects of this technical-rational discourse on teachers' classroom practices are well-documented (e.g. Wood, 2004; Jones, 2010; Goodwyn & Findlay, 2003; Lofty, 2006; Hart *et al*, 2004; Collins *et al*, 2010). Typically these effects are characterised by a teacher and pupil focus on performance goals rather than mastery goals, and some

recent research within the field of achievement goal theory has even provided data for theorizing about how learners' adoption of mastery versus performance goals orient them to value very different qualities in their teachers (Senko, 2012): learners pursuing mastery goals seem to favour teachers who stimulate and challenge them intellectually ('concept-builders' – Twiselton, 2004), whereas learners pursuing performance goals favour teachers who are effective 'task managers' and 'curriculum deliverers' (Twiselton, *ibid.*) and who provide clear signposts to academic achievement. As an interesting aside, these studies also often reveal how teachers utilize "... the processes of creative mediation, adaptation and resistance" (Wood, 2004: 361) when the dominant discourse conflicts with their personal and professional values, beliefs and expertise.

Clive's work implicitly rejects technical-rational efficiencies in favour of the more difficult educational work, of valuing a task process rather than task product-agenda, of refusing traditional teacher-as-leader roles, of insisting on student ownership of their own learning, of tolerating the resistance and the inevitable messiness and time demands that such stances bring with them. He knew then that efficiency is a dead end in education as it is in nature. Nature values diversity and resilience, not efficiency, and we should follow this call. We do well to remember this.

4. Education is political

Education happens within a unique socio-political context. A useful framework for evaluating these contexts is the expansive-restrictive workplace learning environment continuum which was initially developed from studies of a range of commercial and industrial workplaces but has been applied to schools and other formal educational environments (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005):

<<<EXPANSIVE	RESTRICTIVE>>>
Close collaborative working	Isolated, individualist working
Colleagues mutually supportive in enhancing teacher learning	Colleagues obstruct or do not support each other's learning
An explicit focus on teacher learning, as a dimension of normal working practices	No explicit focus on teacher learning, except to meet crises or imposed initiatives
Supported opportunities for personal development that goes beyond school or government priorities	Teacher learning mainly involves strategic compliance with government or school agendas
Out of school educational opportunities including time to stand back, reflect and think differently	Few out of school educational opportunities, only narrow, short training programmes
Opportunities to integrate off the job learning into everyday practice	No opportunity to integrate off the job learning
Opportunities to participate in more than one working group	Work restricted to home departmental teams within one school
Opportunity to extend professional identity through boundary crossing into other departments, school activities, schools and beyond.	Opportunities for boundary crossing only come with a job change.
Support for local variation in ways of working and learning for teachers and work groups.	Standardised approaches to teacher learning are prescribed and imposed.
Teachers use a wide range of learning opportunities	Teachers use narrow range of learning approaches

Figure 1 The expansive-restrictive workplace learning environment continuum for teachers (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005)

Clive's work aligns itself with the 'hard left' of this continuum. Understanding these contexts can be helped by assuming a politico-philosophical perspective, as Gert Biesta does. Biesta argues that 'education needs to have an orientation toward the freedom and independence of those being educated' (2010: 2). He proposes a mix of three broad purposes for education:

- qualification
- socialisation
- subjectification

By *qualification* he means knowledge and certification. By *socialisation* he includes preparation for family life, citizenship and employability in a developing and uncertain world. In arguing for *subjectification* as an essential third purpose of education Biesta (2010) offers a concept upon which schools and teachers may be able build their resistance to the accountability agenda and more positively drive forward their moral mission. Subjectification, as a purpose for education, means allowing children and young people the opportunity to develop as unique individuals and ‘singular beings’, to respond creatively to planned learning activities, and occasionally to surprise their teachers. This point is captured by Stenhouse (1975) in his classic text, by considering the ultimate aim for a teacher to be that the learner’s understanding will grow beyond the teacher’s knowledge. The age of measurement does not tend to encourage such open-ended learning and prefers predictable lessons beginning and ending with reference to tightly-defined intended learning objectives. Allowing for subjectification requires schools and teachers to take risks, perhaps to ‘dare’ to include at least one open-ended learning objective in each lesson, and to facilitate learning activities that are adventurous – meaning that the outcome is uncertain (Mortlock, 1987). In developing an education that allows subjectification, the mantra ‘no risk, no learning’ is a useful one. Biesta argues that teachers must be more than competent; they must be educationally *wise* and have the ‘ability to make situated judgements about what is educationally desirable’ (Biesta, 2013).

This links to the idea developed by Biesta that the complexity of teaching and the multiple paradigms and ways of knowing within the field make it necessary to trust teachers’ professional judgements and accept the ‘beautiful’ risk of education (Biesta, 2013). Clive’s papers anticipate Biesta’s call, arguing as they do for a profound trust in student judgments and the need to engage in ‘beautiful risk’. Beyond anticipation, I read Clive’s papers as a living manifestation of Biesta’s call and, perhaps betraying the post-70s zeitgeist of their genesis, they read as a remarkably radical version of contemporary educational progressivism – not just “daring to include at least one open-ended learning objective in each lesson” (how very daring!) – but creating the

curriculum in its entirety. The battle successfully to tackle notions around engagement and assent (Millar, 1989) remains a contemporary focus. Two of my own colleagues are currently wrestling with the inherent ethical and semantic issues, and are introducing a nuanced take on student “assent” – offering an alternative and arguably more realistic concept of “willingly enough” (Dawson & Elton-Chalcraft, in preparation).

Since the strenuous task of (re)constructing an authentic curriculum is the substantive subject of all these papers, it strikes me as richly ironic that a paper written by an avowed liberal strikes many of the chords struck in the demands of the “rhodesmustfall” campaign. As Bernstein taught us, education does not compensate for society – but it has a role to play. In reminding ourselves of the intensely political nature of education, we would all benefit from another look at Clive’s paper, *Critical reflection for educators of adults: getting a grip on the scripts for professional education* (Millar, 1991), and to maintain this stance of critical reflection. If only because this work speaks to our contemporary concerns, we would do well to survey the struggles of the past. Old and new orthodoxies wage battles still.

We do well to remember this.

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CHAPTER3

TEACHING STUDENT TEACHERS TO BECOME RESEARCHERS

Part 3 returns to the professional education of teachers, more specifically, Waldorf teachers at the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town (CCE). Clive was in deep retirement when he undertook to teach final-year students how to engage in classroom research – a new requirement for the award of their B Ed degree. The three papers that follow draw on ten years of such work at CCE, until his second retirement. They are extracts from his book, *A Practical Guide to Classroom Research* (2017).

Peter van Alphen and Beulah Reeler were colleagues at CCE and strongly supported Clive in developing the new student research programme. Peter reflects on “*why does research in real time matter?*” and Beulah on “*where to start: with theory or practice?*” Two former research students, Alexi Silverman and Leigh Moore, reflect on “*becoming a researcher*”.

Three papers by Clive Millar on the student research programme at the Centre for Creative Education

1. “Why research in ‘real time’ matters” (2015)
2. “Where to start: with theory or practice? (2016)
3. “Becoming a researcher” (2016)

“Why research in ‘real time’ matters” Clive Millar (2015)

Research on Steiner Education, Vol. 6, No.2

Introduction

This brief paper (which began as an internal discussion document) is an attempt to explore the implications – pedagogical and practical – of applying a “real time” principle to teaching students how to conduct empirical research and produce a dissertation as part of their undergraduate teacher education programme at the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town (CCE). A very brief account of the CCE student research programme is necessary to provide the context for this discussion.

The research programme at the Centre for Creative Education

The main task of Centre for Creative Education is to qualify teachers to teach in Waldorf and main-stream schools through a Bachelor of Education degree course. As part of this course, students are required to submit a formal dissertation on some aspect of primary school education. Over recent years CCE has developed an integrated research programme that has both raised the quality of research and enabled students to meet tight deadlines for submission of research reports. The features of this programme are as follows.

- The first quarter of the final year is devoted entirely to research. Final research reports are to be submitted before the start of the second quarter.
- All students are required to explore a common research theme. This theme changes every year.
- Within this theme, students pursue individual research questions.
- Theory and practice are completely integrated: instruction in research method both guides and accompanies the research process.

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- Supervision takes the form of detailed formative assessment of students' work, submitted, critiqued and revised through rapid email communication.
 - Research reports are submitted chapter by chapter, with tight deadlines. Each chapter builds on the previous one and acknowledges and addresses the possible limitations of the previous one. Cosmetic rewriting is discouraged; explicit critical reflection and change of mind encouraged.
 - Research is "qualitative" not "quantitative". It relies on interpretation of evidence and not on measurement and is appropriate for small-scale exploratory investigations in the real-life situation of the classroom.
 - The programme takes students through three stages of work:
 - Design (including definition of the research question, a literature review and appropriate methodology),
 - Implementation (including immersion in a school or classroom situation for systematic data collection over a two-week period, and
 - Analysis (interpreting research data in a systematic, reflective and open-minded way).

The 'real time' debate

It was the critique of student dissertations by an external examiner that forced me to analyse just what it is that convinces me of the importance of "real time" in student learning (and possibly in all learning). This principle had so quietly and incrementally crept into our research practice at CCE over the last eight years that it had achieved taken-for-granted status. The value of the examiner's query was that came as a challenge to the 'obvious'.

The key paragraph in the examiner's report I need to address is the following:

Most of the reports pointed to a difficulty that students experienced in defining where – in terms of time – they were standing when writing the

report. In many cases, their writing reflected a mixture of three standpoints in time – before, during and after the research. It would be helpful if they could be encouraged to write from a more consistent standpoint of after the research had been completed.

The examiner's position here is the one she is accustomed to, the one that university staff and students assume to be "normal" and customary. This is the position I worked from when I began teaching and supervising student research at CCE some eight years ago. At that time the students took an introductory course in research method, designed a research project that interested them, carried out the research and gathered their data, and then, finally, wrote – with hindsight - their research reports. It was the problems that emerged from this conventional approach that over time led to the "real time" innovation.

Problems with the conventional approach

The most obvious problem of this approach was that many students were unable to submit their research reports on time. This caused considerable stress, eroded other aspects of the final-year curriculum, made excessive demands on staff time, caused financial problems, and frequently delayed graduation of even able students, sometimes by years. This problem was a particularly severe one for students with poor formal education.

A further obvious problem was that students were not, in fact, able to apply or transfer what they had learnt in their research course to their actual research practice. The gap – chronologically and conceptually – was too big. They had been exposed to research method in modular, theoretical form; they did not know what its principles meant in terms of practice. These would have to be rediscovered (with difficulty) within the praxis of their own research project. And this lay in the future.

The third obvious problem was that the range of individual and idiosyncratic research topics that students chose to investigate meant that their topics were framed by common sense assumptions, were under-theorised and were difficult to supervise.

Curriculum strategies

We discovered that the way forward lay in a common research theme, the concentration of research work within a tight time-frame, a rigorous support structure and, most crucial of all, a way of integrating theory and practice. *“Real time” became the key mechanism of integration.* In practical terms these innovations worked in the following ways.

The integration of the introductory research module and school-based research

A two-week research module at the start of the final year flowed directly into school-based research. The task of this module was to enable students to write the first chapter of their research reports and submit this (in draft form) within a week after the module ended. The second chapter was due three weeks later, and the final chapter two weeks after this. Further research classes were scheduled to support this process. This procedure enabled the research course to be relevant (in “real time”) to each of the three stages students were going through in their research process – planning and design, data collection and organisation, and analysis and discussion. This form of concentration in time and integration of what had been separate components was the key innovation.

The “research team” approach

The class became, in fact, a research team, and experienced an apprenticeship in research method. This apprenticeship involved engagement with a demanding academic text, defining a research question, devising a research plan, and, through all this, grasping what being a researcher entailed. A firm supporting structure was provided by pre-selected texts, sequential tasks and a simple research report format.

As work progressed students developed individual approaches to the common task, introduced new readings and first person plural became first person singular.

Research as a process of writing: communication, critique and revision by email

Students were required to become writers from the first moment of the research module. The pressure to write was relentless. To begin with, what was written was examined, critiqued and improved in class. Then, after two weeks, all writing was submitted and critiqued by email with a 24 hour turn-around time. Research teacher became research supervisor. Though there were strict deadlines for each draft chapter students could send small sections for comment whenever they wished to. All supervision was by email. There were no meetings. All conversation was both in writing and about writing.

The principle of writing each chapter in “real time” sequence

Research reports were submitted chapter by chapter, and these chapters were regarded as final drafts. Chapter 1 was a genuine research plan, written before immersion in the research site. Chapter 2 reported on the actual implementation of this research plan. And Chapter 3 reflected on the significance of the data reported on in Chapter 2. Each chapter was enabled by, and built on, the previous one. And each acknowledged and addressed the limitations of the previous one. Cosmetic rewriting and “false coherence” were discouraged; explicit critical reflection and justified change of mind encouraged.

So research reports were written from three time perspectives in answer to three questions: what do I intend to do; what I have I discovered; and what does this mean? I do not think students were confused by these different positions (as the examiner suggested). I think they experienced them as three consecutive and logical steps towards task completion.

Why does the principle of “real time” matter?

The “real time” principle is a pedagogic principle. It matters for motivation, for reflexivity and for task completion. All are interrelated.

Motivation

In motivational terms, “real time” meant “real task”, not preparation for some future task. Students were engaged as a group and individually with a series of real tasks that were achievable by all within a relatively short time. Every small piece of writing submitted was a stage in the completion of the task. Piece by chronological piece, and day by day, each student could see the text of her actual research report becoming a reality. This sense that “I am writing my actual research report now” was highly motivating: it generated both a strong sense of ownership of the task and a growing sense of confidence in its completion. *This was not preliminary work*: the final report (barring a careful edit) was taking shape in the present tense.

The “real time” equals “real task” principle was crucial, I think, in the degree of personal investment visible in the students’ work. The external examiner put it like this:

I think the biggest strength of these research projects was the deep personal investment and interest of the students in their research questions; this clearly motivated them and enhanced the quality of the research. This personal investment and motivation furthermore translated into a style of writing that allowed them to express a strong sense of their own ‘voice’.

This sense of the authenticity of the research task and of personal engagement in the research journey seems particularly important at a time when some student research work in Education at South African universities has been reported to be “dummy research”, going through the motions of research procedure without ownership of and understanding of the research task.

Reflexivity

The customary way of writing a research report is to revise earlier drafts so that these are consistent with the final draft. A position of hind-sight, taken at the end of the entire research process, determines which parts of earlier drafts will be retained, modified or omitted. The aim is to produce a coherent, consistent and smooth account of research process and findings: a persuasive text. In producing such a final text, error, shift of focus, loss of faith in a research question – indeed critical reflection on an unfolding intellectual process – may be regarded as interference or irrelevance and omitted or concealed.

The examiner made the following comment about the students' capacity for critical reflection:

Almost all also made very thoughtful critical reflections on their research journeys, and on themselves as researchers; this development of a capacity for 'meta-reflection' is particularly valuable to them as researchers.

In my view, it is the requirement to write in "real time" that licensed and produced such "meta-reflection". Such reflection became the necessary substitute for erasure. Inconsistencies needed to be explained rather than concealed. Coherence lay in explicit justification and explanation: an honest text, aware of (and even enjoying) its uneven process of production.

Task completion

Task completion is the most concrete consequence of writing in "real time". With very rare exceptions, students completed and submitted their entire research reports within four months. Before the concentration of research in the first quarter of the final year and before the "real time" stipulation, students had needed at least a year, and some several years, to complete and submit their reports.

A major cause of this was that the daunting retrospective task of final report writing was continually deferred. The report was never quite good enough, never quite finished and never quite coherent enough. And other priorities inevitably intervened.

In conclusion

In concluding this brief case study, I would like to express my appreciation to the examiner who questioned my “real time” pedagogic fundamentalism and for choosing to see examiners’ reports as opportunities for reflection and dialogue. It has been a long time since last I was required to explore dearly held pedagogic assumptions, and I have enjoyed the process.

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“Where to start: with theory or practice? Clive Millar (2016)

Chapter 3 in A Practical Guide to Classroom Research

There is nothing so practical as a good theory (Kurt Lewin)

Introduction

We can start classroom research with either a theoretical interest or a practical problem. There are advantages and disadvantages to both. I have chosen to argue for starting with theory. More precisely, I have argued for finding a theoretical way into a practical problem. I think the advantages of doing this outweigh the disadvantages. To illustrate my argument, I shall draw on actual examples of student research that begin with a theoretical idea and move from there into practice.

The argument follows the following sequence of topics:

- what it means to start with “theory”;
- analysing examples of working from theory to practice;
- principles and guidelines.

How do you start with theory?

I do not mean by “theory” mastery of an established discipline. I am not assuming you have necessarily acquired an adequate grasp of an established intellectual tradition, such as psychology or anthropology or linguistics. My assumption, rather, is that your primary concern is with the practice of becoming an effective classroom teacher. But my second assumption is that prioritising practice does not preclude an interest in theoretical ideas, if these are mediated appropriately.

The way into theory in this limited sense is through some form of *focus*. Focus could be achieved by a theme, an interest or, possibly, the beginnings of a research question. The student research group I wish to discuss began with a common theme, one they

soon developed into a useful opening question. Their theme – emerging from a major interest in their professional teacher education programme - was *narrative or storytelling*. They were interested in how storytelling penetrated into teaching, learning and classroom life. Because they were training to become Waldorf teachers they were particularly interested in Waldorf classrooms, with their rich storytelling tradition. Indeed, this group of student researchers had extensive experience of stories and storytelling.

Their research theme was not, however, about the practical skills of telling stories (important as these are) but about something more general and pervasive: how the narrative form seeped into and possibly structured classroom interaction. This was primarily a theoretical concern – and for the more practically minded students an elusive one to begin with. Their first step was to *read*, intensively. They were exposed to three stimulating and accessible writers on the nature, power and pervasiveness of the narrative form – Jerome Bruner, Jonathan Gottschall and Kieran Egan. Their influence is apparent in the examples that follow. The crucial thing was that these readings introduced them to exciting theoretical concepts that could be used as lenses through which they could devise their research questions and explore their classrooms. But not all students found it easy to use theory in this way.

Examples of working from theory to practice

The following are brief extracts from seven student-researchers' reports on their early attempts to sharpen the focus of their investigation and define their research question. The first four emerging questions make use of some idea or concept discovered in their preliminary reading; the final three do not.

Example 1: Kathy's emerging research question

Phrased differently, my research question then became: "How is narrative methodology used to connect the known and the unknown in a Waldorf main

lesson?" In the classroom the characters can be seen as the children and the teacher; the predicament and the solution will be developed and then solved by those in the classroom. The predicament and the solution will be moulded by the teacher as she will be introducing the content. The teacher will bring to the classroom the information that she has selected to present to the children and she will choose the method to convey this new information. The teacher may choose to take a more back-seat approach, where the children question and discover the content themselves and form their own understanding, or she may prefer to be the driver, feeding children the information. With all of this in mind I have refined my research question in the following way: "How are narrative predicaments created by the teacher and how do the children engage with them?"

Kathy has found her sharp theoretical focus and her research question in what Gottschall sees as the "universal grammar" of narrative: "Story = Character + Predicament + Attempted Extrication" (Gottschall, 2013). She has discovered an exciting idea: that "predicament" (some problem that seems impossible to solve) may be as essential for learning and teaching as it is for storytelling. And it is this idea that provides her work with its initial focus, curiosity and intellectual energy.

Example 2: Amy's emerging research question

Clearly I need to find a sharper focus and now I think that my key question will be: "How does the teacher transform curriculum content into "pedagogical knowledge"?" I want to know how the teacher takes curriculum content and transforms this content in such a way that it becomes meaningful and suitable for the children.

Amy's theoretical discovery is Gudmundsdottir's concept of "pedagogical knowledge" (Gudmundsdottir, 1995). She wants to understand the rules and procedures whereby formal course descriptions are brought to pedagogic life in the classroom. Her interesting new idea is that every teacher is involved daily – and minute by minute - in an act of "translation". She has to translate the abstract ideas and inert information of course requirements into "pedagogical knowledge" – a form of mediated knowledge that engages hearts and minds in her classroom. She wants to understand the principles involved in this transformation process. Again, this is a highly theoretical question but one that generates real curiosity about daily classroom practice.

Example 3: Christopher's emerging research question

Whilst revisiting Egan's work I was particularly interested in the use of "binary opposites" and "affective meaning" as criteria for creating and constructing an effective lesson in which the child can build meaning, and understand the new concepts being brought forward by the teacher. Suddenly my research report began to change shape and direction. It evolved as I suspected it might, and I spent far more time reading Egan's book, "Teaching as Story Telling". This further reading led me to my question: 'How do binary opposites facilitate affective meaning and conceptual understanding in this classroom?'

Christopher has found Kieran Egan's argument intriguing: that the resolution of value conflicts in the form of what he calls "binary opposites" is fundamental both to the story form and to moral, emotional and intellectual engagement in the school curriculum (Egan, 1986). He wants to spend his time in the classroom exploring how teacher and pupils engage with the value choices implicit in a small part of their social studies curriculum.

Example 4: Fay's emerging research question

My interest spiked when Egan suggested that we should not work from the 'known to the unknown' but rather, when content is introduced through the narrative or the story we constantly swing between the 'known and the unknown'. This "pendulum effect" cannot be physically seen, because it is a swinging process that takes place within our imagination while we listen to story. Egan writes about the prior knowledge of the child, which he refers to as being "abstract concepts" that the child already has when entering the schooling system. His theory is that children have the ability to know and understand new tasks and ideas by drawing intuitively on these 'known' abstract concepts.

The above theory lead me to my root question: How does the unknown draw out the known within the child? I look at my question as having endless research possibilities. But the fact that my root question is largely theoretical makes my research journey practically impossible to complete. On the other hand, my research question was so alive to me that I could not bring myself to change my question. At this point, it was vital that I find some way in which to investigate my theory practically. It was not until I had grappled with my probable interview categories that I discovered a possible way in which to look practically at my question. I decided that I would focus on lesson content, story and methodology.

Though Fay's question, like Christopher's, derives from Egan's work on storytelling in education - in particular his sense of the power of intuitively understood "abstract concepts" as pre-conditions for learning, she will in due course she will find Vygotsky useful too. Fay is aware that though her theoretical question has become "alive" for her, it will not be an easy one to pursue in practical terms in the real classroom world. We shall follow her attempt to do this in the following chapter.

Example 5: Mary's emerging research question

Imagination is clearly something of fundamental importance in a story. I am not only concerned with imagination but how it is utilized in story to create meaning. In my observations I will tentatively look at how the teacher utilizes imagination in the story form as a link between content and meaning-making. I will observe to find if imagination is the link or are there other aspects of the 'story form' that are creating a link or are helping the imagination in this process of meaning-making. During my data collection and observations in the classroom, I will pay special attention to how the teacher structures the story around his or her interpretation of the content in an imaginative way.

The focus of my research report, therefore, will be to explore the teacher's imaginative use of the story form to create new understandings. The research question is "How does the teacher use the story form in an imaginative way to create meaning and understanding within the child?"

Clearly, common sense language can generate interesting questions without the help of "theory". What Mary wishes to explore is a key relationship: between story and new understandings, via imagination. Her key concepts – *story*, *understanding* and *imagination* -are ones she uses every day. But this is a good question because it focuses on trying to understand an assumed relationship: that somehow the use of story acts as a powerful mediator of new understandings. There is a lurking hypothesis here to be tested.

Example 6: Simon's emerging research question

"How does the Story Form work in this Waldorf classroom?" Once we had arrived at this question and after doing preliminary reading, a few aspects of this question started to stand out for me and led me to want to know more. My interest was sparked when thinking about how imagination could be used

or awakened in the classroom using the story form. “This led me to question how the teacher could engage the children’s imagination through story form and how the teacher uses story form in a lesson that is mainly theoretical, like mathematics, to help the children understand new concepts.”

Another key aspect stood out for me. When thinking about story form and how it could be used in a classroom I wondered about the children, how the story form would impact them and their responses. Would the story form awaken their imagination and would the story form evoke any emotions? I am interested in seeing whether children can be shaped by story and the impact that story has on them. When considering all of this, a sub-topic started to emerge and brought everything that I am interested in together. The sub-topic that I will be working with is: “Exploring children’s imaginative engagement with the “story form” in a Waldorf School”.

Simon has not found a clear and useful theoretical concept to focus his research question. Instead he draws on his classroom experience and common sense language to shape his question: exploring the relationship between storytelling, imagination and understanding. These are important concerns for him professionally and he may well sharpen the focus of his question as his research develops. At present, however, the main terms of his question are dauntingly vague: “storytelling”, “imagination” and “understanding”. In spite of this, he adds on a second question, which he calls a “sub-topic”. This is concerned with exploring the children’s engagement with the story form. Given the vast scope of his inquiry he will find it difficult to know what to look for in his classroom research site.

Example 7: Ann’s emerging research question

For this research report I am taking the framework, story form, and placing it into the classroom to see what fits into which characteristic. Who are the

characters? What roles are they playing in this story? What is their problem? What journey are they going on? Where are they starting and where are they going to end? I want to understand the different ways the teacher brings across the content in order for children with different learning difficulties and learning styles to understand. Does she change the way she explains the content so that different children can understand? I also want to look into the way the teacher keeps the children engaged in the content. Does she keep them immersed in what she is teaching by using having something to solve or investigate? Or do the children feel the need to investigate further? I am also interested in the way different children interpret what they are being taught. Is there any evidence that some children understand or have better abstract concepts about the content? Does it show in their work?

Ann's attempt is similar to Simon's, in that she makes no use of theoretical concepts discovered in her reading. All her thoughts about a possible research question flow from her common sense understanding of teaching and learning. What is distinctive about Ann's statement, though, is that she has not yet defined a research question. Instead, she has composed a long list of possible questions. All these questions are interesting ones but she has found no way of solving the problems of focus or selection. She is not in a position to begin her research.

Beginning with theory: some principles and guidelines

Focus

It is interesting but not surprising that the research questions that are most sharply focussed are the ones shaped by a theoretical concept that is fresh to the researcher: *narrative predicament, pedagogical knowledge, binary opposites*. What these concepts have done is provide powerful "sensitising concepts", conceptual lenses through which to view and explore the situation under study (Blumer, 1954).

Intellectual energy

Nor is it surprising that the discovery of an interesting theoretical focus should generate intellectual energy. Suddenly, a way into a baffling and complex social situation has become available. You are no longer restricted to your own common-sense world. And you are not embarked on a lonely, self-referential journey. You are part of a bigger project.

Intellectual frameworks

Starting with theory provides an intellectual framework for the investigation that is recognisable and accessible to a wide academic readership. Research is being conducted within some form of tradition; it is not idiosyncratic. In the cases discussed above, all researchers are clearly working within the broad framework of “narrative theory”. Nonetheless, though students have drawn for the most part on the same key texts, they have done so in entirely different ways. They have found different sensitising concepts and have devised different research questions.

Improving practice

Theoretical questions don’t preclude practical outcomes. All of the above examples of theoretical questions have practical implications for learning and teaching; and all their writers are concerned with improving their own professional practice. Furthermore, a theoretical starting point by no means displaces, or undervalues, practical, common-sense reasoning. What it does is introduce a fresh stance from which to conduct an inquiry that will inevitably draw on an intuitively understood and accepted body of professional knowledge.

Having a hunch

Perhaps the key advantage of a theory based question is that it rests on some kind of hunch, some hypothesis, however tentative. This is what distinguishes it from what I have called a “common-sense” question, one that introduces no fresh terms into everyday language that might disturb taken for granted expectations. It is the

introduction of a fresh perspective on common-sense practice that provides the provocation that sets the intellectual inquiry in motion.

How long?

How long does it take to move from a (general) research theme to a (specific) research question? In the case of the examples above, it took about two months between the first reading of what became key theoretical texts and the ownership of an individual research question.

Summary of key points

- Identify your theme and establish a focus.
- Read the work of key writers to find a theoretical way into a practical problem.
- Starting with theory provides a recognisable intellectual framework for your investigation.
- You will gradually be able to move from a general research theme to a specific research question.



“Becoming a researcher” Clive Millar (2016)

Chapter 1 in A Practical Guide to Classroom Research

“How do I know what I think until I see what I say?” E.M. Forster

Beginning with imagination

A research project begins in the imagination - imagining what research is, what a research report looks like and what it means to be a researcher. And students do not easily imagine themselves as researchers. Of all academic tasks research is the most intimidating. It is often surrounded in mystique and seen as demanding and difficult. Can I do this? Will I succeed in writing a good research report? These are common questions in the first stages of the research process. A week into their introductory course in research methods (a course that required students to begin writing their research plans from the first morning) I asked one of my classes to give a brief answer (anonymously) to the following question: *What have you learnt about yourself during the past few days?*

Their answers reflect considerable anxiety. Imagining oneself as a researcher is no easy task.

I struggle to move forward (or write) when I am uncertain. I worry about failing the task.

That I lack concentration when I get too stressed and over think or analyse too in depth.

I panic far too easily and worry when there is actually no need for worry because we are all in the same boat. Taking deep breaths helps! There is help if I need it but I hardly ever ask for it.

I have learnt that I am not nearly as willing to make mistakes and put myself (intellectually) out there as I thought I was.

I have learned that I am quite concerned with appearing to be intelligent. I have felt a lot of pressure but now that I have recognised this I feel more relaxed and am better able to just be me without keeping up appearances.

The big fear I have about writing a research report is that I feel very uncertain and that when I am criticised it makes me lose confidence and I feel more uncertain than before. I cannot imagine submitting the final document.

At the same time, however, positive strategies and attitudes are taking shape – ways of thinking about doing research and being a researcher. Students are talking themselves into the role of researcher; imagining what this may require of them. The process of becoming a researcher has begun. Students are saying to themselves, in very different ways, “I can do this”.

I’ve learned that I can go beyond my limits and take on something that is totally foreign to me, if I put thought and much effort in to it.

I have learned that this work requires of me a ‘push’ of intellectual and physical work within a specified time.

I have learned that I have a strong sense of perseverance. I have realised I can trust the theory of “it’ll come” and “sleep on it”.

I have learned that I enjoy taking in people’s thoughts and ideas. Pieces of a puzzle coming together that may or may not ever be finished.

I have discovered that I am deeply passionate about writing and philosophising – it energises and inspires me in ways I never dreamed possible. I realise too – I tend to struggle following an idea or train of thought to its conclusion – am prone to confusion and emotional conflict and anxiety. But that’s okay.

I need to develop and ‘exercise’ my own imagination in order to be the teacher/researcher/writer I want to be. That I am more interested (for now) in researching teaching, than actually teaching... or maybe that I am uncomfortable with the often dissonant space between theory and practice.

These students are taking key steps in imagining themselves as researchers; they are reflecting on their personal experience of beginning to think like researchers and imagining, too, what they might need to do in order to succeed in the task. They are also drawing some comfort from being part of a group of fellow travellers.

Different conceptions of research

False stereotypes of research

One of the problems faced by novice researchers is that they may have to unlearn intuitive and common-sense understandings of what research is. The first misleading idea is that research is about *collecting information*. Collecting information is part of research but not the central part. The second is that a research report is a kind of *essay*. Students are accustomed to essay and collection modes of writing and might easily assume that research involves simply the collection of information and its presentation in essay form. What both these stereotypes miss is the key feature of research: that it is a process of systematic inquiry directed by a question that has no simple answer. It is this conception of research – *as a slowly developing investigation driven by a question that will lead to theoretical answers with practical implications* – that the novice researcher has to imagine and learn.

Quantitative and qualitative research traditions

Established approaches to research fall into two major traditions: quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative research rests on the measurement of variables and the search for relationships among variables using statistical procedures. It is the classic procedure of mainstream science. Its use is pervasive: in opinion polls, in drug trials, in comparing crop yields, in all the physical sciences. It includes large scale surveys of various kinds as well as controlled experiments. The data generated reveals correlations between variables; and may in some cases clarify cause and effect. Findings are usually generalisable.

Qualitative research, by contrast, is confined largely to the social sciences. It makes no attempt to define and quantify the factors or variables to be examined. Its approach is exploratory: it attempts to understand what is happening in natural situations, drawing on participants' intuitive understandings. Its main methods are observation and interview. The findings of qualitative research are not generalisable to other situations.

This does not mean that they cannot provide insight into other situations. The following comparative table produced by Xavier University Library puts the distinctions between these two traditions in clear and useful terms.

Criteria	Qualitative research	Quantitative research
Purpose	To understand & interpret social interactions.	To test hypotheses, look at cause & effect, & make predictions.
Group studied	Smaller & not randomly selected.	Larger & randomly selected.
Variables	Study of the whole, not variables.	Specific variables studied
Type of data collected	Words, images, or objects.	Numbers and statistics.
Form of data collected	Qualitative data such as open-ended responses, interviews, participant observations, field notes, & reflections.	Quantitative data based on precise measurements using structured & validated data-collection instruments.
Type of data analysis	Identify patterns, features, themes.	Identify statistical relationships.
Objectivity and subjectivity	Subjectivity is expected.	Objectivity is critical.
Role of researcher	Researcher & their biases may be known to participants in the study, & participant characteristics may be known to the researcher.	Researcher & their biases are not known to participants in the study, & participant characteristics are deliberately hidden from the researcher (double blind studies).
Results	Particular or specialized findings that is less generalizable.	Generalizable findings that can be applied to other populations.
Scientific method	Exploratory or bottom-up: the researcher generates a new hypothesis and theory from the data collected.	Confirmatory or top-down: the researcher tests the hypothesis and theory with the data.
View of human behaviour	Dynamic, situational, social, & personal.	Regular & predictable.
Most common research objectives	Explore, discover, & construct.	Describe, explain, & predict.
Focus	Wide-angle lens; examines the breadth & depth of phenomena.	Narrow-angle lens; tests specific hypotheses.
Nature of observation	Study behaviour in a natural environment.	Study behaviour under controlled conditions; isolate causal effects.
Nature of reality	Multiple realities; subjective.	Single reality; objective.
Final report	Narrative report with contextual description & direct quotations from research participants.	Statistical report with correlations, comparisons of means, & statistical significance of findings.

Table 1.1 Qualitative versus quantitative research: a comparative table

The Library acknowledges that content in the above table was taken from the following sources: Johnson, B., & Christensen, L. (2008). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (p. 34). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications; Lichtman, M. (2006). *Qualitative research in education: A user's guide* (pp. 7-8). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Qualitative classroom research

Why is qualitative research the appropriate approach for classroom research – for exploring social interaction in classrooms? There are several reasons for this.

The nature of classrooms

The first is to do with the nature of classrooms. Primary school classrooms, for example, have a lot in common but each is, at the same time, unique. Each is a small but complex social world, requiring constant interpretation and challenging the teacher's understanding. Teachers and children are active creators and negotiators of what goes on in their classrooms. What things mean to them is of primary importance. The key question in qualitative research "What is happening here?" is a question that needs to be asked again and again in the daily life of classrooms. Furthermore, there are ethical reasons for viewing the classroom as a natural situation to be understood rather than a site for an experiment or the measurement of variables. Children and teachers are actors whose motives and meanings have to be respected, engaged with and understood through language and observation rather than measured within predetermined categories.

The purpose of classroom research

The second is to do with the purpose and context of classroom research. Its purpose is to deepen understanding of some aspect of learning and teaching; its hope is that such understanding will inform improved practice. The main beneficiary of such research will be the researcher herself, whether she is the teacher of the class being studied or possibly intends to become a teacher. Classroom research is usually practitioner research. It implies a deepened professionalism for the teacher: a commitment to researching one's own practice.

The teacher as researcher

A key characteristic of what has been seen as a deepened form of professionalism is the capacity and commitment to reflect on one's own practice. The most famous expression of this idea was the term "reflective practitioner", the focus of Donald

Schön's influential book, *The Reflective Practitioner; how professionals think in action* (Schön, 1983). He saw critical self-reflection as a defining characteristic of a practitioner, in any professional field, committed to developing his craft by learning from experience. The phrase "teacher-researcher" was used by Lawrence Stenhouse in his classic argument that classroom teaching should be seen as research based practice (Stenhouse, 1975). He saw systematic reflection by teachers as the crucial means of professional development and of creative innovation in classrooms. Much of Donald McIntyre's later work, building on this tradition, was concerned with the systematic, collaborative development of "professional craft knowledge" by teachers through study and reflection on day to day practice. See his *Learning Teaching from Teachers* (McIntyre and Hagger, 2006).

Classroom research in teacher education

The idea of developing "reflective practitioners" – teachers who think about what they do and why they do it - lies behind the decision to introduce research components into teacher education programmes. It is not sufficient to induct student teachers into "good practice"; they need to learn to critique good practice, to think on their feet in unpredictable situations and to grow professionally through reflection on practice. The important thing is that a qualitative approach begins with participants' intuitive understandings of the situations they find themselves in. It does not displace these common-sense understandings with "better", more objective or scientific ones. It respects where teachers are and gives them the skills and security to examine, critique and build on their early taken-for-granted assumptions.

Finding a researcher voice: "My researcher voice came along silently"

Students are often resistant to committing themselves to thought on paper. They prefer to talk than to write. In the research course for student teachers I draw on in writing this book, students were expected to become writers from the first morning. The pressure to write was relentless. To begin with, what was written was examined, critiqued and improved in class. Then, after two weeks, all writing was submitted to

their research supervisor and critiqued by email with a 24 hour turn-around time. There were no meetings. All conversation was in writing and about writing.

After three weeks of work, when their drafts of Chapter 1 of the research report had been submitted, I sent students the following invitation:

Finding your voice as a researcher

Over the past three weeks you have done an amazing thing: you have learned to become a researcher. Okay, some of you were already close, but others were light-years away. Some found it mysteriously easy; others incredibly difficult. But you all, in one way or another, have found, or are finding, your voice as a researcher. And some of you have had to learn a new writing style too: formal, academic English. You have made remarkable progress. And I don't really understand how it all happened.

So a new research question is taking shape in my mind (or rather the very oldest and best qualitative research question is taking shape): What is happening here? What has been happening here? How on earth do we find our voices as researchers? And learn to write in an academic way? You are the only persons able to answer these questions. Will you try?

The three students quoted below had no previous experience of the conventions of formal academic writing.

My researcher voice come along silently without me even realising this was happening. I did not give the 'researcher voice' much thought as I was (still am) focusing on my writing and writing style. I could only follow and notice my researcher voice after I completed chapter one but not during.

Working through previous fourth year students' research reports gives us a feel for what is expected and the manner in which to write a research report. Reading through multiple students' research reports is a good way to begin finding your own style of writing. Finding a style that you are comfortable with and a style that suits your research is important.

I found that the best solution to transform my informal writing to formal/academic writing was to get an editor or somebody who has a proper grasp on formal writing to help you. Sitting down with my sister in law has helped me majorly. She has been patient and guided me in a way that aided me to correct my own mistakes and to write in a more academic style.

In order to find your research voice, you need to research something you are interested in. You will not develop a researcher's voice if you research something that you don't want to. It will result in a boring and dull research report. Researching something that intrigues you hopefully should result in an attention-grabbing research. To develop a researcher's voice you need to write with feeling and passion and express your opinions and thoughts. This becomes easy if you research something that fascinates you.

This process has been overwhelming for me; I don't think it was just the level of difficulty but more so the limit of time we've been given. Maybe working under pressure forces one's ability to think quickly and get the 'job' done knowing there is a much needed deadline and the significance of completing our thesis.

Finding our voice certainly comes with experience and actively being involved in the process; reflecting, keeping up, asking questions when unsure during the process etc. It almost happens subliminally because we are, in a way, forced to become a researcher and along the way we start thinking like one and reflecting it into speech and writing.

These insights are both insightful and practical. Certainly, these students are learning to be researchers through writing like researchers. But they are also learning through serious reflection on the process they are going through. The engine for both processes is being faced with a real and immediate task: writing their research plans – the first chapter of their research report - and having three weeks in which to do this.

Writing yourself into the research process

If you have not written in research mode before, you will need to find your “researcher voice” – a style of writing that is both appropriate for the research task and authentic for you. For most students, this is probably something that “comes along silently”. It emerges as a by-product of ongoing work.

In this section, I argue that we “write ourselves into the research process”. We need to see ourselves as writers and make writing the cutting edge of our task. Such writing is a form of thinking aloud. It is a developing commentary on the research process. It is the earliest draft of the research report. And it needs to be a simple, honest record of ongoing thinking, something like the following:

“I think my research focus will be on some aspect of classroom discussion. I am interested in why some discussions “work” and are interesting and involving, and others do not. But I don’t yet have a clear enough focus.”

“My tentative research question is taking shape. But it remains far too vague. This is my question at present....”

We may write for an interested supervisor, for one or two supportive peers perhaps, but above all for ourselves. “How do I know what I think until I see what I say?”, as E. M. Forster put it. The enemy of research report writing is deferral, of not being quite ready to commit thoughts to paper. The rule is not to wait for perfection: rather to

describe in simple narrative your engagement with the research task, step by step. Slowly, in this way, a draft of the research report is crafted.

Who says research is an intellectual process?

It is certainly an intellectual process but it is as much an emotional experience. It draws on all one's confidence, courage, resilience, humour and doggedness. Research, like old age, is not for sissies. It requires stance and style – attitude – and such things are not under neat intellectual management.

This is why the institutional context of the researcher is so important - the availability of good, caring support structures, formally and informally. It is striking how many students, on the completion of their research reports, comment on the stress of the process and give priority to thanking those who have supported them in personal ways on their journey. Family members and fellow students are thanked for “understanding, patience and moral support”; supervisors for “encouragements and kind words in times of defeat and angst that always lifted the spirit”. It is emotional rather than intellectual support that is stressed.

Summary of key points

- Start to view yourself as a researcher.
- Research is not just collecting information.
- Research is systematic inquiry directed by a complex question.
- Research can be qualitative or quantitative.
- Qualitative research lends itself well to the classroom.
- Write yourself into a researcher mindset
- Research is both intellectual and emotional.



Perspectives on this work

Research in “real time” at the Centre for Creative Education by Peter van Alphen

Clive Millar spent ten years after his retirement building up a vibrant research programme at the Centre for Creative Education (CCE), for final-year undergraduate students to be introduced to, and put into practice, classroom-based research. Part of a B.Ed. programme for the development of professional primary school teachers, his evolving of a unique and effective research module has led to the international publication of six students' work, his book *A Practical Guide to Classroom Research*, and most recently this publication of his life-long innovative work in teacher and adult education, by those who have been his colleagues.

Over the ten years of association with CCE, Clive developed a new research pedagogy, which he termed a “real time” approach, one that solves the major difficulties experienced in the traditional method of theory first, followed by practical application and finally the writing of a retrospective report. The integration of these three sequential steps into one simultaneous, unified whole has proved itself to be a major step forward in ensuring a successful, economical in respect of time, and student empowering approach to educating first-time researchers. The principle of “real time” research asks for two structural requirements: from the institution, an uninterrupted two-and-a-half-month period in which final-year students do their entire research on a full-time basis. No other units of study or requirements are expected during this time, so that students' full concentration is focussed on the task in hand. What is required from the students is intense engagement with theory and practice, delivering tasks according to strict deadlines, and ensuring that everything is completed within the arranged time-frame.

Clive's “real time” approach is based on four important innovations:

1. The integration of an introductory course in research with practical school-based research

Students engage in three stages that flow from one to the other: first *planning and design*, then *data collection and organisation*, and finally *analysis and discussion*. In each of these stages, theory and practice are brought together from the start:

Planning and Design

Learning of research theory related to this first step requires the immediate engagement of students in writing the first chapter of their research report, i.e. theory and the practice of writing develop side-by-side. This includes writing a substantial preliminary reading section, inspired by an intense engagement with educational theory, to which students add from their own research efforts. This leads to forming a tentative research question. Next, through exploring research methodology, the students write up their individual research designs.

Data Collection and Organisation

The planning and design phase is now put to use in a live classroom situation, with its possible unexpected real-life events that may necessitate adaptation and re-framing of plans made. Here the new task that students face is careful, objective observation and its recording. Immediately after the two-week observation and interviewing of the host teacher, comes the task of writing a well-organised summary of the significant data collected.

Analysis and Discussion

Here again, the research-teacher provides a seminar on the most challenging part of the research process, that of interpreting the data collected through analysing, discussing and possibly re-theorising or extending understandings described in the preliminary reading section. This major shift in thinking often needs the careful guidance of a supervisor, who will have guided the student's entire research process from the beginning.

2. The ‘research team’ approach

By selecting an educational theme for the group of final-year students months before the research process begins, a great deal of background preparation – in terms of immersion into new and varied perspectives on the chosen theme – will already have taken place. This brings the student group together, able to work collaboratively on a broad theme, within which each student will create his or her own specific research question by engaging with what excites an individual interest. A passion for exploring a particular topic within the overall theme will have been ignited.

A research group has a great number of possibilities for interaction and mutual support, avoiding the syndrome of working in isolation. In practice, each research report is a highly individual account of the journey undertaken and the insights gleaned, providing a wide range of research within the overarching theme which the team has explored together.

3. Research as a process of writing

Writing in “real time”, as students learn the methodology, explore their individual topics within the research theme, carry out their real-life investigations and finally write up and interpret their data, provides a continual flow of writing as they grow into qualitative research. They *become* writers, *throughout the process* of research. Initially writing – often shared – is critiqued in the two-week introductory classes, followed by individual supervision in a continual flow of email communication. Small sections of writing are submitted, possibly leading to a revision of an entire chapter to improve cohesion and logical progression of thought.

Writing is both narrative and reflective. As students move through the research process, they are reporting on every step taken and its results, as well as reflecting on their own tentative interpretations, insights and improvisations as they engage with a complex, real-life situation. Reflection enables them to keep perspective on their

journeys, continually evaluating what is occurring, and provides the reader with insight into their discoveries and challenges as they engage with the unexpected.

4. Writing each chapter in “real time” sequence

The research report follows the process of the three-stage student investigation, written as chapters. In Chapter 1, theoretical perspectives on the general theme and the specific individual topic are followed by a report on the planning and the design of the investigation. Chapter 2 reports on how data collection proceeded and provides a summary of data collected. Finally, in Chapter 3, each student constructs his or her analysis of the data encountered, discussing and evaluating its meaning for teaching and educational practice in general. Clive’s innovation of three different stances in terms of time – his “real time” approach – therefore follows the three steps students need to master, each as a logical progression from “what do I intend to do” to “what have I discovered” to “what does this mean”. The important thing is that each of these stages needs to be completed before the next is begun – indeed to enable the next to be carried out. This is the crux of working in “real time”.

The importance of this innovation can be seen in building the confidence and sense of achievement in final-year students as they tackle a steeply challenging task, within a time-stream that enables them to keep to deadlines and complete their reports in the allocated time. This enables both genuine, in-depth work and personal insight into the value of classroom research.



When practice meets theory: a letter to Clive by Beulah Reeler

Introduction

I want to reflect on the third chapter of Clive's book, "Where to start: with theory or practice?". I shall use the following recent letter from Clive in order to focus my reflection.

Dear Beulah

I am glad to hear that you have chosen to reflect on Chapter 3 of my book, "Where to start: with theory or practice?" This is the chapter I most enjoyed writing.

As you know, I have not taught the research course for the last two years. But I still have a small group of fourth-year research students to supervise. Beginning their supervision a short while ago has reopened the whole "Where to start?" issue for me. Not one of these students had discovered a fresh theoretical concept for their research focus. Each question was defined in common-sense terms. I'm not sure whether the students were aware of this. So much for the usefulness of my Chapter 3, which I believe all of them had read.

In spite of two weeks last November on selected texts and two weeks in February on their research module, their common-sense positions have not budged. Clearly, I must have been doing something with my 2015 students (on whom I based my book) that my successor is not doing. These new students are able people. May this have something to do with my being a CCE outsider? I really don't know.

Interestingly, since I made email contact with them two weeks ago, two of my students have discovered new theoretical concepts that excite them. One has discovered Carol Dweck's concept of "growth mindset" and the other Polanyi's tantalising concept of "tacit knowledge".

So "What is happening here?" Were the readings chosen this year unsuitable "common-sense" ones themselves? Or did the students not really know what to look for in the texts? Is there perhaps a CCE culture at work that makes it difficult to see and use the conceptual diamonds that are lying around in texts? Or, is the real question one I need to address to myself: do I need to reconsider my own "theory to practice" hobbyhorse? After all, many CCE students have produced excellent research starting and ending with a deep intuitive grasp of Waldorf practice.

Perhaps you might ponder on these tricky questions as you engage with what I thought till now was my most interesting and useful chapter.

Blessings

Clive

Dear Clive,

As usual you have left me with much food for thought and some tricky questions to ponder and mull over in the next few days. Your questions take me back over the years we've shared crafting the CCE Research programme.

I remember the first time I worked with you. It was in 2009. As an inexperienced lecturer, I participated as an observer in the CCE part-time teacher training sessions which you co-facilitated with Mugsy. I joined the course as your apprentice so that I would be better equipped to supervise students the following year. You took the group of students through a 'mock' research process, where they had to work as your 'research assistants'. You created this as a game and they participated willingly. In a very gentle way, you took command of the space - there was no doubt about your role, your expertise, and your confidence in the subject matter. It was there that I was first struck by your magic. I have to say magic, because you managed to get (otherwise critical/passive/stressed/reluctant) students to play along with you and to trust the process.

It has taken me many years to define what this magic is.

It is not the magic of sorcery and enchantment, but rather the magic that fascinates and captivates and brings about shifts and changes. I know that you'll ask me to stay objective and be descriptive. So I'll try...

Crafting the CCE Research Programme

Over the four-year B.Ed training at the CCE, the research project in the 4th year is held as the pinnacle of the academic work. It starts to loom larger than life for the students when they come to the end of their 3rd year; they know that it is something that they must do, and that somehow they should overcome it. However, it seems like a huge hurdle and terribly frightening.

Here again I saw this magic in the shifts and changes that took place in the CCE research programme when, in 2012, you pioneered a radical innovation in the teaching, conducting and supervision of fourth-year full-time student research at CCE. Through careful construction of the course, you managed to get a group of students, who had up to this point produced prosaic writing, to deliver (in one term) sensitive and interesting research projects that were well written, concise and intellectually interesting.

Through your leadership and direction, the CCE

- allocated the entire first quarter to research so that the students could immerse themselves in a researcher role.
- integrated the research module with school-based research, enabling the research course to be relevant (in real time) to each of the three stages students were going through in their research process – planning and design, data collection and organisation, and analysis and discussion. This was an important innovation.
- used the “research team” approach again where the class became a research team and experienced an apprenticeship in research method. This apprenticeship involved engagement with a demanding academic text, finding a research theme, devising a research question, devising a research plan, and, through all this, grasping what being a researcher entailed.
- began with theory by studying an intellectually demanding theoretical paper that challenged dominant conceptions of teaching. Working with an academic paper provided the class with a conceptual framework, a common research theme and, eventually, a common research question.
- discovered the joys of the virtual classroom by communicating all writing and revisions via email. Strict deadlines and consistent and timely feedback encouraged the writing process. There were no meetings. All

conversation was in writing. [adapted from: A REVIEW OF FINAL YEAR RESEARCH AT CCE IN 2012 Clive Millar]

Finding the theme was always the beginning of the process. This was the exciting part, where, as lecturers, we would talk about what was living as questions within the group of students – what issue they were grappling with. Out of these discussions possible themes emerged. These were then discussed with the students and whatever they were experiencing was surfaced and possible questions started to emerge. Then began the hunt for suitable articles. This was an interesting and tricky process as these needed to be appropriate and stimulating for the specific group of students. We knew that the articles needed to inspire the students to think, ask questions and help to focus their writing. The next part was to get the students to develop the confidence to work with these articles. They needed to read them, grapple with the language and concepts and to open their minds to what could sharpen their writing. They needed a lens through which they could now look at their question.

Finding a fresh theoretical concept for their research focus

With this first focused group, we started with a paper by Wally Morrow. He was our unanimous choice. To both of us he represented the authentic academic. We admired his writing because it was honest, clear and direct and it was something that we felt would be accessible for the students. His article, *“What is the Teacher’s Work”* (1997), was used as the core text. The article’s main claim was that within all the expectations placed on teachers, there was *“a failure to recognise the distinction between the formal and the material elements of the concept of teaching.”*

The students were confused; they had never had to deal with such text before. After much discussion, guidance and finally coming to an understanding of the concepts, the following question emerged as a common group question: *How do teachers negotiate the tension between the formal task of teaching and their job expectations as educators?* The students became excited about their research. They had found a

question to which they did not know the answer - a question which they had chiselled out of Morrow's paper and broader class discussions. This was a breakthrough moment for them. And this breakthrough and shift was seen again and again, over the years with new groups of students.

How did you do this?

You awakened something within the students, an interest, a confidence, an intellectual surprise. And you did this by introducing them to theory that they could have access to. Theory through articles which (in your own words in conversations via email) were *'substantial..., containing exciting, accessible ideas that could be used to craft research questions that are theoretically based and avoid common-sense cliché.'*

When confronted with an article that was *'purely descriptive: an account of what (Waldorf) teachers think and believe,'* and where there was *'no research question to answer; no attempt at critique or analysis or argument'*, you would help students see it for what it was - an example of poor research – a confirmation of what was already known.

You avoided articles that were *'baffling, demoralising and inappropriate ... for young, practically minded researchers.'* Instead you chose articles which contained theory that allowed them to work with concepts, which would allow their questions to burst open and become clearer and focussed. This process brought with it an energy and the excitement of developing a research question, igniting an interest to investigate it, to take it further, to try to articulate what they had learnt in practice through the means of theory. It was at this point that they started to become the researchers.

When this interest was awakened within them and they started to see theory as a tool to bring clarity to their ideas and confirm their hunches, they were energised. It gave them new words, helped them to articulate what they had somehow sensed and felt and worked with almost intuitively. Through their preliminary readings they realised that there were others out in the world who had grappled with the same questions.

Reading these texts provided them with the words and conceptual structure to frame their own concepts, to construct their own questions and determine their specific focus. It gave them a lens through which they could understand and look at something that was so close to them that they could not see it clearly.

The strength of CCE

The Centre for Creative Education (CCE) offers students a journey is filled with many wonderful encounters. Through philosophical studies and personal development processes, students transform and grow and by the time they reach their 4th year, they are often unrecognisable. Through their pedagogical studies they explore ideas and frameworks on the purpose and function of being a teacher and are guided through different views and understandings on how children develop and learn. Subject studies extend their content knowledge and build their methodological skills, while classroom teaching practice, designing lesson plans and being exposed to a variety of teaching methods guide them through the daily activities in the class. As they work with stories, colour, form, drama and movement the storyteller and artist awakens within them. Through these practices they begin to experience and understand the real work of the teacher.

This work is the strength of the CCE. By exposing students to good and inspiring practice where they grow in confidence about themselves as teachers and by working in practical and concrete ways, they discover their will and inspiration to teach. This is hugely important in pre-service teacher education.

The missing ingredient

Throughout their training, students are encouraged to observe deeply and to be guided by the learnings from their observations. However, most students find it hard to connect what they observe to a theoretical concept and are unable to clearly articulate the questions that arise out of these observations. The training, which is so deeply

embedded in practice, struggles to provide the intellectual challenge which will enable them to find the words to grapple with their understanding - to find any fresh theoretical focus. This becomes a gap in their learning process. This gap - of providing the intellectual challenge, of helping students to look at and become aware of concepts, of becoming excited about a research idea, of finding opportunities to ask the right questions rather than finding the right answer - is one that becomes increasingly apparent as students prepare for their research projects. And it is into this gap that you have repeatedly stepped, often meeting fourth year students who can write stories, paint, draw, sing and teach, but who feel overwhelmed by theoretical texts and are daunted by the idea of becoming a researcher.

The key question

Why is it that the CCE can inspire students on such a broad level within practice, yet struggles to expose them to theoretical interrogation and the ability to recognise *‘conceptual diamonds that are lying around in texts’*?

It is not that the training is without theory or academic texts, or that students are not motivated and inspired. On the contrary - they are challenged and encouraged on many levels of philosophical, educational and personal development. However, the principles and texts that they encounter call upon tacit wisdom and acknowledgement rather than critical interaction and theoretical interrogation. Through the first three years the students are given an established practice to imbibe. They are disciples, learning a discipline. The practice is a given. This practice, which is often archetypal in its structure and content - “The Three-fold Human Being”, “The Four Levels of Existence”, “The Four Temperaments”, based on an Anthroposophical view of the development of the child - cannot be academically argued. These concepts are doctrinal ones, almost belief systems, and the students internalise them rather than theorise about them.

In the 4th year the students are ‘freed’ to find their own understanding of what has become their practice. They are asked to become *thinking practitioners*. Through the research project they are developing conscious practice for themselves. It is true that in the past, *‘many CCE students have produced excellent research (projects) starting and ending with a deep intuitive grasp of Waldorf practice’*, but often without the critical awareness, clarity and precision of language, theoretical breakthrough moments and an awakening of intellectual curiosity that theoretical impetus brings. Up to this point, students have worked deeply and creatively at becoming good teachers. However they have not been immersed enough in theoretical interrogation of practice. The culture of CCE, though deeply philosophical and richly archetypal, is embedded within a practical, common-sense understanding of learning and teaching.

Clive, what you do is introduce a secular critique. Though deeply respectful of Waldorf education you are an outsider, not a “believer” and so you are able to help them step outside of what they have learnt and imbibed - provoking a new curiosity, and an analysis of context and content that calls for questions to be asked in a different way.

What is it that you do to provoke curiosity, awaken new ideas and generate questions?

This is where the magic becomes real....

You prod and push and enliven the questioning process. You gently nudge students to look deeper, to see beyond the obvious:

Why are you wondering? These are good qualities. However, if you want to expand a little when you write the final draft of the report, then there is certainly space to do so. Did you understand my point about “signalling”, introductory sentences, etc.? Prof

A fresh and personally alive launching! But don’t overdo a metaphor, good as it is. Prof

You encourage them to read and read more and you demand that students become clear in their expressions, bold in their statements and stand by their own words. And then you affirm them, challenge their thinking, crack a joke and push them some more, but always showing a deep interest in what they are discovering, showing them a possible new path, encouraging them *to take the jump*.

I think this works. "Connective moment" is a great improvement. Stick to this.

Dear Researchers

Some of these are a bit too clever for me but there are brilliant examples here of verbal imagination. Enjoy them as light(?) relief over the weekend. (Are there imaginative classroom activities lurking here?). I'm receiving some excellent research questions. Please send yours in if you would like a brief comment before tomorrow morning. Prof'

You're very close. I think the process of "operationalising" will do the trick. But in the meantime, a modest shot below:

"How can one recognise a "breakthrough moment" in classroom learning and how can one begin to explain such moments?"

I've just read your text. Excellent beginning. A pleasure to engage with. You have certainly taken on a tricky task. Your strong point is your ability to define concepts in ways terse and clear enough to know what you are looking for – not an easy task, but you clearly enjoy handling words as tools. Fuller comments and some suggested edits in the text, attached. Prof

These comments are some examples of your email conversations (2013-2014) with students during supervision. This supervision process was crucial, a virtual classroom where a lot of the real learning happened. As I was copied into email conversations with students I witnessed much of the communication and aha moments.

Through these interactions, students start to realise that their questions are valid and that their quest has merit. And you do this by pointing them towards theoretical texts and concepts. You are not afraid of theory. In fact, you revel in it and the students see this. You know *'what a difference a good sensitising concept makes to the energy of a research question and the interest of the investigation'* (our email conversation).

They see that theory is not something to fear. Your confidence allows them to develop new understanding. You place it in front of them and help them to understand it, to dissect it, to love it, to intensely work with it, to find freedom within it, to find a friend in theory. Once students do that their story unfolds. The research paper, which was once so daunting, unfolds and – when working in 'real time', without too much to-ing and fro-ing with their research, but working in the moment, working with what they see in front of them – they are all able to come through it and communicate their ideas. Theory and practice start to integrate, to meet, and to become one.

Finding a balance

What becomes clear is that the students (to varying degrees) develop the confidence to *take the jump*. Many of them feel that in some important way they are finally met, that their thirst for ideas is somehow finally satisfied. And it seems a pity that this is something that they wait for, for so long, that it is something that has seemed so out of their reach. And yet when they work with it they realise that it is something that they can do: they realise that every teacher, every student, can be a researcher. And it is this unlocking that finally brings the balance to the wonderful work that has gone before. The teacher's practice that is so strongly and richly developed by the CCE is

given a dynamic critical perspective that makes it stand strong in the world. The poet also becomes the theorist. The storyteller is also the ethnographer and the artist is also the scientist.

In conclusion

If we want to give students the freedom to become thinking practioners, researchers who can translate what they see on an ordinary level into something which wakes them up to a new consciousness, then we must give them the skills and confidence to work with theory. As you show in Chapter 3, *'an interesting theoretical focus should generate intellectual energy'*, and students will then *'no longer be restricted to their own common-sense world'* or the world that has been beautifully crafted for them, but they will be part of a bigger consciousness, a *'bigger project'*.

In my work with you, I learnt to love theory, to stand alongside it, but what I also learnt was the importance of awakening curiosity in students, communicating with interest, showing empathy and expecting the best. And it is only when we can hold up the theory while truly meeting the students that they can *'discover 'new theoretical concepts that excite them – like Carol Dweck's concept of "growth mindset" and Polanyi's tantalising concept of "tacit knowledge"'*.

And then it is all magic!

I echo your words to me – *'Thank you for the enjoyment we have shared crafting the CCE research programme through the years'*.

Your friend and colleague.

Warmly

Beulah



Becoming a researcher: take a jump by Alexi Silverman

It is a curiosity to me, as well as a truth, that students *do* struggle, and *should* struggle, to become researchers. It is a curiosity because by definition, a student is someone who is invested in the pursuit of knowledge, however when the word 'research' is mentioned there is resistance: 'Hang on, this is not what I signed up for'. Then, as students we *should* struggle: to find a way through the resistance and fear that would prevent us from asking truly meaningful questions.

I write this reflection as someone who has had the privilege of working with Professor Millar as both a student and a colleague. Under his supervision I wrote my research paper to complete a Bachelor's degree in Waldorf Education, as well as co-design and teach two introductory modules on becoming a researcher.

Why is it such a challenge to become a researcher? *Re-search* etymologically means 'to look again'. Coming from an educational system that often teaches in black and white constructs, where teachers are seen as an authority and 'supposed to' have all the answers, it is no wonder that we find it challenging to take a second look. And then a third...

As students, raised through a system that praises or admonishes our value through grades, we are taught that 'getting it right' is a sign of excellence, so that 'not knowing' places us in an uncomfortable place of weakness, an unbearable place to be in. So, for a start, finding The Research Question is hard, because we approach it like a test, an assignment, something with margin for error (which might be humiliating). We become preoccupied with finding The Right Question, which can become a barrier to our ability 'to look again'.

It was in these moments that Professor Millar gave the soundest and most exhilarating advice I've ever encountered – not only for my academic life but also personally: *Take a jump*, he said, almost teasing but also deadly serious. It was a taunt, a challenge, and a very real encouragement to trust.

What are we asking students, with no formal training or background in research, to 'trust'? Writing about High School education, Craig Holdridge puts forward the idea 'to educate students for the presence of the unknown'. The idea is not to trust knowledge as black or white constructs, not to think that the first question is 'the best question' or 'the right question', but to 'take a jump' into a process whose unfolding and ending is utterly unknown. It cannot even be imagined because, once we become researchers, we will constantly be taking a second look, and what unfolds before us will continue to change, even if only subtly, as it shifts and deepens in meaning.

Professor Millar would encourage us, each moment, to 'take a jump', so that his classes were filled with a palpable aliveness, excitement and sometimes even fear, accompanying our explorations into the unknown. Each piece of work was an invitation to take that step not only intellectually, but also concretely, as we battled with the 'getting it wrong' fears and demons in our writing. Over time and through continual feedback, students learned that there was no 'wrong'; only an invitation to take another look, ask a more exciting question and endure or enjoy finding the right words to express ourselves. Today, when I think about my own research paper, the relevance and impact to my life lies not in the final product, but in the stimulating and challenging journey to get there.

Becoming a researcher is vital for a teacher – it vitalizes her connection to her students and the material she teaches. Just as importantly, it creates the space and encouragement for the interest, curiosity and engagement of her students. *This* is the seed for the gift of 'life-long learning'.

Becoming a researcher: the researcher-supervisor conversation by Leigh Moore

A conversation begins

The research task is a landmark moment for many students. We approach the end of our degrees and delve into an exploration that we have spent years building up toward. However, for the most part we are completely unprepared for what will be asked of us and have very little idea of how to engage with the task of research. It is easy enough to find books detailing the nuances of the research process and one could follow those and produce research reports of some standard and feel satisfied with the result. However, the experience of research is not one of a linear narrative in which logical steps provide a surety of success. The experience of research is far more equivocal and is largely concerned with the unpredictability of the dialogue between the researcher and research material. My journey into the abyss of research was not one that followed the narrative of a systemized book (although system is imperative) but rather I became a researcher through a *conversation*.

Between Prof and myself a conversation unfurled that was organic, stimulating, and above all, penetrative into the research theme. Locked into an email thread are the explorations, questions, investigations and examinations that shaped and shifted my research project. The conversation was crafted with such insight into the novice researcher's tribulations that it in itself taught me the real qualities and the true makings of this investigative and exploratory practice called research.

What Prof understood by research – qualitative classroom research in particular – is clearly stated in the first chapter of his book:

One of the problems faced by novice researchers is that they may have to unlearn intuitive and common-sense understandings of what research is. The first misleading idea is that research is about collecting information.

Collecting information is part of research but not the central part. The second is that a research report is a kind of essay. Students are accustomed to essay and collection modes of writing and might easily assume that research involves simply the collection of information and its presentation in essay form.

What both these stereotypes miss is the key feature of research: that it is a process of systematic inquiry directed by a question that has no simple answer. It is this conception of research – as a slowly developing investigation driven by a question that will lead to theoretical answers with practical implications – that the novice researcher has to imagine and learn. (A Practical Guide to Classroom Research p. 4)

Our research conversation was about this “process of systematic inquiry directed by a question that has no simple answer”, and indeed by a question that was only partially understood at the time of its invention.

Learn to think like an architect

There was no lack of ideas for me as I entered this process; I had been waiting four years to finally grapple with pedagogy in an intellectual and analytical way and here was my chance. Information had been collected, ideas were percolating and much writing was underway. However, there was an obvious lack of structure and format. My ideas preceded any logical format and although I had initially sent a wealth of written exploration of ideas it was messy and unfiltered. This is where the supervisory work began - it was time for the conversation to introduce the necessity of systemization in research. The Prof was not afraid to point this out:

“In short, you have a wonderful collection of ideas but no coherent structure to engage with them.”

Shortly after I received this feedback, another letter was sent to the research group as a whole and I realised that I was not the only one whose rolling thoughts and ideas had side-lined any clear sense of format. We were sent the following email which quite clearly described the uncovered habits of the group:

“You are good at lots of things but you are not good at structure or design. Your thoughts tend to simply roll on intuitively. The reader has to work too hard to see where you are going. And I’m not sure that you always know. You need to think like an architect or a good civil engineer – have a sense of the growing structure you wish to create. You need to have a developing mind-map of the structure of each section of your report. Do you do this? Can you think like this?”

In short, an architect creates and relies on format and I realised I was to get right into the scaffolding and planning before any real intellectual conversation relating to the research could actually begin. This proved to be essential. The format of my written ideas held much more than easy coherent reading. It was a means of reflexive thinking, challenging ideas and bringing into grips the elusiveness of my research material. As Prof put it, having a sense of *where you are going* is imperative when working with theories and ideas; they can branch off in ways that completely disrupt the research focus. I discovered this later on when I began an in-depth exploration of my chosen theme, “authenticity”. Here, the conversation taught me the first essential of meaningful research: “tentative mapping”.

The quest for “authenticity”: what does it really mean?

Once the structure was “coherent”, we began grappling with the ideas and perspectives I had proposed and was keen to explore. There was much grappling needed as I had chosen a focus that was not only elusive but largely indefinable within the context of a classroom. It required careful work to ground the idea of authenticity in a working definition that could provide insight into the practical experience of the classroom. My

initial attempts revealed little more than a dead-set decision to stick with the word “authenticity” and so the conversation continued. The Prof realised we would need to break the concept down. He suggested two exercises in which I could contextualize authenticity as well as begin to derive my own stipulative definition. However, my tendency to over-complicate got in the way and it was clear that direction was lacking. The researcher needed to be pulled in and the supervisor could recognize how:

“You do enjoy intellectual journeys! But your journeys are so complex and so aware of all possibilities that a short, simple working definition is still eluding you. I’ll wait for your revised 1.3”

Not only did the supervisor acknowledge the researcher’s personality seeping through, but he also gave her the time to work things out: supervision at its best. When I did eventually arrive at a definition that was honed and simple, short and manageable, it was not by chance but by some real reflexive thinking. I wrote to the Prof describing the revolutionary moment that arose from the tension:

“I realised that I had forgotten what first and so strongly moved me to explore 'authentic' learning moments. It was this: authenticity certainly holds "positive" qualities; but the whole point is that it means encountering the raw, realistic and sometimes repugnant truth - *truth*. I wanted to know about truth. Authentic learning is not about window-dressing, pretty drawings, happy days; it is about honesty, relevance and reality - really living in the world I live in.”

Moments like these are revolutionary not only to the research process but also to the individuality of the researcher; to remember ones purpose is like remembering ones favourite childhood hideout where dreams were built and none were too big. It is a gift to be guided back to that core value that inspires the adulthood choices. The Prof recognised and responded with,

“This is your inspiration. And this must be your focus.”

This was a fitting closure to a riveting process of sifting through possibilities and the honing of the pivotal core value that indeed inspired this research. It is truly pivotal when ones inspiration has the opportunity to become ones focus; often inspiration remains just that and hardly develops further. In this case the supervisor gave flight to the inspiration with two simple sentences and that insight was the catalyst for the research that followed.

Home and Dry

Write, send. Re-write, send. Edit, send. Delete, re-send.

Arriving at the point where one could send a final copy of one's research report to all necessary recipients is not quite as simple as the sentence above describes. Multiply that by one-thousand and perhaps we are close to the magnitude of the final task of the research - analysis of the data. When this analysis is deeply rooted in a conversation that has unfolded over the weeks of the research process one has the advantage that all ideas are somewhere to be found in the thread of emails to be referred back to, but the disadvantage that all those raw ideas somehow need to be drawn together (or discarded) to achieve an in-depth, grounded and coherent analysis of what was discovered and explored. Naturally, new ideas have risen in the interim too.

This is a difficult time for the researcher:

“I have re-worked this section. It has felt similar to the predicament of pounding one's head against a brick wall only to discover another wall looming”

Having a supervisor at this point is essential. Not only for the much needed intellectual sounding board, but also as mentor with whom I could share my honest, riveting experiences. Honesty arose in my research and it arises here now too. An evident tone of the conversation between researcher and supervisor was one of utter honesty. The

notion of honesty with oneself during the data analysis process is crucial to the outcome of the research. This was another, subtle yet pivotal, lesson imbedded within the conversation.

Is this really what you mean? What are you asking here? Where did this thought come from? Is it grounded in evidence?

These are some of the questions that a novice researcher needs to face scrupulously in order to carry out a realistic and valid analysis. In terms of the supervisory input, realism and relevance are now at their peak.

“You are certainly not home and dry but you have plotted an excellent course”

While the researcher is banging heads on walls, the supervisor is reviving the map and reassuring its creator. It becomes clear there is no need to battle the stormy sea but rather maintain the course toward “home and dry”. After much tweaking and commenting the research report was ripe for submission. At this point the conversation is not so much between the researcher and supervisor: rather it moves into a kind of three way dialogue between the writer, the written work and the supervisor. The written work becomes the platform for dialogue as opposed to email threads:

“See my notes and edits in the attachment”

A closing note

I have enjoyed research as an amiable, unpredictable and fluid dialogue between my perception and the reality of *what is really happening*, through a dialogue between the researcher and the supervisor. It was this exchange that was my greatest teacher of what research is really about - *conversation*.



AFTERWORD

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS BY COLLEAGUES AND STUDENTS

This afterword contains a variety of short pieces of a personal nature written by former colleagues and students. When the idea of a *festschrift* to Clive Millar was first mooted and possible contributors contacted, a number of Clive's friends wrote to say that they preferred to write a short piece in appreciation of what he meant to them rather than submit a formal paper. The following section records what has been written by a young man Clive taught at Westerford High School, a young lecturer beginning his university lecturing career at the University of Fort Hare, and persons with whom he worked at the University of Cape Town.

Stephen Schulman, Ramat Hasharon, Israel

At the beginning of the 1959 school year in Std. 7 at Westerford High School in Rondebosch, Cape Town, a new young English teacher by the name of Clive Millar entered our class and I had the privilege and good fortune to have him both as my English and class teacher until I matriculated in 1962. Clive's many qualities endeared him to us all. He was kind, patient and a good listener open to all points of view with the natural ability to generate a warm and pleasant classroom atmosphere. Never once did he raise his voice and his rare scolding was limited to the mild reprove: "My fellow, don't be so wishy washy!" His natural humanity and modesty was combined with sharp and analytical intellect that made learning literature with him a rewarding experience. Contact with his pupils wasn't only limited to classrooms and I have fond memories of him, attired in khaki shorts and battle dress jacket, taking a group of us for occasional Saturday morning rambles along the paths of Table Mountain.

In my matric year, the muse took hold of me and I decided to write poetry. Doggerel in hand, I would wait after school for Clive who after a long and tiring day would always find time to sit down patiently with me, read my maudlin verse and offer gentle and constructive criticism. He was for me, both a teacher and a mentor. Though a few decades have passed since then, my appreciation and gratitude for his great kindness and concern have not waned one iota.

In 1968 with the completion of my BA, I enrolled for the Secondary Teachers Diploma at UCT and was delighted to find (like my fellow students) that Clive was lecturing in the Faculty of Education. The department itself was a mixed bag with some stuffy lecturers of the old school. Clive was like a breath of fresh air. His youth, enthusiasm, critical approach and willingness to hear differing points of view endeared him to us all. I wasn't lucky enough to be in his weekly practical teaching and tutorial group but I know that all his students benefitted greatly from him. One of them threw down the gauntlet when she challenged him to practice what he preached and give a demonstration lesson in their school. Clive, unfazed, accepted the mission!

Clive and Sheila also extended their generous hospitality to us students during that year when they kindly invited us to their home for a few evenings of convivial socializing and shop talk over tea and cake. I always eagerly looked forward to them and never missed one. Our ways then parted; mine to Israel, teaching English as a second language in high school and Clive continuing his distinguished academic career. He has been kind enough to send me a copy of his research guide text book: down to earth, to the point, pleasant, analytical and thorough - accurately reflecting the personality of its author!

My friendship with Clive and Sheila has always been most cherished. Throughout the years, I have not relinquished this special link and remained in touch with them – a source of great pleasure and gratification! Clive has always been someone special to me, subtly influencing my life in more ways than one. He has been a role model and I strongly suspect that it was his influence that led me into teaching! A few years ago, I co-authored a successful matric English text book and it was with great pride that I was able to send a dedicated copy to my old English teacher!

*With appreciation and love,
Stephen.*

John Rogan, Tillamook, USA

I remember arriving at Fort Hare in about September 1976 and joining the Department of Teaching Science, headed by Clive Millar. I was full of enthusiasm having secured funding to develop a science curriculum development project (later known as the Science Education Project, SEP) but very short on any understanding of innovation and research methods. Without being in any way intrusive, Clive was able to shape my thinking as the project began to take shape. He, along with others in the department, was able to act as a sounding board during a time when a number of crucial decisions needed to be made. For example, as a result of my inexperience in research, I tended to embrace the jargon of the time, and Clive would say something to the effect of let's slow down here and consider what really needs to be done in this situation. Fort Hare was my first exposure to a university environment. Here, too, Clive proved to be an able mentor, leading by example. He

had a sharp intellect which he brought to bear when analysing a given situation or proposition. He seemed effortlessly able to get right to the heart of the matter and then deliver his analysis so clearly that what had at first seemed murky was now astonishingly clear. Part of my own growth as an academic was thanks to the books and journals that Clive recommended, and also discussed with those of us in his department.

Another way in which Clive was of tremendous support was that he made sure I had the time to develop the Science Education Project and get it underway. My duties in his Department were kept to a minimum, giving me the time and freedom to work on the project.

Doug Walker, Wellington, New Zealand

On a visit to Cape Town in 1979 while I was working at Massey University, Department of Continuing Education, New Zealand, I visited Clive at the Centre for Continuing Education at UCT. He informed me that a position was becoming vacant at UCT in the Centre for Continuing Education and invited me to apply. So began many years of friendship between us and years of wonderful involvement under Clive's vision for the department of Continuing Education.

The eighties were turbulent times for the department, for UCT and for the country as well as a time of personal tragedy for Clive and his family. Through it all Clive led the department with vision and deep self-involvement and commitment. His team was unique, including Tony Morphet, Tony Saddington, Doug Thomson and myself, dedicated to providing adult education to all the communities of Cape Town, and Clive had to deal with the sometimes uncomfortable duality of his functions as both Professor of Adult Education and Director of the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies. He was challenging, demanding and always supportive.

During my years at UCT I presented my MEd thesis supervised by Clive. He was both supervisor and colleague-respondent to me in this piece of research. I appreciated his acute perceptions of a situation unique in South African university experience, and also his skill in bringing order and logic to my work. His gentle criticism, a steely insistence on precise expression and his encouragement were invaluable.

Thank you Clive.

Tony Morphet, University of Cape Town

Speech at Clive Millar's retirement party, 5th December 1998

Welcome to Kalk Bay. Glad so many could join us for this very special moment in the history of the Department. As you know Clive retires at the end of this month

and we are having this little party to celebrate his time in the Department and the University.

Clive was already something of a legend before he joined the Department in 1979. I met Doug Thompson shortly after his appointment had been made but before he had arrived – I was down in Cape Town from Durban trying to find out how to run a Summer School – something I never found out – and Mr. Thompson – he was always Mr. Thompson – told me, more or less, that the Department was saved. It sounded as though the mission elders had just received the news that a new minister had been found. Robert Tobias was due to leave for New Zealand – Derek Kotze for America – and somehow, they had persuaded Clive and his family to abandon thoughts of Perth – Perth Australia that is – and take the chair that Robert Tobias had battled so long and hard to secure. That's by way of background to the legend. I got the first sound of that when Mr. Thompson leaned a little closer and speaking a little more confidentially said – “he's an intellectual you know – very theoretical – top class – the best man in the country.” Mr. Thompson had a great feeling for teams – sports teams actually – and his tone made it clear that Clive was a Captain and that he would be able to bowl good intellectual googlies.

It must have been about a year later that I finally met Clive – in a small office on the first floor of the old Education building. I was down this time for a “chat” about a possible job. This was the famous occasion – famous for me at least – when I was asked the question “What makes you tick?” I was clean bowled middle and leg and I began to see what an intellectual googly looked like.

My move from Durban was described by someone as downward mobility – I took a cut in status and money to get into the Department but it took only a month or two for me to be absolutely sure that it was the best decision I ever took. I have said that ever since and I am saying it again today. What made it so good was the intense intellectual, and let me not cut corners here, the moral pleasure, of working with Clive. It's hard to know where to begin describing the detail of those pleasures so let me stick with the simplest things first. It was first the pleasure of learning. Learning what? Well learning how to craft things. Building and sailing boats is about crafting – so is the construction and delivery of a skillful intellectual googly.

Anyone who has taught with Clive on his beloved Diploma Course will recall how often he will turn to the class and ask - “What's the key word here?” rubbing thumb and forefinger together feeling for textures of the argument. Well my key word is craft.

Clive is a craftsman through and through – boats, houses, combi's and second-hand cars, fires, crayfishing, fynbos, kabeljou, all the ordinary things anyone gets involved in – all weighed and considered and enjoyed – it must have had something to do with the Scouts – don't they have craft badges for everything? But more

seriously, Clive's intellectual craftsmanship was something I had not seen before. He loves the tools of the intellectual craft – propositions, logic, argument, debate, reason – and he loves to keep them clean and sharp through use. We once had a facilitator – Andy Dawes – who after a two-day workshop said that the Department didn't seem to like closure. He was right but what he didn't see was that we didn't like closure because we enjoyed the discussion too much. And he likes the feel of the simpler tools too – constructing a good meeting – getting the agenda right – the minutes – and the whiteboard. I think we were the first Department to have whiteboards as standard equipment for everyone.

But these were the basic tools – it was when they were put to work that you could see what he could do. Clive finds curriculum design irresistible because it speaks to the desire of the craftsman – and can never be complete – there's always some new way to analyse, to reassess and reinterpret and some new move to be made. And that is why he has always been absorbed by the idea of "process" – the process of a class or a curriculum will always be more complex than the designer will have imagined – the "failures" that it will produce will always be of exceptional interest because that is where the complexity of the event will show itself.

Peter Kallaway used to scoff at us as the Department of failures because we were always producing analyses of what had gone wrong with a plan. It was Clive who did it first and did it best. It's really no wonder that every new course had a new curriculum. We know that he learned the formal terms and methods of curriculum analysis from the person he chose as his master – Lawrence Stenhouse – but they would have meant little if they hadn't struck the bedrock of his own passion for craft. The Department which he nurtured and grew over 15 years²⁶ was a model of a collective institutional academic enterprise – a model in the simple sense that other universities took their lead and their design from us – but a model too in the wider sense of bringing together a collection of rather strange and marginal people – all academics are marginal in some sense but we were more marginal than most – encouraging them to find a common focus in a coherent project and making a place in which the intrinsic goods of intellectual work were intensely valued. Scarcely a week went by when we didn't get into discussion about the nature of the project. It was simply the best place to work – not just for academics. It was known right across the University as the place where people got on together – where they worked hard because they wanted to – and where tea-time was an intellectual adventure – that is when it wasn't some sophisticated ironic comedy.

²⁶ 15 years as head of department; 20 years in all.

Clive of course is a deep joker. It's a very particular style – a sort of Buster Keaton of the seminar room – solemn and deadpan on the surface – long elaborating verbal lines which slowly tip over into the mockery which has been running along underneath all the time. You need to keep a sharp watch on the smile which eventually even he can't quite keep down. Students new to a class often found it unnerving until they realised he wasn't making fun of them, but with them. But in academic conclaves where people take themselves very seriously the style has landed him in trouble more than once. I can recall him coming out of more than one meeting – usually a Higher Degrees meeting – with him looking grey-faced saying "Couldn't they tell it was a joke?" The answer was no, they couldn't – and sometimes I couldn't either.

Jon File once said there were three official languages in the University – English, Afrikaans and Adult Education. He made it as a joke somewhere back in the 80's but he didn't know how prescient the remark was. I have to say it was with mixed feelings that I listened to Nadia Hartman at the Mamdani seminar earlier this year. She was defending the flagship Foundation programme in the Social Sciences and as I listened I found myself taken, phrase by phrase, back to 1982 and into the front office of the old Admin building where Clive and Tony Saddington and I used to have our debriefing sessions after the tumultuous Diploma classes of the night before. We were working it out as we went along and the formulations that Nadia was using were being created there – virtually for the first time – curriculum negotiation – facilitation – process – problematisation – academic discourse – experiential learning – reflection. And we were really worried that the University would find out what we were up to and put a stop to it. Well it's all orthodox now – and it's firmly in place well beyond the University. It's orthodox even in the schools where the teachers are being taught to remind themselves each day – "I'm not the sage on the stage/ I'm the guide at your side". Who would have thought it? We've won – but of course we've also lost. They've stolen our intellectual clothes – and our Department too.

But they are making a right hash of it at the same time, because they don't understand it from the inside – and so we come back to craft. To learn a craft, you need a master – not a manager; you need a curriculum not a strategically planned programme; you need a shared engagement in an open process not a manipulation of consent. They may have stolen our clothes but they don't have the bodies, or the souls, to wear them.

We did our work as we saw it – and it was well done. Only two nights ago I ran across Michelle Gavron and in her usual way she shouted across a packed room – "You should see where your students are now – they're all in the top jobs". Many of them are, but they are part of a cycle. And now it seems time to start again. I was talking to a curriculum researcher this week who was trying to find a way out of a dilemma over outcomes based education. The ends that everyone wants are

clear enough but nobody knows how to get there. None of the big policy documents could tell her what teachers needed to know, nor what they should do in the classroom, nor what the textbooks should be like in order to reach the outcomes of the national grade 4 maths curriculum. I offered her two resources. First, she should read Tyler's Basic Principles of Curriculum Design (circa 1940) and second she should hire Clive as a consultant.

Clive is retiring at the right time. Scientific Management has finally reached the academy. In the new world of executives, line managers, productivity measures, incentives and punishments there is no place for the autonomous practice of an intellectual craft. But its time will return. Just as with the new school curricula, when it becomes clear that intellectual work requires more than policy, more than a plan, more than management; more than competitiveness and budgetary compliance: when it is once again apparent that what is essential is people who know not only in their bones what an intellectual craft is, but also what it means to teach it to others, then the search will be on for people like Clive – and the example of his career will be recalled. I would like to think that it will be the first case study in the rediscovery of academic work.

In the meanwhile, we all wish him and Sheila the very best crafted retirement that they can imagine.

Michael Ashley, University of Cape Town

As the Head of the very important department of Adult Education and Extra-mural Studies In the Faculty of Education at UCT, Clive provided academic and intellectual leadership which ensured productive staff, successful programmes and satisfied students. I admired him for the depth of his intellect and his commitment to the study and development of education in a country in which such work is urgently needed and his will be a resource for years to come.

Ivy Moody, University of Cape Town

Early in 1983 I found myself at a crossroads: due to circumstances beyond my control I found myself without a job. I took stock of what I would like to do and made a quality decision: I wanted to work at the University of Cape Town. As a youngster I had dreamed of going to varsity but that dream did not materialise. How exciting to view university from a different perspective! I registered with an agency that serviced UCT as a prerequisite to entry as a secretary.

I responded to an advertisement for a post in the Department of Extra-Mural Studies and was offered the job. Plans were afoot to launch a Department of Adult

Education within the Faculty of Education. I became Clive's personal and administrative secretary, and he and I launched out on a pioneering adventure that lasted for 16 years! We moved from the cozy family atmosphere of the Old Administration building to the new Middle Campus complex. The fledgling Adult Education Department was high up on level 6 and we had big "rooms with a view" of Devil's Peak beside the great Table Mountain. There was plenty of space to spread our wings; the challenges were enormous.

Extra-Mural Studies was located on level 4 and the prof made a wise decision, not cast in concrete, that tea breaks on level 4 involved everyone in the department. This maintained unity among the staff; we were able to build relationships and keep in touch with developments in a relaxed informal atmosphere. Clive's active mind and engaging sense of humour often provoked vibrant discussion and if sometimes the non-academics were merely a captive audience we were energised and stimulated by the erudite conversation. I enjoyed typing up his articles and class notes; in fact I saw it as a kind of brain teasing. As my fingers were busy I was being exposed to wonderful English and interesting ideas!

Clive was an outstanding leader, fair-minded and good at getting each of us to respond actively with the gifts we offered. As a result, everyone felt they had a significant contribution to make to a shared vision, and over the years we built a fascinating tapestry of adult education. I loved the variety of students who came to study for the Diploma in Adult Education he introduced, and it was great to know we were investing in the next generation of South Africans. The prof was always striving for excellence and he initiated several donor funded programmes, as well as a vibrant literacy unit, to name a few. He also managed to involve companies who offered bursaries for disadvantaged students.

When Clive tried to get promotion and better pay for his P.A. he was told "she must move on if that is what she wants". I chose to stay with the family! It was one of the best jobs I've had.

Nancy Murray, student, colleague and friend

The thought of going back to university after a space of over thirty years was daunting but in 1982 I joined the newly created Diploma Course for Educators of Adults in the Department of Adult Education and Extra Mural Studies at the University of Cape Town. Standing at the bottom of those formidable Jameson Hall steps on that first day I wondered what on earth I was doing there when I could have been playing tennis or working in my garden or most likely chatting to a group of literacy learners in Crossroads. Their eagerness to learn was, in fact, the reason I was standing there.

In the late 1970's and early 80's I was a volunteer assisting with classes and training isiXhosa speaking teachers for a literacy organisation in Cape Town's highly politicised townships. I was not comfortable with the method we were using. I don't think I understood at first what literacy really meant – that the basic education of adults was not just about teaching the skills of reading and writing. I needed to know more about how to help adults learn and more about how people learn to read and write: in other words how to make real changes in the lives of those adults who had never meaningfully interacted with print.

On that first day, standing at the bottom of Jameson steps I experienced my first lesson in adult learning: no matter what the level of learning, for some people that first step is scary. This was the beginning of my association with Clive as a teacher, later as head of department and now as a friend. It was the beginning of two years of learning and unlearning on the exciting, challenging, often baffling Diploma Course. The most baffling thing was that the course had no curriculum. At the start of our first "class" Clive's colleague, Tony Morphet, announced that the staff had nothing planned. We would all share responsibility for what we would do over the next two years. He then lapsed into silence, which lasted a long time. I remember so clearly those evenings in the car park after our first sessions (lectures?) – a group of fellow students, leaning on the bonnet of the car attempting to answer the question that was on all our minds: 'what on earth is going on?' We shared our fumbling answers, shook our heads. Learning was starting to take place in the car park! Then, the talking, questioning, listening, combining of knowledge and skills of the class with intuition and a certain amount of courage grew into a conversation that lasted for two years. Slowly it dawned on us that we – all of us – were indeed creating a curriculum, week by week.

The course was a turning point for me. In addition to the ongoing experience of thinking, questioning and reflection, I had been introduced to the ideas of sociologists and philosophers I had not encountered before. I had written essays and exams and I enjoyed knowing that I was growing intellectually. I was ready to challenge the way I was living my daily life. Clive gave me my next learning opportunity – a different kind of conversation - when he invited me to join the Adult Basic Education Research and Development Programme in his department. In 1983 UCT became the first university in South Africa to involve itself in adult basic education. My move to this department exposed me to views and practical knowledge of experienced researchers and trainers. We engaged in debates affecting all aspects of literacy work including research into how people learn to read. We were involved in training initiatives and published materials for learners and teachers.

After about ten years had passed since I stood below the Jameson Hall steps, I was ready to leave the university and join two of my colleagues in combining our knowledge and experience to produce a new isiXhosa literacy programme. This was

a different challenge but the question ‘what is happening here?’ remained as relevant as ever.

I was in my early fifty’s when I stood below the Jameson Hall steps and now more than thirty years later I look back on those years with gratitude. My turning point all those years ago guaranteed me an interesting, meaningful, exciting, never-a-dull-moment old age. Spending time with Clive makes me glad to be alive. What a joy it is to have such a friend, to have hiked through the fynbos or strolled with our dogs along Scarborough or Kommetjie beaches, talking all the time – grandchildren, dogs, cricket, rugby and, of course books - or drinking coffee and talking.

Thank goodness the conversation never stops and my (Clive would say, “our”) learning goes on.

APPRECIATION

BY CLIVE MILLAR

Alan Penny's generous initiative came as an odd surprise. Festschrifts, I thought, were solemn things for eminent people. This one has broken both these rules, and I am delighted. True, it contains new, formal papers: excellent perspectives on some old obsessions of mine about teaching. But these are written with a warmth and personal engagement that only old colleagues and friends could share.

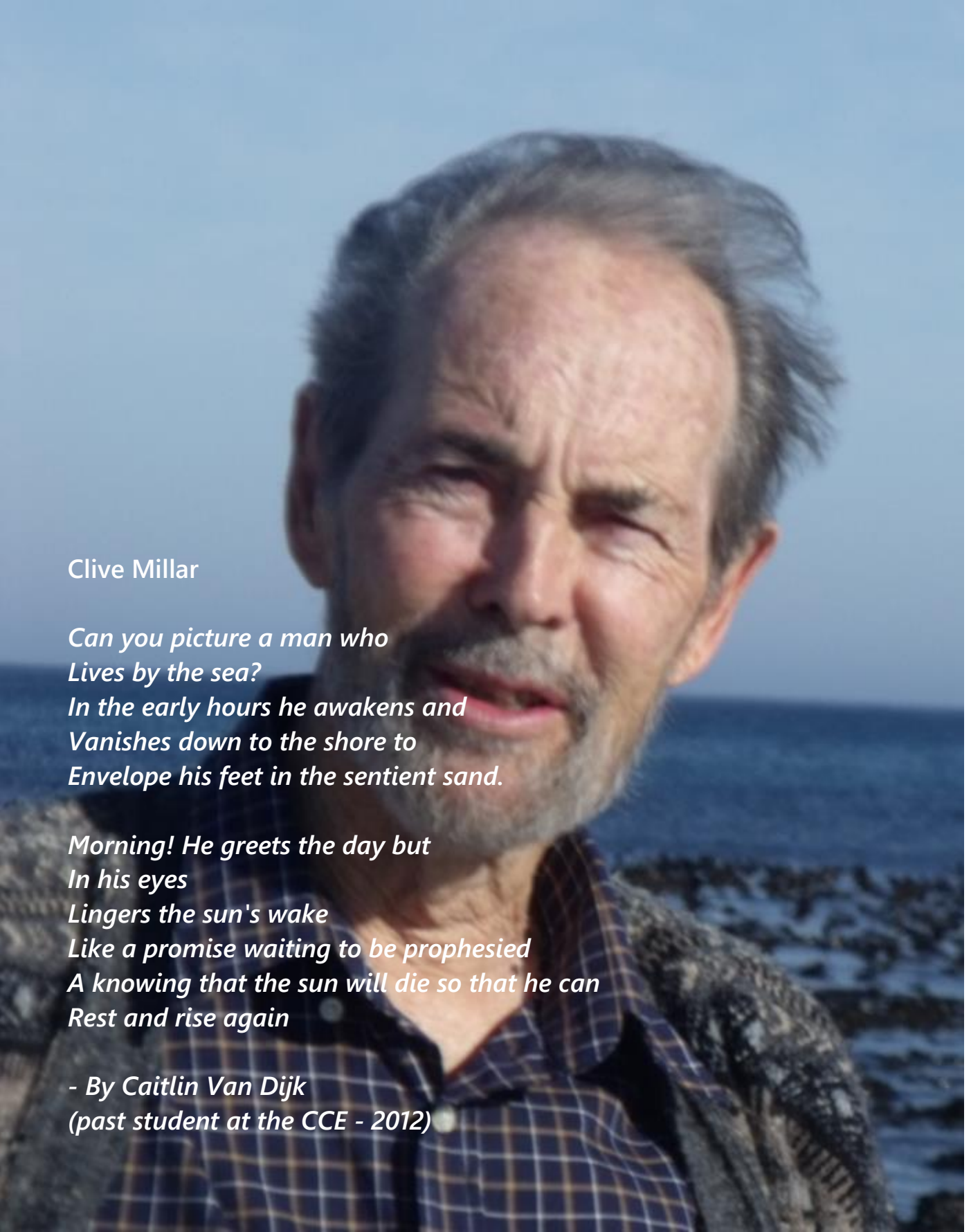
It contains, too, several moving personal articles, reflecting on experience shared with very recent colleagues and students, to do with classroom research. No Ancient Mariner has had his exploits engaged with so attentively and so generously, and by shipmates old and new.

Finally, the book contains a collection of reflections of a personal kind by colleagues and students through the years. I am grateful for these.

My only concern is that I feel only slightly embarrassed by all the good things said about me. Instead, they have lifted my spirits. But what has lifted my spirits, too, has been my privilege in sharing in the creation of this unusual book. This has been a wonderful shared experience, it has given me many moments of nostalgia and introspection, and it has recreated for me a deep sense of community.

To each one who has given thought, time and love to this wonderful gift, and to all my teachers, students and colleagues over the years who have helped me in my work – thank you.

Clive Millar



Clive Millar

*Can you picture a man who
Lives by the sea?
In the early hours he awakens and
Vanishes down to the shore to
Envelope his feet in the sentient sand.*

*Morning! He greets the day but
In his eyes
Lingers the sun's wake
Like a promise waiting to be prophesied
A knowing that the sun will die so that he can
Rest and rise again*

*- By Caitlin Van Dijk
(past student at the CCE - 2012)*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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2. Millar, C. (1989); Educating the educators of adults: two cheers for curriculum negotiation. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 21 (2): 161–168.

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1. Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and Appendix 2 from Millar, C.J. (2016); A Practical Guide to Classroom Research. Northwich: Critical Publishing. ISBN: 978-1-911106-37-1

