POWER RELATIONS: EXPLORING MEANINGS IN THE *CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT (2011)*

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ABSTRACT

Power relations are seldom one-sided. Those who exercise power are caught up in and subjected to its functions equally as those over whom power is exercised. Educational institutions as social structures with a mandate of sustaining learning represent the conceptualisation of power as concomitant to social relationships. In the enactment of power, discourses of text and talk are evident in directive speech acts, through text types and laws, regulations, instructions, institutional policies and everyday social contact. This article provides insight into the concept of social communication transfer in multicultural education settings in South Africa. Despite the transformation of South African society, education institutions in particular remain sites where powerlessness is rife and social communication discourses reinforce the notion of perpetual disempowerment. A Foucauldian discourse analysis was undertaken to analyse the purpose statements outlined in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS 2011). An analysis was conducted in which meanings conveyed in CAPS discourses were explored; an interpretation of the manifestation of power relations in texts and the implications thereof on the creation of a sustainable learning environment uncovered.

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INTRODUCTION

South African education was previously characterised by segregation and racial inequality and thus had to be changed fundamentally with the inception of the new democratic dispensation. Significant gains in recent years include new curricula, policy guidelines, improved access, accelerated provisioning of school infrastructure, and a more equitable distribution of resources (Nelson Mandela Foundation 2005). The formal arrangements for democratic education in South Africa are now clearly in place. To facilitate the process, the suite of education policy produced since 1994 is impressive. Each policy makes commitments that signal profoundly democratic principles and practices in education (Jansen 2004: 126).

Since the establishment of the new political dispensation, the South African government has placed emphasis on the introduction of policies and mechanisms aimed at redressing the legacy of a racially and ethnically fragmented, dysfunctional and unequal education system inherited from apartheid. Piper and Piper (2009: 95) note that transformation in South Africa with its areas of tension in policy and practice is probably best understood as an endless work in progress; a journey rather than an arrival. South African society consists of not only (indigenous) Africans, but also of people of European and Asian decent, as well as others who can be termed partially indigenous. Such variety and complexity makes the notion of a common and shared "one size fits all" South African educational identity a problematic concept to pin down (Piper & Piper 2009: 101).

Soudien and Sayed (2004: 101-115) argue that while the general policy direction of education embodied in the South African Schools Act of 1996 aims at providing free, compulsory and equal education, there are exclusionary possibilities latent within it. It is also argued that the way in which decentralisation was implemented, by devolving authority and governance to schools, provided racially and economically defined communities the legal means to preserve their privileges (Soudien & Sayed 2004: 101; Meier & Hartell 2009: 183). Within the schooling system, the most significant of these developments was a radical departure from apartheid education, firstly through the implementation of an outcomes-based curriculum, and recently through curriculum reform known as the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement 2011* (CAPS). CAPS strives to enhance equity, redress, social transformation and social justice as a way of contributing towards the development of individuals in South African education (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3). However, despite these intentions, the enactment of power through communication discourses in CAPS manifests itself in the South African education setting.

Policy documentation abounds with the aim of creating transformation in education institutions and favours enabling conditions conducive to the sharing of power and collective decision-making (Department of Education 2011: Section1.1.3.(a)). Jansen (2004: 126) argues that "policy is not practice" and despite these noble intentions, education institutions in South Africa remain sites where powerlessness is rife and social communication discourses reinforce the notion of perpetual disempowerment.

The word *power* has led to a number of misunderstandings with respect to its nature, its form and its unity. Conventionally, power may be considered as the capacity of an agent to impose his/her will over the will of the powerless, and it is therefore regarded as a possession. In Foucault's opinion, power is not something that can be owned, but rather something that acts and manifests itself in a certain way; it is more a strategy than a possession. Conceiving power as a strategy and not as a possession means to think of it as something that has to be exerted and not something that can simply be acquired. It is not localised exclusively in certain institutions or individuals, but is rather a set of relations dispersed throughout society (Foucault 1988: 38).

The term power is used in a generic way in this study to describe many different forms of control. Therefore, this study provides an opportunity to gain deeper insight into the power relationships in multicultural social communication education sites as articulated in CAPS.

Increasingly, the communication landscape (including the modes of talk, gestures, gaze, writing and movement) of South African schools is characterised by cultural and linguistic diversity. Jewitt (2008: 247) posits that any given mode is contingent on fluid and dynamic resources of meaning, rather than static skill replication and use. These modes are constantly transformed by their users in response to the communicative needs of communities, institutions and societies: new modes are created, and existing modes are transformed (Jewitt 2008: 247). With a focus on writing as a multi-semiotic resource, Kenner's (2004) ethnographic case studies show how young bilingual learners (Spanish, Chinese and Arabic) use dictionality, spatiality and graphic marks to realise meaning and express identities. From this work it is evident that people draw from their available modal resources to create meaning in specific contexts. Furthermore, the resources come to display regularities through everyday patterns of use. The more a set of resources has been used in the social interactions of a particular community, the more fully and finely articulated are its regularities and patterns (Jewitt 2008: 247).

From the point of view of multicultural communication as social interaction, learning by teachers and learners in the education setting arises from interactions

between the particular individual and the culture (Sierpinska 1998). Crucially, Oliver (1999, as cited by Towndrow, Brudvik & Natarajan 2009: 135) identifies teachers and learners as the principal stakeholders in teaching and learning events and shows how these parties can manipulate their overlaying elements, namely content (learning resources), learner supports and learning activities (or tasks) in order to influence learning outcomes. The process of meaning-making is central to this interaction between teacher and learner. The significance and complexity of meaning in texts, which is the focus of this study, and its use by educational policymakers, will demonstrate the link between the communicative demands of CAPS in this instance, and how "power over" and "power to" is communicated in the policy.

A discourse analysis within a Foucauldian framework will be conducted to explore meanings conveyed in CAPS discourses; the manifestation of power relations in the CAPS document will be highlighted; and how the power relations are interpreted and the implications thereof on the creation of a sustainable learning environment are outlined.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to French philosopher Michel Foucault (1972: 107), "[a] discourse is constituted by a group of sequences of signs, insofar as they are statements; that is, insofar as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence". A central concept in Foucault's outline is the use of "statement" which he defines as an enunciative function that involves various units which may comprise sentences, fragments of sentences, a table of signs and propositions or equivalent formulations. The description of statements and the organisation of their enunciation is no interpretation or search of what "really" has been said (Jansen 2008: 109), nor is the purpose to overcome surface appearance or to reveal secret principles of the meaning of statements. Rather, it is the description of how meaning is produced in texts and how it contributes to the constitution of social reality by making meaning (Phillips & Hardy 2002: 4). The description of statements is therefore a starting point, through an analysis, to establish an understanding of the multiple and delicate meanings embedded in texts (Rose & Miller 1992: 175-176).

Discourse analysis as inspired by Foucault can be utilised to uncover manifold meanings rooted in texts. As Foucault observes:

> There are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of discourse. (Foucault 1980: 93)

Thus, discourse analysis is a way of making sense of the struggles of discourse and understanding the operation of power and social practices which shape discourse. The aim of discourse analysis is to reveal ontological and epistemological premises which are embedded in language and which allow a statement to be understood as rational or interpreted as meaningful (Hewitt 2009: 8). In Foucauldian terms this means that provision is made for an understanding of the combination of meaning and power to create the social construction of meaning.

In this study, Foucauldian discourse analysis, which focuses on uncovering diverse influences as a result of power relations in social settings as defined by policy purposes, was employed. Foucault's ideas challenge the notion that policy is a rational process based on incontrovertible evidence and truth (Hewitt 2009: 7). Evidence or information used in policy is created within the confines of discursive formations, so that the "truth" conforms to the rules and norms of discourse. The strength of Foucauldian discourse analysis in this regard is the debunking of the rationality of policy texts and thus of the boundaries and limits of the discourse. Researchers are thus enabled to question policy texts, explore how dialogue takes place and how power relations produce dominant discourses and marginalise others. The result is that researchers are able to distil the rules of discourse, observe power relations, highlight gaps in the practice of policy and become sensitive to issues of difference, diversity and the politics of identity in social settings (Flyvbjerg 2001: 104).

One of the most useful analytical tools to conduct a discourse analysis is by means of "governmentality". As an analytical guide, it expands analysis from a focus on describing how authority operates to an inclusion of "the practices of government which form the basis on which problematizations are made and what happen when we govern and are governed" (Dean 1999: 28). In other words, by using governmentality as a guideline we look at rationalised schemes and techniques that aim to shape the conduct of others in order to achieve certain objectives.

In research conducted by Makoelle (2009: 71-80) discourse analysis was employed to interrogate experiences regarding the implementation of the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) curriculum since its implementation. The author analysed how language works ideologically and attempted to unearth the hegemonic nature of discourse in OBE. In his conclusion the author mentioned that the prior exploration brought to light that OBE is marred with instrumentalism and that it lacks a focus on true emancipation. Discourse analysis also highlighted "managerialism" and "administrativism" as regularities which contribute to stereotypical and rigid thinking which result in individuals' weak personalities and people of little substance (*ibid*.).

Whilst Makoelle's research (2009) focused on the implementation of OBE, this study reflects on an exploration of meanings conveyed in the purposes and principles outlined in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3.2; 1.3.3). Such an analysis is concerned with making meaning of the presence of power relations and multicultural social communication in the mentioned document. Critical discourse analysis was used because it enabled the researchers a deeper probing to establish power relations in CAPS. Thus, power relations in texts were explored and the implications thereof probed on the creation of a sustainable learning environment.

The researchers chose to analyse three of the four purposes in conjunction with the seven principles stipulated in CAPS. The purposes and principles were selected because they locate the general aim of this policy document, i.e. "give expression to what is regarded to be knowledge, skills and values worth learning" (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3.1).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The value of communication as a process of social interaction in education settings cannot be underestimated. Discourse, communication and (other) forms of action and interaction are monitored by social cognition (Van Dijk 1997). The same is true for our understanding of social events, social institutions, power relations and the interpretation of meanings in communication. Social cognitions mediate between micro and macro levels of society, between discourse and action, and between the individual and the group.

Schools are complex organisations (Leithwood, Mascall & Strauss 2009: 5; Preedy, Bennet & Wise 2012: 271) wherein meanings that are constructed in the process of interaction between subjects influence the nature of their social communication. We begin our discussion by considering the flow of information communicated through policy, notably CAPS in South African education. The focus here is not to decipher the actual content of the messages or the dissemination of or grammar contained in messages for particular schools/ settings. Rather, we aim to reflect critically on how meaning is constructed and communicated in CAPS and its possible influence on multicultural social communicational practices in schools. Three purposes of CAPS (outlined below) will be extracted and analysed individually in later sections (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3.2; 1.3.3):

- ♦ Purpose 1: "equipping learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with

the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country;

♦ Purpose 2: "providing access to higher education"; and

♦ Purpose 3: "facilitating the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace".

Against this backdrop the demands placed on education institutions to be multimodal communication sites become important. It is therefore necessary to explore how social communication discourse functions in South African schools.

The nature of social communication discourse

The characteristics of contemporary societies are increasingly theorised as global, fluid and networked, with these conditions underpinning the emerging knowledge economy as it is shaped by the societal and technological forces of late capitalism (Baumann 1998; Castells 2001; Jewitt 2008: 241). Notably, these shifts and developments have appreciably affected the communication landscape of education in the 21st century (Jewitt 2008: 241).

Communication as an instrument of the relationship between teacher and learner has been the target of widespread dispute in the field of education, given its relevance in the teaching and learning process. The greater value given to the role of dialogue and the sharing of information is opposed to a more traditional form of communication based on a one-way discourse undertaken by the teacher (Bendefur & Frykholm 2000: 125-153). From this point of view, the transference of information and codes (linguistic and others) is not approached nor studied in itself, but in its use, with communication being characterised as a process of social interaction. It is in this process of interaction that the subjects as well a society itself undergo their construction through the negotiation of meaning between individuals (Yackel 2000).

Developed primarily on conceptions in social semiotics, *multimodal literacy* is a term used by Jewitt and Kress (2003) to refer to the different ways in which meanings can be created and communicated in the world today. From this perspective, Kress (2003) argues for a new concept of literacy in which all modes and their interactions are to be considered and critically interpreted. This stance implies a shift from the notion of mere competence in literacy to one of literacy as multimodal design. A multimodal design is itself a complex system of many different kinds and relations organised on a number of different scalar levels of organisation (Baldry & Thibault 2005). As Baldry and Thibault (2005: 172) expound the process of designing, representing and interpreting modalities involves a constant dialectic between virtual constraints of the mode and the dynamic constraints of the mode as it unfolds and develops over time.

In South Africa, increasing diversity in educational institutions implies that these institutions are continually challenged to provide a multicultural environment conducive to effective social communication and cultural interaction. Representational and communicational practices are constantly altered, modified, as is all of culture, in line with and as an effect of social changes (Kress 2010: 7). The authors reiterate that there are some highly general semiotic principles, which are common to all human communication. Consequently, these are present and evident in all human societies and their cultures. The most significant of these is that humans make signs in which meaning stands in a "motivated" relation. These signs are made with different means and different modes. They are the expression of the interest of socially formed individuals who, with these signs, realise, or "give outward expression to", their meanings, using culturally available semiotic resources, which have been shaped by practices of members of social groups and their cultures (Kress 2010: 9-10). The authentic involvement of all in an organisation as active and empowered members will link teachers with the diverse learner, further increasing and affirming cultural diversity within multicultural educational settings.

A considerable body of work has been undertaken in schools within the diverse cultural and linguistic context of South Africa. The Arndale Alphabet (Janks & Comber 2006): *A is for Arndale; A is for Attridgeville*, was set up as a shared, cross-continent primary school project that situated literacy in the learners' experiences and concerns of their neighbourhoods (one in South Africa and one in Australia). The project recruited learners and teachers from grades 3 to 6. Data involved videotapes, teacher and learner interviews, and learners' work with alphabet books. Working with a class of learners in each school, an alphabet book was made that drew on learners' experiences and use of available designs. The learners were given overt instruction through the analysis of the representational meanings in other alphabet books, an analysis of how image and word were organised and the identification of patterned meanings. The learners undertook deconstructive and reconstructive critical analysis and text design, together with engaging in critical interpretations of the social and cultural contexts of designs of meanings. The project moved beyond literacy as explanations across differences, involving the students in the work of imagining the other class in another context, as the audience of their book. Such pedagogic projects that involve the development of learners' literacy resources and a range of modes of representation in conscious ways have been developed to provide learners with tools for critical analysis and the redesign of meaning (Jewitt 2008: 249-250).

Reflecting on the above-mentioned study, it is evident that the teacher usually controls communicative events in the classroom ("the learners were given overt instruction..."), allows scope and creativity in the classroom and assumes that

he/she has access to and control over educational discourse in the learning environment. Conversely, learners in the traditional classroom setting have, in principle, access to talk only when spoken to and when invited to speak. Jewitt (2008: 246) advocates that learning environments should become sites of multimodal interactions where "learners are provided with tools for critical analysis and the redesign of meaning". For the purposes of this study, the meanings conveyed in CAPS (writing mode) are central. Key to multimodal perspectives on literacy is the basic assumption that meanings are made (as well as distributed, interpreted and remade) through many representational and communication resources, of which language is but one (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001). Multimodality attends to meaning as it is made through the situated configurations across image, gesture, gaze, body posture, sound, writing, music, speech and so on (Jewitt 2008: 246).

By implication, multimodal representations of knowledge are realised by the user's design decisions, which are inherently epistemological in nature. Thus, Kress (2003: 37) points out to educators, in particular, that "it is no longer responsible to let children experience school without ... understanding of the shift from competent performance to design as the foundational fact of contemporary social and economic life". Competent learner performance with multimodality is further informed by the theoretical distinction made by Lemke (1998) between "typological" and "topological" dimensions of meaning. With "typological" meaning or "meaning-by-kind", natural language has a specialist function to play in expression (what modes have to say), whereas with "topological" meaning or "meaning-by-degree", gestures and visual representations present continuous variation more easily. Consequently, potential expressive impact in multimodal communication is enabled by knowledge of the affordances of modes, their appropriate choice and designed interactions (Towndrow, Brudvik & Natarajan 2009: 133).

In interpreting meaning in CAPS, typological meaning is relevant. Teachers, in their quest to provide learning support and contribute to a transformed society, should create the conditions, opportunities and experience for learners to engage meaningfully in the process of multimodal communication.

In the same vein, distributions of power and principles are generative of and crucial for an understanding of communicational environments. They arise as a response to social conditions; that is, as a particular semiotic response to designs of "freedom of choice" (Kress 2010: 21). In exercising freedom of choice, it is assumed that full participation by all members of the organisation, socially, culturally, and affectively, is a prerequisite for the institution to flourish. It includes a commitment to values regarded as central for maintaining social cohesion and suggests full participation in the design and production

of representations as messages and access to the means of their dissemination (Kress 2010: 20).

Research in the field of education suggests that in order to function in a multicultural environment, social competence is crucial. As with all group relations in society, multicultural relations are also partly managed by text and talk. Group members produce and reproduce their own identity, and thus their group, by using the group's own language variety and special discourse forms (Van Dijk 1997: 164). To be a competent communicator in intergroup discourse, work has to be done to widen the knowledge net of multicultural values and norms. Garcia's (1995) criteria for multicultural sensitivity are closely related to the concept of social competence which summarises an individual's performance across a variety of interpersonal situations (Hunter & Elias 2000: 552). Social skills and social problem-solving are two components of social competence. Social skills refer to the specific patterns of learned, observable behaviour through which we influence others (Gesten & Weissberg 1986; Hunter & Elias 2000: 552). Communication skills, sharing, making requests and complimenting are all examples of social skills. From this point of view, the transference of information and codes (linguistic and others) is not approached or studied in itself, but in its use, and communication is characterised as a process of social interaction (Yackel 2000; Guerreiro & Serrazina 2009).

Power relations in the South African education system

Power is conceptualised as being a capillary form of existence, and reaches into the very grain of individuals, touching their bodies and inserting itself into action and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives (Foucault 1981: 92; Bagarette 2011). The purpose of power is to prevent groups from participating in decision-making processes and also to obtain passive agreement of these groups in a particular situation. A silent agreement signifies not an expression of a desire not to participate, but evidence of a mute compliance with the situation (Clegg 1989: 236).

Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere (Foucault 1981: 92; Bagarette 2011: 224). In schools in England for instance, principals exercise power over teachers in both their educational and employee capacities (in contrast to many European countries) (Preedy, Bennet & Wise 2012: 270). The two are linked by performance management, involving power over a teacher's appointment and dismissal, workload and promotion. A defining feature of distributed leadership literature is that it ignores the dual role of the teacher as employee, as well as educator, and the conflictual potential in both roles. Conflict can occur over workload, conditions and salary issues, as well as over educational policy issues, with the two being intertwined.

Greenstein (2003) regards the concept of power as a set of practices and discourses that govern the interactions between social actors. The identities and interests of these actors are shaped in relation to contests over agendas, strategies, meanings, and resources. The author describes three dimensions of power which are of particular importance for this study:

- social power (access by individuals and groups to resources and control over their allocation);

- institutional power (strategies employed by groups and institutions in exercising administrative and legal authority); and

- discursive power (shaping social, political and cultural agendas through contestations over meanings).

Scholarly literature on transitions in contemporary South Africa focuses on the social dimension of power and discusses, to a limited and insufficient extent, the institutional dimension, largely ignoring the discursive dimension of power. This means that the operation of power is incompletely understood, and that one of its crucial dimensions, which make sense of the others, is missing from the analysis. As a result "we" are left with a truncated picture in which the actors that operate on behalf of other social forces (usually defined in class or race terms) are responsible for their own interpretations. Alternatively, they are seen as blank slates that merely reflect conflicts and interests that are generated from outside their boundaries in the economy and in society at large (Greenstein 2003).

Mann (1986: 52) posits that power and resistance are two separate but interdependent aspects of social interaction and distinguishes in the circuits of power model between two main kinds of resistance, namely, *effective* and *episodic* resistance. Effective resistance is organised and very rare: it becomes possible in conditions of victory over organisational functions. Episodic resistance is the most common form and generally manifests itself only against the exercise of power. Power is an inseparable part of social interaction and may be regarded as a factor that intervenes between human agency in the form of every person's inherent ability to influence the world around him and its social structure (in the form of the structures of domination that determine the degree of a person's ability to influence the world) (Mann 1986: 69).

Gaventa (1980: 39) found that the social elite make use of their power principally to prevent an increase in conflicts in its domain and to attain social quiescence. Central to this article is the decisive unravelling of how power is created and exercised in an education policy document and determining its natural consequence on social communication situations.

DISCUSSION

CAPS (2011) replaces the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (2002) and the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (2004). Although CAPS (2011) serves four purposes (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3.5), three purpose statements were analysed.

Analysis of Purpose 1

> Purpose 1: "equipping learners, irrespective of their socio-economic background, race, gender, physical ability or intellectual ability, with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country" (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3.2(a)).

This purpose of CAPS can be considered a strategy by the South African Department of Education as a form of governmentality where techniques are utilised that aim to shape the conduct of others with the intention of achieving certain objectives. Rose (1999: 4) observes: "To govern humans is not to crush their capacity to act but to acknowledge it and utilize it for one's own objectives." The emphasis is on analysing the strong coupling between power and knowledge, as well as how practices of government produce subjectivity. Thus, a discourse analysis of this purpose by means of governmentality reveals the following:

Governed individuals in this regard may refer to school managers who are expected to commit their whole being to the school. On the other hand, teachers are also governed, because it is expected that they commit their knowledge and expertise to the benefit of the education department. According to Florida (2002: 37) and Thrift (2005: 47), workers are governed because they are considered the people amidst the action that is supposed to take place in institutions such as the school. It may be argued that teachers assume the burden of extensive planning to equip learners with knowledge, skills and values. This is prescriptive and it is evident that power is exerted over teachers; although the intended purpose is noble, such power play seemingly diminishes the autonomy of teachers.

However, if teachers are thus afforded opportunities to act autonomously, this purpose lends itself to the creation of a sustainable learning environment in the sense that learners may be equipped to participate meaningfully and collaboratively in their own learning. Learning involves a collaborative process of inquiry, action and reflection to continuously improve sustainable behaviours. This holistic approach integrates knowledge, values and actions. Learning is designed, with student involvement, to be meaningful, purposeful, interesting and relevant. The educator becomes a facilitator who ensures that all students have opportunities to be listened to and participate in actions for sustainability.

Successes in achieving sustainability outcomes inform and guide cycles of ongoing improvement.

In terms of governmentality, teachers are thus rendered freedom of mind to be creative workers to skill learners for self-fulfilment and meaningful participation in society. Freedom allowed by the education department enables teachers to be "governed through their freedom" (Rose 1999: 62) because CAPS does not indicate how teachers should go about equipping learners with knowledge, skills and values.

The prior discourse analysis reveals that teachers are projected as free agents who are allowed to use their power to contribute towards the self-fulfilment and meaningful participation of learners in society. Such freedom is possible when power, according to Foucault, is productive rather than repressive. As Foucault puts it in a 1977 interview:

> If power were never anything than repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse (Foucault 1977: 119).

If, according to this stipulation, power is to be interpreted differently, discourse in education policy documents (such as CAPS) can be reinterpreted and meaning remade. Reinterpretation and remaking of meaning can assist in determining how curriculum discourse in CAPS contributes towards the enhancement or violation of a sustainable learning environment.

To adhere to the notion of multimodality, the researchers reinterpret Purpose 1 as follows: The communicative demand in the writing of "equip" may be interpreted as setting conditions for the possibility of subjectivity. It is almost as if CAPS wants to use sovereign power to dictate what teachers should do. However, if we look at the non-disciplinary form of power which illustrates "a possibility of a new form of right" (Foucault 1977: 15), it may be interpreted that teachers are liberated from constraint by CAPS. The policy demand then rather frees teachers to restructure and transform teaching practices, thus addressing curriculum expectations and meeting learners' current and future needs.

Analysis of Purpose 2

Purpose 2: "providing access to higher education" (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3.2 (b)).

In terms of governmentality, schools are mandated to ensure that learners are free to access higher education, but are pressured in terms of prescriptions in the curriculum. This is in line with the principle of "high knowledge and high skills which reflects the minimum standards of knowledge and skills to be achieved and sets high achievable standards in all subjects" (Department of Education 2011: 1.3.3 (c)). An ambiguity is detected here, because *minimum standards* and *high achievable standards* are not compatible. While there might be good intentions in policy documents and high expectations about the role of schools in promoting access to higher education, the reality is that the implementation of policy always faces problems and challenges (Cloete 2002: 452). In addition, teachers have no say in the formulation of policy; they are only seen as delivery agents of pre-planned policy (Kallaway 2007: 30). The consequence is that for various reasons, including the lack of teachers' involvement in policy formulation, not all students have the privilege of accessing higher education.

Given the discrepancy between the discrimination of "minimum" and "achievable" standards, the creation of a sustainable learning environment may elude educational institutions perpetually.

Analysis of Purpose 3

> Purpose 3: "facilitating the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace" (Department of Education 2011: Section 1.3.2(c)).

In this purpose, the concept "facilitating" implies a position of power in the hands of the teacher, whilst the learner may be regarded as a commodity to be used by the state for economic gain. The discrepancy here is that this purpose does not necessarily contribute towards the social transformation principle. Although social transformation envisages equal opportunities for all, the multicultural and social communication dimension are not considered. Though the focus appears to be on the development of the self, the meaning may be derived that this purpose explicitly favours the development of the economy. On a positive note, given the position of power of the teacher over the learner environment, the possibility exists that positive gains may be experienced, as this may directly contribute to the creation of a sustainable learning environment.

Discourse analysis by means of governmentality demonstrates that the Department of Education seemingly steps back from the exertion of power over teachers as articulated in CAPS. Although teachers are allowed to take action regarding equipping learners with knowledge and skills, the Department of Education retains power by specifying outcomes and presupposing the necessity that outcomes be achieved.

CONCLUSION

As an integral part of the transformation agenda in South African education, policy documents (Green Papers, White Papers and Acts) have been produced, constructing their purpose as promoting and protecting the rights of all learners (Van Rooyen & Le Grange 2003: 152). The purpose of the study was to provide insight into the nature of power relations as articulated in South African education policy and to explore social communication transfer in multicultural education settings. A Foucauldian discourse analysis with governmentality as a guideline was undertaken to analyse three purpose statements outlined in the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (CAPS 2011). The analysis revealed that the notion of power and its resultant effects may be regarded as a debilitating factor for both teachers and learners in a multicultural educational setting.

Whilst CAPS seemingly empowers teachers and learners to take initiative regarding knowledge transfer, the Department of Education retains the power by specifying outcomes and presupposing that outcomes will be achieved. The study suggests that although the CAPS document intends to promote social transformation and a critical approach to learning, underlying power relations play a role in the construction of meanings of the text. In terms of social communication discourse and the interpretation of meanings in CAPS statements it was found that teachers and principals still experience power being exercised over them with the Department of Education seemingly relinquishing "freedom" by expecting certain actions to be performed in the curriculum.

It is recommended that in further studies such meanings be analysed through alternative guidelines of discourse analysis such as managerialism (focus on management processes at the expense of educational purposes and values) and perfomativity (enacts or produces that which it names). An exposition of this nature will focus attention on how discourse is regulated in education policy documents.

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