

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**An analysis of the constitution of a school subject  
through recontextualizing; the case of the NAC  
drama syllabus (1994).**

**A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the Degree of**

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**by**

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## ABSTRACT

This study sets out to develop a framework for the analysis of a school subject and uses as a focal study the NAC drama syllabus developed in 1994. Drawing in the main on Basil Bernstein's theory of curriculum, an analysis is made of how a syllabus is constituted through **recontextualizing**, using the theoretical concepts of **voice** and **identity**, **classification** and **framing**, and **hierarchy**. The discourses that have been recontextualized in the formation of the syllabus are identified. Two sets of discourses are identified: **educational policy discourses** (namely the discourses of progressivism, utilitarianism and reconstruction and development) and **educational drama discourses**. The specialization of voice in the syllabus marks out the **academic identity**, and is an indicator of educational drama discourses evident in the syllabus. The specialization of identity marks out projected **social identities**, indicating the recruitment of educational policy discourses in the constitution of the syllabus.

The field in which the syllabus is constructed is also examined, which following Bernstein is defined as the **recontextualizing field**. The syllabus writers, located in this field, act selectively on the educational policy and educational drama discourses in constituting the syllabus. The **rules for selection** in the development of the syllabus are examined, and these are related to the syllabus writers' situation within the recontextualizing field. It is argued that the syllabus writers are positioned subordinately within the field, and that this factor to a large extent regulates the operation of educational policy discourses as rules for selection in the drawing up of the syllabus.

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## DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

I hereby declare that the work contained in this minor dissertation is my own work and that all sources of reference have been acknowledged. This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy at the University of Cape Town. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Signed 

Signed by candidate
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*Signature removed*  
Ursula Kate Hoadley

this 15th day of March 1997

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Locating the study

This thesis is set against a highly active period of curriculum construction in South Africa. With the aim of revising the entire education system, the state has set in motion the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which has as its main purpose the integration of education and training and the establishment of outcomes-based education in all institutions of learning. In accordance with the NQF's proposals, the National Education Department published the *Curriculum Framework for General and Further Education and Training* in 1996. In terms of the NQF and this framework new syllabuses are currently being devised in the education departments at both national and provincial levels. Stakeholder participation in the process is emphasized, and members of different education sectors (including teachers, teacher unions, NGOs, and so forth) are currently engaged in determining outcomes for their subject areas.

The concentrated activity in devising new curricula for a "new South Africa" did not begin with this process in the education departments in 1996. With the demise of apartheid, educationalists embraced the idea of a "fresh start", and outside of education departments, several projects aimed at developing new curricula were undertaken. I use as a focal study in this thesis the drama syllabus contained in one such curriculum document: the National Arts Coalition's (NAC) *Syllabus Proposals For the Creative Arts: Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Arts*. The NAC drama syllabus was formulated by a group of educational drama practitioners, including teachers and academics, in the Western Cape in 1994. The NAC document was written as a submission to the Western Cape Province Arts and Culture Task Group's (WESTAG) policy document, formulated by a voluntary task group under the auspices of the Ministry for Education and Cultural Affairs.

### 1.2 Rationale

My interest in examining the constitution of the NAC syllabus was sparked by attending, with the status of 'observer', a series of meetings in the Western Cape Education Department (11/09/96, 11/10/96 and 25/11/96), at which the Learning Area Committee for arts (including art, drama, dance and music)

was engaged in the process of drawing up syllabuses ("learning programmes") in terms of the new curriculum framework. It became clear during this process that the educational policy discourse of the NQF determined to a large extent the way in which syllabuses were being constructed.

In the course of attending these meetings I encountered the National Arts Coalition (NAC) document. It was clearly influential at the meetings, and it was suggested by many participants that it be used in the contemporary process of syllabus design. The syllabus, which was written in 1994, just after the elections, appeared to reflect the spirit of that time, with an emphasis on multi-culturalism, nationhood, and democratic idealism. I was interested in the way in which policy discourses circulating at the time of the making of the syllabus had come to shape the syllabus text. The syllabus had been developed outside the state educational departments and thus was not bound directly to the imperatives of the state (as appears to be the case with the NQF and the current process).

The NAC document consists of four separate syllabuses, for dance, drama, music and visual arts. My decision to focus on the drama syllabus in this document was informed by my interest in and study of educational drama. It was also informed by the fact that drama as a subject has not been firmly established within the formal schooling system in South Africa. In the past, the subject has in many ways run contrary to the economic and political imperatives informing educational policy in terms of subject status and priorities. I was therefore interested in how the development of the NAC syllabus related both to the educational drama discourses and to the educational policy discourses circulating at the time of its construction.

### **1.3 Research question**

As a result of my interest in the relationship between policy discourses and syllabus development, and my exposure to the NAC syllabus document, the focus of this research project is on developing an analytic framework for examining how a particular syllabus is constituted.

In surveying the literature on curriculum, I found little evidence of analyses that examined the constitution of syllabuses. However, the work of



sociologist Basil Bernstein, and in particular his notion of recontextualization, appeared to provide a fruitful means for developing a critical approach to the analysis of the syllabus. Recontextualizing describes the process whereby a discourse<sup>1</sup> is delocated from its substantive practice and context and relocated within a new discourse according to principles of selection, ordering and focusing (Bernstein, 1990:184). This theoretical approach presents a way of analysing the constitution of a syllabus as a selection from discourses circulating in the field in which it is constituted. Thus I framed my research focus: an analysis of the constitution of a syllabus, in this case the NAC drama syllabus, through recontextualizing.

#### 1.4 The study

In the thesis I use the NAC drama syllabus as a focal study to develop a framework for the analysis of the syllabus itself and how it is constituted through recontextualizing. I use Bernstein's concepts of voice and identity to analyse the syllabus and to identify the discourses that have been recontextualized in its formation. I isolate **two sets of discourses** circulating in the field in which the syllabus is constructed: the **educational policy discourses** (namely the discourses of progressivism, utilitarianism and reconstruction and development) and the **educational drama discourses**. The 'field' in which the syllabus is constructed, is the recontextualizing field, following Bernstein's theory. This field comprises two separate fields: the official recontextualizing field (ORF) (in short the bureaucracy), and the pedagogic recontextualizing field (PRF) (all interested educational actors, except officials).

The syllabus authors, situated in the PRF, act selectively on the educational policy and educational drama discourses circulating in the recontextualizing field in constructing the syllabus. This patterning and prioritizing of discourses raises the question of rules for selection, i.e. what regulates the choice of discourses for recontextualizing in the constitution of the syllabus. In the analysis, I examine how the educational policy discourses, to a large extent, regulate the rules for selection.

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<sup>1</sup>By discourse I mean the systematic and regulated character of knowledge and practices which delimits the sayable, what counts as truth and the identities or positions made possible.

In the final phase of the analysis I explain the operation of the rules for selection. I argue that the way in which the rules for selection operate is related to a number of factors, an important one being the syllabus writers' subordinate positioning in the recontextualizing field. Due to drama's low status as a school subject, and the syllabus writers' location in the PRF, the educational policy discourses to a large extent regulate rules for selection in the making of the syllabus. The syllabus authors endeavour to give drama as a subject greater significance and legitimacy by foregrounding ways in which drama serves the purposes and values defined in educational policy discourses.

In summary, this study sets out to analyse the constitution of a syllabus through the recontextualizing of discourses circulating in the recontextualizing field. It also examines the rules for selection in this process and how these rules operate. Using as a focal study a drama syllabus created in South Africa in 1994, in the PRF, the study also considers the time and place of the writing of the syllabus for the selection of its content.

This Chapter (Chapter One) provides a rationale, defines the focus of the research, and gives an overview of the dissertation as a whole.

In Chapter Two, the literature review, I examine critical approaches to curriculum, particularly to curriculum texts, in order to assess the existing research on the analysis of the constitution of syllabuses, and to locate my own study in relation to these.

In Chapter Three, I describe the theoretical notions I have used from Bernstein's work on curriculum, and outline the analytical framework I have employed in this study.

Chapter Four comprises the analysis and discussion of the data - the NAC drama syllabus - which is refracted through the notions of voice and identity in order to isolate the discourses that have been recontextualized in the developing of the syllabus.

In Chapter Five I analyse the recontextualization of educational drama discourses and educational policy discourses in the constitution of the syllabus. I provide an overview of these two sets of discourses and consider

why they were salient at the time of the syllabus' making, and examine how the discourses are recruited for recontextualizing in its constitution.

In Chapter Six I analyse the rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus. On the basis of data from policy papers and statements, I describe drama's subordinate positioning within the recontextualizing field due to its low status as a school subject. I argue that the syllabus writers draw on educational policy discourses as rules for selection as a strategy to overcome this subordination and to legitimate the establishment of drama as a subject in the school system.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis, provides a summary of the study and indicates some of its limitations. I also point to possible further research based on the analytical framework set up in the thesis.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

The focus of this research has been identified as the analysis of the constitution of a syllabus through recontextualizing, using as a focal study a drama syllabus constructed in 1994. In this chapter I will review some of the literature dealing with critical approaches to the constitution of syllabuses, and more broadly, curriculum. I make the distinction between syllabus and curriculum because it is one that is made repeatedly in the literature. Stenhouse (1980:11) asks "what is curriculum as we now understand the word? It has changed its meaning as a result of the curriculum movement. It is not a syllabus - a mere list of content to be covered". As part of this curriculum movement, Wexler (1987) defines curriculum in the broadest sense of the new sociology of education as belonging to the domain of cultural theory. Muller argues that the "problematic of the curriculum so conceived is that of the production and distribution of socially-relevant knowledge, and the way such processes are shaped by social and political forces" (1996b:184). This raises a number of questions and critical approaches to the curriculum that are commonly addressed: the relationship between school and work, knowledge and skill; the question of how curriculum can and should relate to identity construction and citizenship; the social construction of school subjects; and the relation between knowledge and curriculum on the one hand, and bureaucracy, democracy and the state on the other.

These issues have resulted in a large body of literature, referred to by Pinar (1975) as "curriculum theorizing", which refers to the different values and methods used to portray and theorize the curriculum. Although maintaining a commitment to transform or reconceptualize the existing curriculum field, the emphasis is on reflection and theorizing rather than on the production of documents, curriculum plans or theories.

The work of curriculum theorists is, however, invaluable to those engaging in curriculum research, in that it provides a range of perspectives and analytical tools with which to engage in the study of curriculum. Critical curriculum

theory provides an overarching framework within which specific approaches to curriculum can be located. This is the case in this study as, using Bernstein in the main, I examine the socio-political influences (as manifest in educational policy discourses) on curriculum.

The literature review consists of four sections. In the first section I review some of the work in the area of curriculum design and development. Although the purposes and approach of this work differs from those of this study, a large portion of the literature concerned with the written curriculum is devoted to this approach (i.e. "how to" develop and design curriculum). In the second section I review a sample of the literature on critical curriculum theory, particularly those authors who examine how socio-political relations are reproduced in the curriculum. In the third section, I review some of the critical approaches to the **written** curriculum, and examine how the analyses of syllabuses and textbooks, and the study of school subjects take up the issues raised by critical curriculum theory in relation to specific texts. In the fourth section I review some of the literature on policy and curriculum, thus locating the specific approach that is taken in this study which examines educational policy discourses as manifestations of the socio-political influences on curriculum.

Aside from the review of literature in the areas of critical curriculum theory and policy and curriculum, the focus of this literature review is on the **written curriculum**, or as Goodson (1991) terms it, the 'curriculum as prescription'. In the literature there appears to be a minority of studies which engage directly with the written curriculum (particularly syllabuses). The reason for this is that many educationalists dismiss the written curriculum as having little or no impact on the practice of teaching, or on the assessment that comes at the end of a course of study. Regarding the syllabus as curriculum is perceived as taking a limited, rational and technocratic approach to a field of study that is organic, unpredictable and dependent on the actions of human agency (teachers, learners and so forth). Cornbleth is one of the most vociferous critics on curriculum analyses that focus on the written curriculum:

Critical empirical studies of curriculum and efforts to reform curriculum consistent with values of human possibility and social justice have tended to focus in curriculum documents such as syllabi and textbooks rather than curriculum practice ... There must be greater attention to context and contextualized social processes (Cornbleth, 1990:198).

Most of the literature does in fact focus on practice, that is when the syllabus enters the classroom, and the autonomy of the school and of practice is celebrated throughout the critical writings on curriculum. Goodson (1991) however, emphasizes the importance of examining the prescriptive curriculum, in developing a social constructionist perspective of curriculum:

...the written curriculum, whether as courses of study, syllabuses, guidelines or textbooks, is a supreme example of the invention of tradition; but as with all tradition it is not a once-and-for-all given, it is a given that has to be defended, where the mystifications have to be constructed and reconstructed over time. Plainly if curriculum theorists ignore the history and social construction of curriculum, such mystification and reproduction of 'traditional' curriculum form becomes easier. An important stage, then, in the development of a social constructionist perspective is the production of a wide series of studies on the social construction of the prescriptive curriculum (Goodson, 1991:179),

and goes on to say that:

For only what is prepared on the drawing board goes into the school and therefore *has a chance* to be interpreted and survive...clear parameters to practice are socially constructed at the preactive level. Practice in short is socially constructed at the preactive *and* interactive levels (1991:180, emphasis in original).

I focus in this literature review on studies of the written curriculum. This is not to deny the importance of curriculum as practice, or broader notions of curriculum. However, this study is an analysis of syllabus in the preactive stage, that is curriculum as prescription.

## **2.2 Curriculum design and development**

Much of the literature on curriculum deals with curriculum planning, and models or guidelines for the task of constituting a curriculum. There is a large body of literature concerned with ways of planning and developing curriculum, as opposed to analysing what is existent. There are a numerous models and checklists provided by a number of writers, arguing for ways of improving the curriculum. Few however provide models for analysing the curriculum as it is. Some of the models for the construction of a syllabus could be seen as models for the analysis of a syllabus, however they do not take into account the ideological strands underlying a syllabus nor the function of discursive conditions and offer very little insight into the socio-political nature of the constitution of curriculum. They are generally

mechanistic, linear, rational models concerned with the setting out of aims, goals, and objectives. Walker and Soltis (1986:83) state, however, that although "there are no firm conclusions about the aims of education, there is much to be learned from studying and thinking about them".

One of the most commonly cited examples is that of Tyler and the well established and widely used Tyler Model which first appeared in his book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949). The model describes how to build a curriculum by posing four questions: 'What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?', 'What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?', 'How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?', 'How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?'. In short the model takes into account Aims and Objectives, Content, Organisation, and Evaluation (Lawton, 1973:13). The model has, however, come under severe criticism as a technocratic, linear view of curriculum. Olson states that schools "persist in using curriculum models grounded in technical rationality (for example Tyler's model) because they fit well with the bureaucratic organisation of schools" (1989). One of the main reasons why this type of view of curriculum and this way of planning has come under attack is because there remain severe discrepancies between curriculum documents and curriculum practice (Cornbleth, 1990:18), and there is a shift away from viewing curriculum as a product to viewing it as a process. Cornbleth also states that "there is also evidence that the curriculum products produced under the umbrella of these models are not widely used or used as intended by their developers" (1990:15).

A different, and less mechanistic approach is the situational analysis model which takes 'context' into account in the planning process. This analysis involves reviewing (external) broader contextual issues and (internal) school environment issues, and then planning curriculum from there. Reynolds and Skilbeck (1976) argue that this process is really one of cultural analysis. Soliman et al (1981) have developed a 'situational analysis checklist' covering such factors as societal and cultural values and expectations, resources and finances, educational system requirements, content, forms of knowledge, internal factors, and learning processes.

Breen (1987) takes a different approach to syllabus design, analysing a number of paradigms of syllabus design. His focus is on language syllabuses and he argues that there are a range of requirements to which syllabus designers must be responsive. In order to meet these requirements the syllabus designer constitutes a syllabus according to four organizing principles of focus, selection, subdivision and sequencing. In analysing the syllabus types, he poses the following questions: what knowledge does it focus upon and prioritize?, what capabilities does it focus upon and prioritize?, on what basis does it select and subdivide what is to be learned?, how does it sequence what is to be learned?, and what is its rationale?

Throughout his discussion he relates how the selection, sequencing, and focus of the subject relate to the subject itself. For example, in discussing the formal syllabus design, he states that "the formal syllabus is organised in ways that, as directly as is feasible, reflect the organisation or 'logic' inherent in the language itself" (pg. 85).

The questions that Breen raises have relevance to this study as I pose similar questions in analysing the constitution of the syllabus. However these are taken up through the notion of recontextualizing. Breen considers how the way in which the syllabus is constituted is linked to the intrinsic nature of the subject itself, namely language, and does not deal with extrinsic factors such as the discursive and ideological conditions of the place and time in which the syllabus is shaped. It must also be remembered that Breen is analysing designs for syllabuses, and not syllabuses themselves.

### **2.3 Critical curriculum theory**

In the 1960s and 1970s a new approach to the sociology of education arose particularly in Britain and to a lesser extent in the United States. Educationalists like Michael Young and Basil Bernstein undertook "a systematic study of the curriculum as the organised and codified reflection of societal and ideological interests" (Sadnovik, 1991:48). Their approach critically examined curriculum not merely as an organisation of school knowledge, but also as a social and political construction. Integral to the 'new sociology of education' was the belief that the "sociology of education is no longer conceived as the area of enquiry distinct from the sociology of knowledge" (Young 1971:3).



The new direction in the sociology of education was largely a response to the economic determinism of Bowles and Gintis (1976), which viewed schooling in direct correspondence to the capitalist relations of production. New sociologists of curriculum and pedagogy sought to understand the degrees of autonomy in schools, as well as the specific ways that schooling is related to larger social, political and economic conditions. School knowledge is therefore viewed as being produced by human subjects operating in specific social contexts and thus underpinned by the political, economic and ideological interests within that context. This conception of curriculum is articulated by many of the authors engaged in current curriculum theorizing. Goodson, Meyer and Apple affirm that

curricula are not simply there, natural objects that arise from the accumulated wisdom of the past. Rather, curricula are often the results of political settlements and compromises over what is important to know (1991:3).

They go on to describe the profoundly social nature of the curriculum; that curriculum must be conceived of socially, that it must be thought about in terms of the relationship between knowledge and power. Thus what is selected as legitimate knowledge, how it is organised, what its means and ends are, and to whom it is taught, is dependent on social relations both within the education system and between education and other sectors of society. The question of power is thus raised: whose interests are embedded in the curriculum, and through what cultural and political processes is the dominant discourse articulated through the curriculum?

Bernstein's well-known paper on the classification and framing of educational knowledge was first published in *Knowledge and Control* (Young, 1971). Here he argues that changes in the curriculum are part of the larger question of changes in the structure of cultural transmission. This paper begins with the celebrated statement that:

How a society selects, classifies, distributes transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control (Bernstein, 1975:85).

In this statement Bernstein points a way towards analysing curriculum, in order to understand the processes of knowledge construction, and to address some of the questions raised by the critical curriculum theory instigated by the new sociologists of education.

Young (1971) in *Knowledge and Control*, suggests "new directions for the sociology of education" (the sub title of the book). One important direction to which he draws attention is that it is the status of knowledge which is necessarily implicated in any consideration of the power of definition in respect of what counts as knowledge. The dominant characteristics of high-status knowledge are identified, and attention is drawn to the implications of the stratification of knowledge for the academic identities of educators and learners.

Michael Apple, in *Ideology and Curriculum* (1979), claims that the primary function of schools is really "cultural reproduction", that is reproducing in each new generation the social patterns and power relations of the prior one. Schooling functions, he maintains, to reproduce and sustain an unjust, inhumane society and maldistribution of power. It helps those in power to maintain their power, and trains those without power to accept their underclass station in life. It does this in part by teaching a selective version of knowledge. A partial and biased set of facts is purveyed as the complete, neutral, objective truth.

## **2.4 Critical approaches to the written curriculum**

In this section I review some of the more specific approaches taken to the curriculum, focusing on the written curriculum. There is very little evidence of work done in analysing syllabuses, specifically, but in many of the following studies syllabuses have implicitly been used in the analyses. I found no models pertaining to the analysis of the constitution of syllabuses directly and the general approach appears to be the examination of the content of the written curriculum in relation to social and political factors.

### **2.4.1 Analyses of syllabus**

A sample of some of the literature dealing with the analysis of syllabuses through direct engagement with the documents will be discussed in this section. A number of approaches to the analysis of syllabus are examined.

Ashley's (1982) focus in his analysis of Joint Matriculation Board syllabuses is on the "stimulation of a critical scrutiny of society" (pg. 369). Looking at literature and art, language, history and religious education, he focuses on

**omissions** in these syllabuses, and concludes that "existing syllabuses of the JMB leave out knowledge and learning experiences which are critical to the development of social awareness in pupils" (pg. 372). His analysis focuses largely on the content of the syllabuses and the lack of South African and African resources prescribed for learning. This results in syllabuses that are Christian, white and Euro-centrally oriented.

Ashley's view that a "syllabus is interesting as much for what it leaves out as for what it puts in" (1982:372) is similar to the concept of the "null curriculum", which has been described as the curriculum that does not exist because it is left out. Kitshoff (1988) uses this notion in discussing religious education. Account of omissions is evident, too, in Anyon's (1979) study of United States history textbooks. Although not the focus of this study, I do refer to omissions in the focal study, particularly what changes and is left out from one level in the NAC syllabus to another.

Harley (1989) in his doctoral thesis on the South African curriculum's relation to wider society (pre 1948), uses the Weberian concepts of class, status and party in analysing the school curriculum and society in a particular historical period. This is done within the overarching theory of relative autonomy with its roots in the Marxist tradition (pg. 65). Harley defines the curriculum, for the purposes of his study, as "the management of knowledge", and draws his data from material from a variety of official sources, including syllabuses and policy documents, in this way affording himself as researcher, an insight into the educational "atmosphere of the time" (1989:75).

The work has relevance to my own in that it uses specific analytic tools in order to understand how syllabuses were constituted in relation to the time and place of their making. However, Harley uses the tools in a different way, "comparing features of the curriculum made available to specific groups with the social position of those same groups in respect of class, status and party" (pg. 73).

The marking out of identities, particularly in terms of race and gender, through curriculum has been extensively researched. Most of these studies have focused on curriculum as practice. Auerbach (1965) presents an interesting, early example of the analysis of the written curriculum in his study of the history curriculum in South Africa. Analysing syllabuses and

textbooks, he found representations of institutionalized racism with blacks being portrayed as representing danger and threat. In his analysis of syllabuses, Auerbach subjects the texts to a grading in the following categories: biased wording, lack of balance, falsification, assumed superiority, inadequate appreciation of others, and bias created by omission. He also defines the qualitative data quantitatively by comparing the percentage of text devoted to South African history, to the percentage of general (mainly European) history.

Several authors analyse syllabus documents through an examination of the discrepancies between what is set out in the syllabus and the examinations that follow the course of study. In discussing the history curriculum in South Africa, Van den Berg and Buckland (1983) point out the rhetorical nature of the syllabus:

The official aims of the core syllabus serve largely a rhetorical function, so that if they were removed it would probably make no difference to the syllabus at all. Taken further, one may well imagine one type of content and emphasis being formally laid down in the syllabus while the examination is so constructed that it tests other things - that is the examination serves to subvert the rest of the syllabus and comes to replace the official aims that have been laid down (pg. 34).

Siebörger, Kallaway, Bottoro and Hiscock (1993) also examine the disjunction between syllabus and assessment in the history curriculum. Two history examination papers (the former DET and former NED Higher Grade History Senior Certificate examinations) are analysed and the authors conclude that, although based on the same core syllabus, the papers represent two completely different approaches to understanding and interpreting history. The authors also conduct an analysis of 1987 - 1989 Senior Certificate history HG examination papers, by examining the type of questions set, the selection of content, and technical and procedural problems. Their conclusion is once more that there is a disjunction between syllabus aims and the Senior Certificate examination. They envisage a syllabus that gives appropriate methods of assessment for each of its aims and conclude that "if public confidence is to be placed in Senior Certificate history examinations, they need to be more professionally constructed, shredded, scrutinised and properly moderated" (Siebörger et al, 1993:228).

Joffe (1993) also points to the failure of syllabuses to give any indication of how assessments should be devised and carried out in order to address the "laudable sentiments" of syllabus approaches and activities (pg. 232).

### **2.4.2 Analyses of textbooks**

There is a considerable amount of literature on the analysis of textbooks, particularly in the US, where state control of textbook publishing puts it in a powerful position to influence what counts for official knowledge and the wide dissemination of this knowledge. Considerable emphasis is placed in the literature on textbooks. This is probably because syllabuses are generally short and concise, and although containing details about objectives, content, assessment and sometimes methods and resource recommendations, textbooks are more detailed. A lot of the literature around textbooks, as with syllabuses, applies to the curriculum in use. i.e. the focus is again on the text once it enters the classroom. A number of checklists have also been developed for assessing textbooks, including those by Eraut (1975), Piper (1976) and Gall (1981).

In countries where only state-approved textbooks are used, publishers avoid controversial issues like race, gender and class so as to maintain high volume sales (Apple, 1993). Lorimer and Keeney (1989) state that in this regard textbook publishers "stimulate and shape demand and constrain the choices available to the consumer" (pg. 19).

Anyon (1988) undertakes an analysis of the political and economic content of social studies textbooks and argues that "the textbooks provide conceptual legitimacy to US social arrangements by omitting social conflict, misrepresenting the realities of economic participation, disguising or rationalising political and economic power and privilege, and constraining approved methods of dissent and social change" (pg. 185). Dowling (1994), using a case study of textbooks in the UK, shows how the recontextualization of "everyday" content into maths texts hinders rather than helps the acquisition of maths for working class children. Flanagan's (1985) study of a selection of primary school textbooks in use in Natal argues that these are saturated with assumptions and selective views of reality.

### 2.4.3 Study of school subjects

Another approach to curriculum research is a recent trend to give attention to specific school subjects in order to examine the nature of curriculum change. One of the leading researchers in this area is Goodson, who emphasizes the importance of a socio-historical approach to the study of school subjects. In his book *School Subjects and Curriculum Change* (1987), Goodson undertakes a series of historical case studies of three school subjects: biology, geography and rural studies. His analytic approach entails an examination of the process by which each of these fields of study evolved into school subjects, and the issues, conflicts and compromises which occurred in the promotion of these subjects. He states that "much of the curriculum debate can be interpreted in terms of conflict between subjects over status, resources and territory" (1987:3) Goodson stresses the importance of the socio-historical approach to curriculum studies.

Popkewitz also emphasizes a socio-historical approach to studying school subjects in the introduction to the volume *The Formation of School Subjects*:

By looking at how our practices have been shaped by the particular struggles to define the American school curriculum, we can better understand not only the possibilities open to our predecessors, but the social context of power and discourse which made the actual directions taken as plausible paths to follow. We can appreciate how particular social values are made into ideologies; how the assumptions and debates of a particular segment of American society become taken-for-granted. The study of the past may also enable to consider the possibilities of our own situation (Popkewitz: 1987:x).

Hargreaves (1989) takes a similar approach, stating that

school subjects are more than just groupings of intellectual thought. They are social systems too. They compete for power, prestige, recognition and reward within the secondary or high school system (pg. 56).

In his socio-historical analysis of the subject English in the UK, Ball (1990) draws on a number of Board of Education papers, syllabuses and memorandums in reconstructing the development of the subject. A number of paradigms are evident at any one time in the history of the subject, all struggling for ascendancy. Ball emphasizes that at the level of the school, the paradigm positions that are adopted are dependent on individual

teachers and their allegiances. He thus calls into question the power of specific curriculum paradigms to define the nature of the school subject.

Other work that has contributed to this field includes that of Smith (1984), Ball (1984) and Reid (1984). This thesis draws on the approach to analysing curriculum by engaging in specific school subjects from a socio-historical perspective in the historical description of the development of the school subject drama in Chapter Five, and in the overview of the promotion of the subject drama in Chapter Six.

## 2.5 Policy and curriculum construction

As part of the analysis in this study, I examine how policy discourses to a large extent determine how the syllabus is constituted. I therefore provide a review of some of the literature that pertains to this issue.

It is clear from a survey of the literature that state policy plays an important role in the constitution of curriculum. In Popkewitz's (1987) *The Formation of School Subjects*, the authors focus on how school content is shaped and fashioned by issues located in the larger structure of power. Apple (1993) states that:

the means and ends involved in educational policy and practice are the result of strategies by powerful groups and social movements to make their knowledge legitimate, to defend or increase their patterns of social mobility, and to increase their power in larger social arenas (Apple, 1993:10).

However, the relationship between policy and curriculum is generally defined in terms of a struggle. Muller and Taylor (1995) assert that:

The curriculum embodies the values and practices of the dominant [social] group at its most powerful. It is always the result of a process of struggle. It is always also related to the broader field of power in society at large. This is a precarious position. It needs to be defended by continuous struggle, though this struggle is usually deeply embedded in the conventions and niceties of the field in question. **Thus every redescription represents a site of struggle where rival groups battle for control of the transaction of legitimate definition or practice** (1995, 209 Emphasis in original).

Weiler (1993) uses as a case study the Federal Republic of Germany to show how the state has powerful accumulation and legitimation imperatives to satisfy, and how curriculum is usurped to a large extent by the state in

order to satisfy these objectives. The state keeps the participation of social groupings at a largely symbolic level and the rhetoric of participation serves to maintain its own legitimacy.

There is an extensive amount of literature on the rightist resurgence in education, particularly in Britain and the US, where conservative restoration and an increasing centralization of the education system have led to the bureaucracy, with its particular political discourse, gaining the upper hand in this struggle. Apple (1993) cites the US report *Nations at Risk* as a demonstration of the increasing power of conservative ideologies in the public discourse (pg. 122). He points out that despite the rhetoric of "teacher development, co-operation and empowerment ... centralization, standardization and rationalisation may be the strongest tendencies" (pg.119).

Dowling and Noss (1990), Ball (1993), and Goodson (1993) examine the effect of the Conservative New Right on the National Curriculum implemented in the late 1980s in Britain. In particular they examine how the centralization of the curriculum ensured bureaucratic control over the way in which the curriculum was constructed.

Kallaway (1984) demonstrates how apartheid policies related to a curriculum of racial differentiation. Even education reform strategies on the part of the apartheid government (e.g. de Lange) formed part of a strategy to preserve the status quo, and school people for their role in the apartheid capitalist hierarchy.

But Apple (1993) asserts that the "powerful are not **that** powerful. The politics of official knowledge are the politics of **accords** or **compromises**. They are usually not impositions, but signify how dominant groups try to create situations where the compromises that are formed favour them" (pg.10). He describes how these compromises occur at different levels, that of political and ideological discourse, and the level of the school. Muller and Taylor (1993) also examine the formation of school knowledge at different levels, or within different **domains**. In examining the constitution of curriculum they describe how "social knowledge becomes validated as school knowledge" (1993:312). In doing this they examine the various 'domains' (e.g. the domain of everyday life, the academic domain and the



bureaucratic domain) between and within which there are contestations for the validation of knowledge, which are linked to social interests. Since actors within these domains have unequal possession of control and command of the rules the outcomes generally favour "a particular configuration of interests" (Taylor, 1993:14).

Evans and Penney (1995) examine the proposals for the subject Physical Education (PE) in Britain and investigate the impact of the 1988 Education Reform Act on the provision of PE in schools. They describe how the conservative political discourse of 'cultural restoration' reduces PE to sport and team games, thus obfuscating the broader curriculum aims and pedagogical intentions of the subject. This study has particular relevance to my own analysis in that it draws on Bernstein's notion of recontextualizing in order to demonstrate how what counts as the "official pedagogic discourse" of PE is a result of the political discourse being recontextualized in the constitution of the subject. They also examine the recontextualizing field in the constitution of the new proposals for PE, and indicate the weakness of the PRF against the ORF's imperatives for the subject. They describe how the state's "discourse not only limits the definition of the subject ... but also the identities of its teachers" (pg.187).

## **2.6 Conclusion**

What my survey of the literature indicated was that the central concern in curriculum analysis is a broader concern with the development of curriculum and curriculum as practice. Very little work appears to engage with the written curriculum, in the structuring and content of individual documents. Critical curriculum theory provides broad approaches to the study of curriculum. These broad approaches, their ways of thinking about and conceptualizing the curriculum, necessarily influence detailed and specific approaches to the analysis of curriculum. In particular, Bernstein's structural analysis of curriculum offers a lens for viewing the socially constructed nature of curriculum. His theory provides insights and analytical concepts to engage in an analysis of a syllabus.

In the literature review I have offered a sample of the approaches taken to analysing the written curriculum. It becomes clear that there is a paucity of literature dealing with the analysis of the curriculum as prescription,

particularly syllabus documents. In this thesis I attempt to provide a framework for the analysis of the constitution of a syllabus document, using certain theoretical notions from Bernstein, and informed by the literature reviewed in this chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to analyse the constitution of a syllabus. This I attempt to do by analysing the discursive conditions of the field in which the syllabus is produced, and examining how the discourses circulating at the time and place of the syllabus' construction are recontextualized in its making. In this chapter I give an account of the theory underlying the analytical framework of the thesis and the methodology I employed in setting about my analysis.

### 3.1 Bernstein's theory of curriculum and pedagogy

In setting up a framework for the analysis of a syllabus, I have drawn substantially on the work of Basil Bernstein. I begin with an overview of his approach to curriculum, and then go on to explain the specific concepts that I use in this study.

Bernstein takes a sociological approach to the analysis of schooling and understands curriculum as a social and political construct. Bernstein's emphasis is thus on the "social nature of the system of choices from which emerges a constellation called a curriculum" (1975:80). He attempts to show, at a theoretical level, the relationship between a particular symbolic order, and the selective organization, transmission and evaluation of knowledge. Bernstein maintains that this selection is intimately bound up with patterns of authority and control, and that "the battle over curricula is also a conflict between different conceptions of social order" (1975:81).

In Bernstein's view, the structure and processes of school knowledge, transmission and practice consist of three parts, and these three parts form, and should be treated as, a whole. Bernstein states that "curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogy defines what counts as valid transmission of knowledge, and evaluation defines what counts as a valid realization of the knowledge on the part of the taught" (1975:85).

Bernstein's overall project can be described as an attempt to create a language which allows for the integration of macro and micro levels of analysis. He thus draws the connections between the micro processes of curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation in the school, and the macro processes

of power and class relations of the wider society. Bernstein's focus in his theory of curriculum is on social relationships, and how the social relationships reflected in the curriculum relate to the social relationships in broader society. Power and control are thus central to his analysis; as are the related concepts of **classification** and **framing**. Classification concerns the bounding of knowledge in the curriculum, and is about power; framing refers to the organization within these boundaries, and is about control. These concepts, together with those elaborated on below, provide a theoretical language facilitating the examination of the **production** of curriculum, and the **structuring** of curriculum. Both of these aspects are addressed in analysing the constitution of the NAC syllabus.

### 3.1.1 The production of curriculum

#### *Recontextualization*

According to Bernstein the production of curriculum takes place via a process of recontextualization, whereby "knowledge passes through the educational system via a series of reinterpretations" (Muller & Taylor, 1995:206). In the process of recontextualization, a discourse is delocated from its substantive context and practice, and relocated into a new discourse. In the process of 'delocating' and 'relocating', the discourse is modified by selection, simplification, condensation and elaboration. The discourse is thus repositioned and refocused (Bernstein, 1990:184).

Bernstein provides a detailed analysis of pedagogic discourse that presents a highly complex analysis of the recontextualization of knowledge through the pedagogic device. Bernstein's project is to pose a model for examining the general principles underlying the "pedagogizing of knowledge" (1996:39). Bernstein is concerned in this process with the 'relay' as opposed to the 'relayed'. In other words, he is looking at the process whereby knowledge is transformed into educational knowledge. Bernstein defines the 'relay' as the pedagogic discourse, which is the principle which removes (delocates) a discourse from its practice and context and relocates that discourse according to its own principle of selective reordering and focusing. The pedagogic discourse has no discourse of its own, but rather,

Pedagogic discourse is a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into a special relation with each other for the purpose of their selective transmission and acquisition (Bernstein, 1990:184).

The pedagogic device, which provides the "intrinsic grammar of the pedagogic discourse," (Bernstein, 1996:42), comprises a set of rules which can either enhance or restrict "the potential discourse available to be pedagogized" (ibid.). The rules of the pedagogic device regulate the way in which knowledge is transformed into educational knowledge. The pedagogic device has three rules: distributive rules, recontextualizing rules and evaluative rules.

For the purposes of this study, I have focused on one aspect of the pedagogic device: the recontextualizing rules. Although the three sets of rules are interconnected, and one level is derived from the one before it, due to the necessarily limited nature of the study, I have extracted the recontextualizing rules only from the pedagogic device for use as an analytic tool in the analysis.

The recontextualizing rules regulate the selection, ordering and focusing of knowledge as it is transformed into educational knowledge. These recontextualizing rules define the **process** whereby a discourse is taken out of its original context, is then modified, and reinserted into a new discourse. Therefore, it is possible to speak of the 'recontextualizing process' or 'recontextualization'.

### ***The recontextualizing field***

The production of curriculum, through the process of recontextualization, takes place within a field. For the purposes of this study, 'field' can be defined as an analytic space, constituted by circulating discourses, and structured by specialized social relationships and practices.

In terms of Bernstein's theory recontextualization occurs within the recontextualizing field. Bernstein states that it is "the recontextualizing field that generates the positions and oppositions of pedagogic theory, research and practice"(1990:61), and his analysis examines the dominant principles and the constitution of positions, agents and practices within the field.

Bernstein distinguishes between two fields within the recontextualizing field: the official recontextualizing field (ORF) and the pedagogic recontextualizing field (PRF):

The *official recontextualizing field* (ORF) includes specialized departments and sub-agencies of the State and local educational authorities together with their research and system of inspectors, in short the bureaucracy.

The *pedagogic recontextualizing field* (PRF) includes all interested educational actors (rather than officials) with an interest in the "circulation and reproduction of educational knowledge" (Muller & Taylor, 1995:203). It includes professional teacher organisations, academics, specialized media of education, like journals, and business organisations, schools and school teachers.

Bernstein's interest is in the interplay between these two fields in the recontextualizing of pedagogic discourses. ✓✓

### 3.1.2 The structuring of curriculum

As well as examining the **production** of curriculum, Bernstein's work also offers analytical tools for examining the **structuring** of curriculum. As mentioned before, central to his theory of curriculum are the concepts of classification and framing. Classification and framing in turn relate to the specializing of voice and identity. In examining the structuring of curriculum, it is possible to discern certain hierarchies which emerge from the specialization of voice and identity and the classification and framing at different levels. I will take each of these concepts in turn in order to provide definitions for the terms Bernstein applies to the analysis of the structuring of curriculum. 10

#### ***Classification and framing***

Bernstein defines classification as "the degree of boundary maintenance between contents" (Bernstein, 1973:68) and is concerned with the insulation or boundaries between curricular categories (areas of knowledge and subjects). The boundaries between everyday knowledge and academic

knowledge can also be referred to in terms of classification<sup>1</sup>. Framing refers to the location of control over the rules of communication. Furthermore, "frame refers to the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organization, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship" (Bernstein, 1973:88). Framing has to do with the way in which the relationship between the teacher and the learner is set up; "strong framing refers to a limited degree of options between teacher and students; weak framing implies more freedom" (Sadnovik, 1991:53).

Whereas classification deals with 'relations between' (everyday knowledge and school knowledge), framing describes the 'relations within'. Thus framing is a means to analysing the extent to which the learner is able to bring their own texts (everyday knowledge) into the classroom to be used in the learning, and the degree of control the learner has in the sequencing, pacing and selection of the knowledge transmitted.

### ***Specialization of voice and identity***

The specialization of <sup>Power</sup>voice and <sup>Control</sup>identity are key concepts in my analysis of the syllabus. According to Bernstein, 'specialization' "reveals differences from, rather than commonality. It means that your educational identity and specific skills are clearly marked and bounded" (1975:81).

'Voice' refers to the voice of the discipline, i.e. the language, vocabulary and conventions associated with, and specific to, the subject discipline. The way in which voice is specialized in the syllabus is thus an indicator of the degree to which the academic identity is marked out. To give a brief example, in grade two drama the specialization of voice would be minimal, as everyday

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<sup>1</sup>Bernstein describes these difference in terms of framing: "Thus we can consider the variations in the strengths of frames as these refer to the strength of the boundary between educational knowledge and everyday community knowledge of teacher and taught" (1975:206). Atkinson, referring to the same quotation, has argued that in practice "this latter aspect of boundary seems equally a matter of classification and frame, since it is often related directly to the relative purity and strength of the membrane of curriculum contents. Empirical research tends to reflect this overlap and ambiguity" (1985:136). I thus use classification to describe the way in which knowledge is organised in the curriculum, and the way in which the relationship between the educational knowledge and the everyday community knowledge of the learners is delineated. Framing refers to the extent to which learners can bring their own everyday narratives into the classroom.

language would predominantly be used. In grade twelve drama, the academic identity would be clearly marked out in the use of the specialized language and conventions of the discipline of drama.

In analysing the specialization of identity I am examining the **social** identity, as opposed to the academic identity, that is projected through the syllabus.<sup>2</sup> 'Identity' refers to the condition or quality of being a specified person and the syllabus projects certain identities for learners (other than the academic identity established through the specialization of voice). Identity in the syllabus focuses initially on what the learner **is** (e.g. a learner in South Africa with a cultural history, with a specific social identity), and secondly on what the learner will **become**, as a consequence of the learning that takes place (e.g. a citizen, a person in the workplace, a drama/theatre specialist). Examining the specialization of identity (i.e. the construction of specific identities for learners) allows for the exploration of what discourses have been recruited from the recontextualizing field in constructing the syllabus, as "identities ... face outwards to fields of practice and thus their contents are likely to be dependent on the requirements of those fields" (Bernstein, 1996:68).

The specialization of voice and identity is related to classification and framing. With the specialization of voice, there is a strengthening of the boundary between academic knowledge and everyday community knowledge, and consequently strong classification of the subject. With weak classification (and weak framing), the identities established are likely to be derived from the everyday community of the learners, and there is a specialization of (the social) identity.

The specialization of voice is an indicator of the academic discourses that are represented in the syllabus. The specialization of identity reflects the social discourses (which I will define later as educational policy discourses) recruited in the constitution of the syllabus.

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<sup>2</sup>Whereas I make the distinction between 'voice' and 'identity', Bernstein makes the distinction between 'voice' and 'message'. In his terms, the voice is the voice of the discipline, and the message is its specific realization. In terms of the subject drama, the dramatic voice can articulate in a range of different ways; through local plays, Brecht, story-telling, playmaking and so forth. All concern drama but each constitutes drama in a different way. In other words, different **messages** are drawn on to specialize the **voice** of drama in the academic identity. It is these messages which in my study construct social identity.



## ***Hierarchies***

Bernstein uses the notion of hierarchy in referring to the social relationships in schools. He states that "the educand is seen as ignorant with little status and therefore few rights" (1975:82). The notion of hierarchy is also applied to an examination of the structuring of curriculum. Through an analysis of the curriculum in terms of classification and framing, and voice and identity, certain hierarchies emerge as a result of the way in which knowledge is organized. The concept of hierarchy in relation to the syllabus is used to describe how knowledge is distributed, how shifts occur in the classification and framing of the subject, and in the specialization of voice and identity at different levels. In the analysis I examine the hierarchical nature of the syllabus to reveal its logic.

The analysis of the production of curriculum through the process of recontextualization, together with the recontextualizing fields and agents, is central to my analysis of how a syllabus is constituted. I also use analytical tools which examine the structuring of curriculum: classification and framing values, the specialization of voice and identity, and the examination of hierarchies. In the following section I describe my methodological approach to analysing the syllabus.

### **3.2 Methodology**

The study begins with the analysis of the data. I use, as a focal study, the NAC drama syllabus constructed in 1994. In order to analyse the syllabus, I separate the text into three categories, **resources**, **modalities** and **skills**, which comprehensively describe the content of the syllabus. I examine the specialization of voice and identity that occurs in terms of these three categories. I examine the classification and framing of the subject, and also the hierarchies that are developed, evidenced through the sequencing of the syllabus, and the specialization of time (based on the age and cognitive development of the learners at different levels in the syllabus).

By analysing the specialization of voice and identity I examine the academic and social identities that are determined at different stages in the syllabus. The specialization of voice establishes the academic identity and the

specialization of identity projects social identities. The next step in the analysis is to isolate the discourses that are reflected in the identities established through the syllabus. I select the discourses inductively through the analysis of the specialization of voice and identity in the syllabus. I identify two sets of discourses that act as reservoirs for recruitment in the constitution of the syllabus: **the educational policy discourses**, and the **subject-specific discourses** (in the case of the NAC syllabus, the discourses of educational drama). The educational policy discourses are "constituted by the dialectic between political and educational authority at national level" (Cox, 1984:376). I regard the educational policy discourses as manifestations of the socio-political configuration that informs the constitution of the syllabus, and relates to the time and place of the constitution of the syllabus (in the case of the NAC syllabus, South Africa, 1994).

The specialization of voice is an indicator of the subject-specific discourses that are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus; the specialization of identity is an indicator of the recruitment of educational policy discourses. Both sets of discourses circulate within the recontextualizing field and are available for selection in constituting the syllabus. Although there are other discourses in the field in which the syllabus is constructed, I select for analysis those discourses represented in the syllabus: in the case of the NAC syllabus, the educational policy discourses (the discourses of utilitarianism, reconstruction and development and progressivism) and educational drama discourses. ✓

Having identified the discourses that are drawn on, I examine how, in constituting the syllabus, the agents in the recontextualizing field act selectively on the subject-specific discourses and the educational policy discourses. These discourses are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus. In the process of recontextualization, a discourse (such as drama, for example), is delocated from its substantive context and practice (i.e. the intellectual field of educational drama<sup>3</sup>), and relocated into a new discourse

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<sup>3</sup>Davis indicates two subfields within the field of recontextualization: the subfield of primary recontextualizing and the subfield of secondary recontextualizing. "The subfield of primary recontextualizing demands of agents an engagement with various discourses in order to effect the **initial** delocation and relocation of a selection of contents. the subfield of secondary recontextualizing is constituted by the recontextualizing of **already recontextualized contents**" (Davis, 1995:43, emphasis mine). In this study, the syllabus is constituted from the subfield of secondary recontextualizing, as drama has already been recontextualized as educational drama.

(such as grade two drama, for example). In the process of 'delocating' and 'relocating', the discourse is modified by selection, simplification, condensation and elaboration. The discourse is thus repositioned and refocused.

The purpose of the analysis thus far has been to demonstrate how a number of different discourses are recruited in the constitution of the syllabus. The analysis, therefore, traces the shifts in the syllabus, the hierarchy that is developed, and the specializations of voice and identity. These specializations and hierarchies are indicators of what is being recontextualized at different moments in the syllabus; they are indicators of the educational policy discourses and the subject-specific discourses that have been recruited in the production the syllabus.

The final step in the analytical framework entails an examination of the rules for selection in the recontextualization of discourses in developing the syllabus. In analysing the rules for selection, I am examining the patterning and prioritizing of discourses as they are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus. I argue that the educational policy discourses, as well as entering the syllabus and projecting certain identities, regulate rules for selection in the recontextualization of subject-specific discourses. In other words they regulate what subject-specific discourses are selected for recontextualization at different moments in the syllabus.

At the same time the subject-specific discourses also regulate rules for selection in the recruitment of educational policy discourses in the constitution of the syllabus. The subject-specific discourses regulate how the educational policy discourses appear in the syllabus.

Analysing the rules for selection, I also examine the positioning of the agents in the recontextualizing field (in this case the PRF) and show how this positioning determines the way in which they act selectively on the discourses in the constitution of the syllabus.

### 3.3 Summary

To summarize, a drama syllabus document has been selected as a focal study in order to generate a framework for the analysis of the constitution of syllabus through recontextualization. The syllabus is constituted through the recontextualizing of discourses circulating within the recontextualizing field in which the syllabus is constructed. These discourses are identified as a set of subject specific discourses, and a set of educational policy discourses, and are evident in the syllabus through the specialization of voice and identity. The educational policy discourses both enter the syllabus and project certain identities and they provide rules for selection in the recontextualizing of discourses of educational drama. The two sets of discourses operate in a dialectical relationship in the recontextualizing process. The educational drama discourses act on the educational policy discourses that are recruited, and the educational policy discourses shape and refocus the educational drama discourses as they are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus.

The following chapters comprise the analysis of the NAC drama syllabus according to the framework outlined in this chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I analyse the NAC syllabus in the terms set out in the previous chapter. In the analysis I consider the specialization of **voice** and **identity** where voice is used as an indicator of the specialization of the academic discipline (drama) and identity refers to the marking out of social compartments. In the NAC syllabus, specialization of voice can be demonstrated by considering the way in which learners become increasingly familiar with the vocabulary and conventions of the discipline through exposure to drama-specific texts and skills. Through the specialization of voice, learners are 'socialized' into the discipline. For example, learners are introduced to modes of critique of plays, and the way in which the play text is analysed in the drama class is different from the way in which a play text would be analysed in an English lesson. The identity of the learner becomes more drama-specific through the grades. With the strengthening of the classification and framing of the subject, the subject becomes a distinctive and separate field of study, with a body of knowledge and a vocabulary specific to the discipline.

The academic identity (established through the **specialization of voice**) is, however, only one of the identities that are marked out in the syllabus. In examining the **specialization of identity**, I analyse the social identities that are projected through the syllabus. These identities relate to the world beyond the classroom, for example that of the socially responsible citizen, the global citizen, the person in the workplace, and so forth. The specialization of identity thus establishes the social compartments of learners, as opposed to the academic compartment which is marked out through the specialization of voice. The 'social' identities are drawn from the educational policy discourses circulating in the field in which the document is constituted. These educational policy discourses are manifestations of the socio-political influences that inform the constitution of the syllabus. Through an analysis of the specialization of identity, it is possible to isolate the educational policy discourses that have been recruited in the constitution of the syllabus in ways I shall demonstrate in the following chapter.

For the analysis I have separated the syllabus into three areas: resources, modalities and skills, in order to examine the hierarchies that are created in the syllabus, and to identify the specializations that occur. **Resources** refer to the content which is to be taught and the resources that are recruited for the learning, including specific material that is employed. **Modalities** refer to the modes or forms that are employed in the learning and are used to frame and organize the resources, i.e. the modality determines how the resources are to be used for the purposes of learning. Three modalities are employed in the syllabus: story, play making and theatre. **Skills** refer to what the learner is expected to learn (i.e. the learning outcomes of the syllabus).

These three categories are separated for the purposes of analysis to highlight the shifts that take place at the different levels. It becomes clear that the three interact in a significant way. If the resources are **what** is negotiated in the classroom, the modality is the **form** that is used to negotiate these resources. A change in the **skills** (i.e. what the learner acquires) correlates to the changes in the resources and modalities.

For example, if the modality is story, the resources could be stories from the fantasy world, and the associated skills will include the ability to pretend, "to share responses to stories in small groups" (5)<sup>1</sup>. If the modality is theatre, and the resource is a play text, then the skills will include "critical skills relevant to an understanding of drama and theatre" (27).

The syllabus is divided into five levels, with different modalities framing the learning at these levels, with different resources and skills. I have used these three categories because they comprehensively describe the content of the syllabus. Through analysing the resources, modalities and skills in the syllabus it is possible to identify the specializations of voice and identity. An analysis of these specializations follows the discussion of each of the categories.

The three categories as they are employed at the different levels are summarized in Table 1:

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<sup>1</sup>I refer repeatedly to the NAC drama syllabus document in this chapter, and therefore reference quotations with the page number only - (5) - as opposed to (NAC, 1994:5)

GRADE	MODALITY	RESOURCES	SKILLS
1-3	Story	Stories from everyday / fantasy world	<p><b>Drama-specific skills:</b> acting out stories; movement with an awareness of space; commitment to a role; distinguishing between the real and the imaginary.</p> <p><b>Groupwork skills:</b> "contribute ideas towards story making in the classroom"; "to show an interest towards others feelings and ideas".</p> <p><b>Language skills:</b> learn new words and make new sentences by acting out the story; use language for expression of feelings and thoughts.</p> <p><b>Critical skills:</b> "to share responses to stories in small groups".</p>
4-5	Story	Stories from everyday life Myths and legends	<p><b>Drama-specific skills:</b> roleplay; improvisation; movement; use of sounds; songs and language.</p> <p><b>Groupwork skills:</b> Participation, "Listen [to] and use the ideas of others as well as offer ideas of their own". Responsibility for one's behaviour; responsibility towards family, friends and the natural environment.</p> <p><b>Language skills:</b> learn new words for the story; verbally sequence happenings in the story; language for the expression of feelings, ideas and opinions</p> <p><b>Critical skills:</b> "express opinions about stories which embody certain values".</p>
6-7	Story	Legends, myths Stories from history Events across the world Themes	<p><b>Drama-specific skills:</b> whole class dramas; sustained concentration, application and engagement, use of space;</p> <p><b>Groupwork skills:</b> Work effectively in a group; "listen to each other and display tolerance for the ideas and feelings of others".</p> <p><b>Communication skills:</b> Formal and informal communication, e.g. giving a speech of thanks, listening skills and vocabulary.</p> <p><b>Critical skills:</b> "discuss their dramas, to appraise the content and evaluate their own contributions.</p> <p><b>Performance:</b> Performance on a specific theme.</p>
8-9	Playmaking	social and personal issues (everyday life experience) prescribed play texts	<p><b>Drama-specific skills:</b> Improvisation; role play; whole class drama; play making;</p> <p><b>Groupwork skills:</b> "tolerate others opinions and cultures and yet value ones own"; listening, negotiating, compromising, "work with confidence.</p> <p><b>Communication skills:</b> Expression of thoughts, feelings and ideas. Debates, forums, discussions, symposiums, interviewing.</p> <p><b>Critical skills:</b> structuring an argument, doing research</p> <p><b>Presentation:</b> playmaking project, demonstrating "mastery of the elements of drama so that these serve the meaning of the play".</p> <p><b>Social skills:</b> Initiative, Creativity and leadership: qualities that "positively enhance the students contribution".</p>
10-12	Theatre	Prescribed play texts. Drama theory texts	<p><b>Drama-specific skills:</b> Devising theatre for an audience; <i>elements:</i> understanding of all elements from previous grades.</p> <p><b>Groupwork skills:</b> "work with drama processes alone and in groups with confidence, self-discipline and some organisational skills".</p> <p><b>Communication skills:</b> Use of a drama vocabulary; communication skills - fluency, clarity and a variety of language styles,</p> <p><b>Critical skills:</b> analysis of play texts; "critical skills relevant to an understanding of drama and theatre".</p> <p><b>Social Skills:</b> Initiative, Creativity and leadership</p> <p><b>Performance:</b> "plan for, undertake and complete a performance or presentational project".</p>

Table 1: Summary of resources, modalities and skills in the NAC drama syllabus document.

## 4.2 Resources

The analysis begins with an examination of the **resources**, or the **content**, that is prescribed for drama at the different levels. There is a movement from early to later stages in the syllabus from resources that learners bring from their own experience, to resources that are prescribed. I will begin with a summary of the resources used at the different levels and will then go on to analyse the specializations that are evident.

In the first seven grades the 'story' is created by, and related to, the learners' own experience and is based on localized knowledge. In Grades 1-3 stories are either based on the learners' "everyday lives and involve the pupils close family experience" (3), or the stories take place in a fantasy world, with mythical characters, like Red Riding Hood or Makhwibitsana, who are familiar to the learners.

In Grades 4 and 5 story is again the modality, and well-known myths and legends, as well as "stories in everyday life"(7), are used.

In Grades 6 and 7 the content is enlarged to incorporate legends, myths and folk tales; stories from history (e.g. "of the student days of Steve Biko; of Emily Hobhouse"); events across the world (e.g. "the Laingsburg flood, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, Neil Armstrong's moon walk"); themes, such as "war and peace, gangsters and water conservation expressed in stories, poetry and dance drama, music or song" (11). At this stage there is the introduction of resources that are not exclusively South African, and the introduction of written texts to work from, for example poetry, and other art forms. Learners still have a measure of choice in the texts used: "Teachers may use, or encourage the pupils to obtain and then use, extracts literature poems ..." (10).

In Grades 8 and 9, the modality changes to 'play making', and prescribed texts like DET Boys High and Fiddler on the Roof are introduced. A localized knowledge component is maintained in the use of everyday experiences for improvisations and role-plays - "a teenager breaking the news of her unexpected pregnancy to her family; a food vendor being harassed at a taxi rank".



In Grade 10 setwork books are prescribed. Two plays are to be chosen from a list of four South African plays: *Drif*; *Curl Up and Dye*, *Woza Albert* and *You Strike the Woman You Strike the Rock*. Drama theory is also introduced in the form of a prescribed text which is then explored through the dramatic processes of role play, improvisation, dramatic situation, interview and media reporting. A theory text is also prescribed - Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (Drama and Theatre for Social Action).

In Grade 11 set works are once again used. There is a choice of some South African drama (*Asinamali*, *Born in the RSA*, *The Hungry Earth*) and some World drama (*Plays for the Theatre: An Anthology of World Drama*). The texts are studied in relation to practical work, theory and history. A local everyday knowledge component is once again included; e.g. "The students are required to research and observe rituals that occur in their community, for example: Sabbath prayers, the toyi-toyi dance. They must select one of the rituals and transform it into a dance drama or a theatrical event" (24). Western European theatre and Eastern theatre is studied, as well as the methods of Grotowski and Brecht.

In Grade 12 the choice of prescribed plays is from 'Plays for the Theatre: An Anthology of World Drama'. South African drama is not prescribed. However the learners must research a form of alternative theatre, and the choice includes: Political theatre, Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty, Street Theatre, Theatre for Africa, Dance Theatre or Theatre in Education. As a final practical project students choose their own material in order to devise a play for performance.

We can thus see a shift through the grades from the use of the everyday community knowledge of the learners as resources, to predominantly drama-specific, prescribed texts being used in the learning. The cultural range of the resources also widens, from that which is community-oriented and South African, to the study of world drama.

#### **4.2.1 Specialization of voice (Resources)**

In the first seven grades, learners bring their own resources into the classroom, in the form of their everyday life experience. From Grade 8 onwards, learners are gradually introduced to drama and theatre-specific

texts, and to a drama vocabulary. By Grade 12, learners are expected to be able to "Document, **using a drama vocabulary**, the processes undertaken for a project and apply comparisons from general drama knowledge" (26).

Learners gain a conceptual understanding of the discipline of drama through engagement with the resources prescribed at the different levels. The strengthening of classification and framing, in terms of the resources, corresponds to the specialization of voice. Initially, content from general literature - myths, legends, poems - is used. Learners then begin to use drama-specific literary texts (plays), and later, socio-historical texts relating to theatre and drama ('Theatre and Cultural Struggle in South Africa' and Boal's 'Games for Actors and Non-Actors) and theory texts ('Acting with Style' and 'Engineers of the Imagination'). There is a building up of vocabulary from the individual who is able to express her/himself effectively using everyday language, to the individual who uses this expressive ability to speak with a drama voice.

#### **4.2.2 Specialization of identity (Resources)**

Identity is specialized through the recruitment of different cultural resources at the different levels. Culture is recruited in the early years in order to develop group identity. Stories from the communities of the learners and their everyday lives are shared and responded to in the group. The development of group identity is extended in Grades 8 and 9 to the development of a South African identity, in the use of the learners' everyday lives as a resource for playmaking, and in the recruitment of a South African text: DET Boy's High. The role-plays, improvisation<sup>2</sup> and dramatic situations are used to "Explore social and personal issues relevant to young people in South Africa"(16). Examples are given from a wide range of South African cultures:

A student from a rural area moves with his family to a large city. His new classmates confront him with his lifestyle and 'old fashioned ways' (16).

A Jewish family's response when the middle daughter announces her intention to marry a Christian (16).

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<sup>2</sup>Hodgson and Richards identify two elements that improvisation utilizes from everyday life: firstly the spontaneous response to an unexpected situation and secondly, employing this in controlled conditions to gain insight into problems presented (1966:3).

A young Moslem woman questions her employer's ruling that she may not wear her traditional clothing to work (16).

A troupe of youth scouts who are engaged in a beach litter clean-up project are made fun of by holiday-makers (16).

Citizenship is introduced in this way, affirming learners' culture and belonging to a specific national identity. The project of developing nationhood is further developed in Grade 10, in which South African plays are exclusively prescribed. The citizen able to engage in social critique is projected. The plays, *Drif*, *Woza Albert* and *Curl Up and Dye*, represent social analysis from a number of different South African cultural perspectives.

In Grade 11, the identity of the socially critical citizen is extended to developing an historical consciousness in the learners, where the "purpose and meaning of the play in its historical context" (23) and "how apartheid and cultural hegemony of the past manifests in theatre" (23) is studied in relation to South African plays. The South African emphasis is balanced by the study of world theatre. The syllabus states that world theatre should be studied within its "socio-political contexts". The identity projected here has extended to include not only the South African citizen with a sense of nationhood and historical consciousness, but the citizen capable of social critique and reflection on cultures other than their own - the 'global citizen'.

This emphasis on social critique in Grades 10 and 11 is, however, ambivalent, and could be construed solely as part of the project of developing nationhood. As texts signify differently in different contexts, there is possibly a sanitizing of what these texts were through a recontextualizing in time. Thus, whether a play like *Woza Albert* is a celebration of cultural diversity, or an example of social critique, is debatable. Whether it is a means to Africanising - saying, here is an African writer that we can appreciate as much as a European - or a means to understanding the mode of social critique, is controversial.

The hierarchy in the syllabus becomes clear through the identities projected at the different levels: from **member of the group**, to **South African citizen**, to **global citizen**. It appears from this hierarchy that the learners' grounding in their own culture and sense of nationhood must be established before they critique their own and other cultures from a political and cultural perspective.

In Grade 12 the projected identity of the learner shifts once again. South African material is not prescribed, and the 'global citizen' established in Grade 11 becomes a theatre specialist. To an extent, the social project of developing citizenship appears to have been abandoned, as learners focus on critiquing various forms of theatre: street theatre, theatre in education and so on, and using these forms in their own acting and production of performances.

### 4.3 Modalities

The changes in the resources used at the different levels corresponds to the change in the modalities employed. These modalities, 'story', 'playmaking' and 'theatre', facilitate the learning and organise the resources. I refer to these forms as 'modalities' because the three forms describe how drama is used for learning purposes at the different levels. The modality defines the mode in which the learner works. The first seven years, '**story**', deal essentially with self-expression in a relatively informal way. In the '**playmaking**' years of Grades 8 and 9 the syllabus focuses on creating form, the identification and use of theatre elements. In Grades 10 to 12, '**theatre**', learners engage in working within a given form, and in learning to critique the form of theatre.

Drama is used initially as a learning medium and later as a form for study. In other words, whereas it is at first used as a means to learning something else, it becomes the object of study in its own right in the higher levels. The playmaking years clearly exemplify the cross-over from medium to form. Drama is used as a medium to study social and personal issues and the form of the play, its elements and structure, is also studied. As drama moves from a medium for learning to the object of study, there is a **specialization of voice**, marking out more clearly drama as a specific discipline, or field of academic study.

#### 4.3.1 Specialization of Voice (Modalities)

The modalities represent dramatic form, and the movement from story to playmaking to theatre represents the formalizing of form, or specialization of form. The subject drama becomes progressively more rule-governed through

the introduction of what are referred to in the syllabus as "drama elements", namely the conceptual base, the language or voice of drama.

Hodgson (1971) describes dramatic elements as "expressive resources", and O'Toole (1992:6) provides a useful diagrammatic representation of the elements of drama that clarifies their meaning:

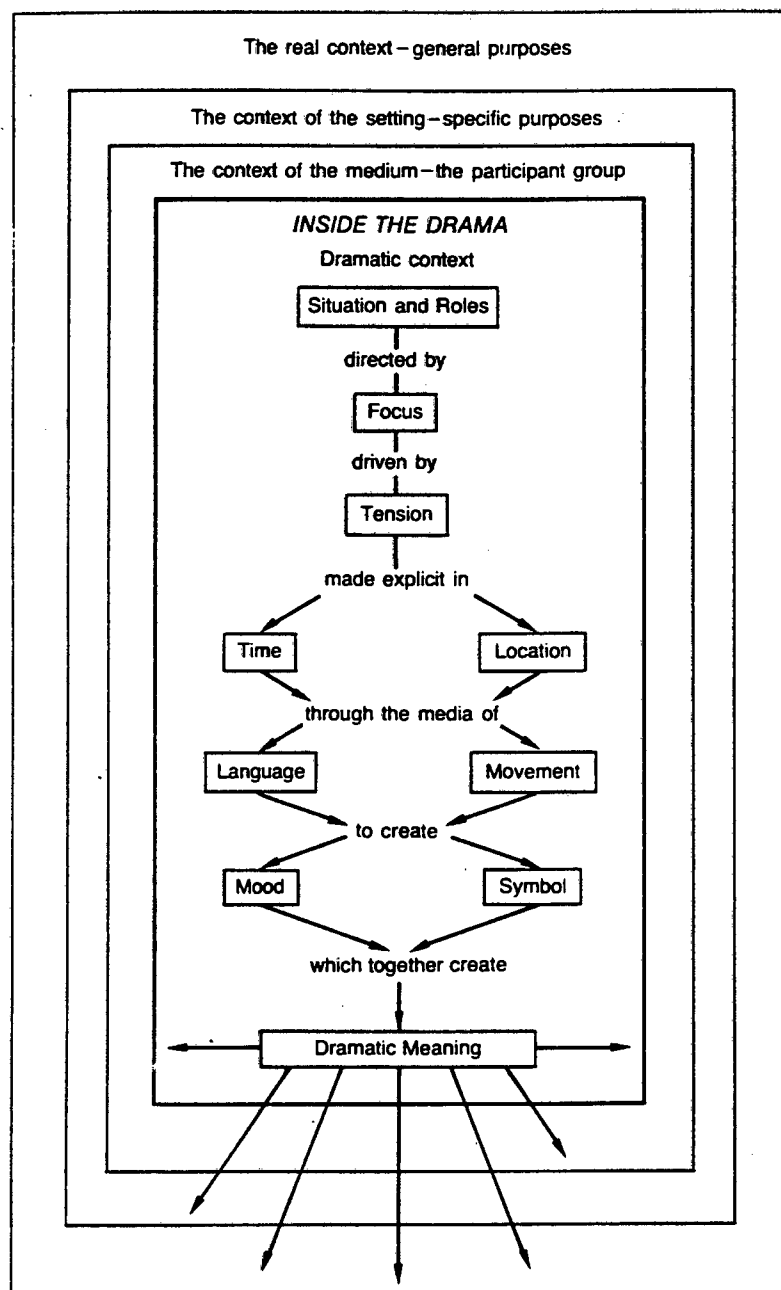


Figure One The elements of dramatic form

From Grades 1 to 7 learners are expected to become familiar with the conceptual base of drama, through exposure to such elements as dramatic structure, form, expression, mood and use of space, in practical work. In Grades 8 and 9 students must become 'familiar' once again with dramatic shape, focus, tension, narrative, mood and symbol. In Grade 10 a use of this vocabulary is required for the first time: "The students write an essay analysing the use of dramatic elements" (22) in relation to the prescribed texts.

The dramatic elements are thus a description of the expressive resources and features of the form of theatre. There is a specialization of voice as learners are gradually introduced to a conceptual understanding of these elements, so that having experienced them (in story) and used them (in play making) they are now equipped to critique them (in theatre).

Learners are exposed to the following elements at the different levels:

Grade 1-3:	mood, feeling, emotion
Grade 4-5:	dramatic structure, form, expression, beginning, climax, ending
Grade 6-7:	beginning, middle, end, focus, climax, language, meaning.
Grade 8-9:	dramatic shape, focus, tension, language, narrative, mood, dramatic symbol
Grade 10-12:	All of the above and an emphasis on aesthetic elements: staging and visual elements, the use of ritual, song and dance, the use of mask, place of performance and audience composition, staging of the performance (space, light and costume).

O'Toole and Haseman assert that "Almost all drama and theatre is made up of story or narrative"(1989: 60). If theatre is a specialized way of telling a story, then the syllabus begins with the basic building block - theatre in its simplest form, the acting out of a story. There is a degree of classification at this level, as the story is treated as a dramatic form and takes place in the symbolic mode. The classification is strengthened progressively as the form becomes more specialized and thus a continuum is created. First the learner engages emotionally in the story by acting it out. In playmaking, the learner comes to know how to create a piece of theatre by identifying what "makes up" theatre (e.g. the elements). The learner is at this stage required to make a play demonstrating a "mastery of the elements of drama so that these serve the meaning of the play".

In Grades 10 - 12 the learners engage with a number of forms of theatre. As well as being able to conceptualize the form in their own performances, the learner also engages in de-narrativized, objective critique. There is thus a shift away from an entirely oral curriculum of the early years to a more literate approach, and the learner engages in critiquing form. There is a strong classification at this level as learners study a wide range of theatrical forms, including South African theatre forms, Township musicals, Afrikaans theatre, Protest theatre, Grotowski, Brecht, Western European theatre forms, Eastern Theatre forms, ritual, alternative theatre, political theatre and Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty.

The forms studied represent practically the entire range of both mainstream and alternative theatre forms. Through Grades 10 to 12 the learner gains a thorough grounding in the knowledge-base of drama through the study of its forms. The modality is 'theatre', the most specialized form of drama, and there is an increase in the number of resources used that deal specifically with form, and a variety that covers all main theatrical forms.

The specialization of voice thus occurs through the learner acquiring a vocabulary that describes dramatic form. Through gaining a conceptual understanding and vocabulary that can be used for critique, the learner attains a drama voice whereby they can interrogate the drama with a degree of expertise. The specialization of form corresponds to the specialization of voice.

#### **4.3.2 Specialization of identity (Modalities)**

There is a process of individuation in the way in which the learner engages with the form and the symbolic mode<sup>3</sup> of drama. The learner begins by working within the symbolic mode, then proceeds to understanding the meaning of the symbolic mode and later to critiquing the symbolic mode.

With the movement through the modalities, forms or modes of drama, the learner progressively becomes more removed from the experiential mode,

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<sup>3</sup>The symbolic mode of drama refers to the way in which drama simulates and represents real life situations in order to convey meaning, where actions come to symbolize meanings beyond the particular context of the drama. The symbolic mode constitutes the "meaning-making" aspect of drama.

and begins to engage in critique. The function of the symbolic mode changes. Initially the symbolic mode is the medium, for experiencing and exploring issues; later the symbolic mode becomes the object of critique.

The identity thus shifts to the more objective and critical learner, less subject to the modality, and engaged more in the interrogation of the form. The progression in the syllabus moves from engaging, to understanding and utilising, to interrogating. Hodgson provides a useful description of the specialization of identity in the movement from 'story' to 'playmaking' to 'theatre':

... we have now progressed through playing for ourselves, in order that we may better understand the world and make acquaintance with it and the heritage and legends of it, towards learning to create within a group and finding language to communicate to each other in that group, and now to our awareness of the place of theatre....in our world. In other words our eyes have turned outwards to the place of the arts in the world of the adult(1971:160)<sup>4</sup>

#### 4.4 Skills

Skills refer to what the learner is expected to learn, or the competencies expected of the learner. With the increasing specialization of the resources and modalities used at the different levels, there is a corresponding specialization of skills, in terms of developing a drama voice and of establishing the identity of the drama specialist. A summary of the skills follows, and can also be read off the table.

In Grades 1 to 3 the emphasis is on listening skills and the ability to *respond* to a story, to instructions, to others in the group. The syllabus also focuses on developing the expressive skills of the learner, the expression of feelings and experiences through movement and voice. The learner learns how to engage emotionally in role play and improvisation, and to distinguish between the real and the imaginary. They are introduced to the symbolic mode of drama. Essentially, the skills that are emphasised in these first stages are summed up in the learning outcome which states that learners

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<sup>4</sup>It is interesting to note that the developmental progression described by Hodgson is reflected in the syllabus twenty three years later. The endurance of the developmental scheme can be attributed to the impact of developmental psychology on theories of educational drama. This will be discussed further in Chapter Five.



must be able to "find a space in which to work with out bumping into others". In other words, learners learn self-expression whilst at the same time attaining an awareness of the group.

In Grades 4 and 5 group work skills are extended from responding to others in the group to being able to **work** in a group. Again the expression of feelings and ideas is emphasised but the expression of **opinions** is included at this level. Role play is extended from being able to separate the real from the imaginary to taking on a specific role with an attitude. Thus, the work of characterisation is introduced, although the skill is for the purposes of examining attitudes and values rather than for performance value. In the first five grades there is no performance. The social functioning of the group is stressed.

In Grades 6 and 7 group work is again extended from responding and working in the group to displaying **tolerance** of others ideas and feelings. The group also learns to work on its own "without direct intervention of the teacher". Language skills are extended from the ability to express oneself to the development of vocabulary, fluency and clarity.

Up until Grade 6 the work has been entirely practical. In Grades 6 and 7 learners are required to keep a written record of their work. Performance is also introduced for the first time at this level, but is limited to a presentation to the class only.

In the first seven levels the skills focus on experiential learning, the developing of a sense of the group, and the extending of the learners' communication skills. Self-expression of thought and feelings is emphasised. The skills at this level do not include interrogation of the form. The modality 'story' represents a weak classification, stories being a medium of learning with which children are familiar.

In Grades 8 and 9 group work is once again emphasised, with the inclusion of the **sensitivity** to the others in the group. **Appropriate** verbal and non-verbal language is dealt with within the context of the group. There is a concentration on life skills, "dealing with social and personal issues"(15), and communication skills which include: listening, negotiating, structuring and articulating an argument, debates, forum discussions, symposiums, reading

and interviewing and formal and informal oral presentations, "e.g. a job interview"(16). Three new skills are introduced: initiative, creativity and leadership.

The focus is no longer on the expression of inner feelings and ideas, but rather on expressing opinions and arguments, and expressing the learners own values after thought and **reflection**. In the exploration of social and personal issues, through role play and improvisation, the ability to reflect on and "critically deconstruct contentious issues" is foregrounded.

Performance is extended to include a presentation to the school or the class. More written work is included and learners are required to record their personal responses to their work and to critically evaluate their contributions to performance.

In Grades 10 to 12, the shift to the modality 'theatre' is reflected in a focus on performance skills and academically-oriented skills such as critical and analytical skills. An understanding of drama/theatre as a **discipline** is introduced. Learners also engage with theatre as a dramatic form and the conventions of dramatic presentation or performance become foregrounded. Improvisation and role play are not prescribed. Learners are expected to acquire skills that are a training for the theatre (vocational), and skills that represent an induction into the academic discipline of drama and theatre studies (academic). Although group work is still emphasised, there is a shift to the individual in the tasks that are set. There is also an equal balance between practical work and written work.

#### **4.4.1 Specialization of voice (Skills)**

The specialization of voice is evident in the skills that are defined for the different levels. Learners are gradually introduced to drama as an academic discipline or field of study. In the first five grades the work is entirely oral and practical, and drama is framed as a general expressive medium. In Grades 6 and 7 some writing skills are introduced in the form of documentation of work. The writing skills in the subsequent grades are extended to include critical analysis and self evaluation. In Grade 12 there is an even balance between written and practical work.

Language skills also represent a hierarchical progression in the specialization of voice. In the early years, language skills focus on the ability of learners to express themselves. In Grades 8 and 9 the learners engage with a number of different communication skills, in different contexts. In Grades 10 to 12 language skills centre around “clarity”, “fluency” and a variety of language styles” and the ability to “use a drama vocabulary” (26).

There is a strengthening in the classification of drama in the shift from process (experience) to product (performance) oriented skills. In the first six grades there is no performance. The emphasis is on group work and communication, with the introduction of the drama-specific skills of improvisation, role-play, movement and language skills. There is no emphasis on the aesthetic content of the learner's expression, but rather an emphasis on dramatic play (i.e. through the improvisation of stories and role-plays) as a means to learning through discovery.

In Grade 7 ‘Presentation’ is introduced, to be performed for the class. In Grades 8 and 9, the learners engage in play making, to be presented to the class or the school.

In Grade 10 learners devise a play for “social action”, thereby exploring a specific form of theatre, and the learners are required to explore areas such as “audience participation” and to consider “target audiences” (22).

In Grade 11 learners use rituals for presentation, transforming them into “a dance drama or theatrical event” (24) - thus exploration of forms and modes of performance are extended.

In Grade 12 the focus is on performance and skills such as “methods of characterisation (with specific reference to Stanislavsky)”, “design and stagecraft”, “a critical awareness of visual and aural elements”, “a chosen style e.g. comedy, farce, protest theatre” and “an appropriate use of stage space” (26) are explored. Through these skills the shift towards an emphasis on the aesthetic becomes clear.

As the subject becomes more performance-oriented and drama-specific, there is an increasing specialization of voice. The skills correspond to the modalities in this specialization, and a continuum is established from a more

general, weakly classified subject, to a strongly classified subject with a clear specialization of voice.

There is, however, a break in this continuum, and the relationship between the resources, modalities and skills in the Grades 8 and 9 playmaking years. Whereas in the story and theatre grades there is a strong correlation between the modalities and the skills, in Grades 8 and 9 there is a focus on communication and life skills. The specialization of drama through the increasing focus on drama-specific skills is disrupted by a focus on more generic skills, and skills that are clearly a preparation for the workplace and civil society. Although the continuum is maintained in dealing with playmaking and expanding the drama-specific activities, the purpose of drama shifts, to an extent, at this level.

#### **4.4.2 Specialization of identity (Skills)**

There is a shift in the syllabus in terms of the shaping of the identity of the learner, and this is marked by a change in emphasis from the group to the individual. In the early grades, the focus is on developing shared, common skills (inter-group); the ability to share feelings and ideas, opinions and values, the ability to work in a group and show tolerance towards others. Grades 8 and 9 focus on life skills and communication skills, and this change in emphasis facilitates the process of individuation. Whereas the first seven grades focused on the individual as part of the group, the focus in Grades 8 and 9 shifts to the individual operating within the group (intra-individual), resembling more closely the 'real world' or the world of work.

Thus at this level the skills of initiative, creativity and leadership are introduced, indicating a shift, not at the expense of the group, but alongside it. Whereas the group skills in Grades 1 to 7 are described as "to show an interest in others feelings and ideas" (5) and "listen to and use the ideas of others as well as offer ideas of their own" (7), in Grades 8 and 9 they are described as to "tolerate other people's opinions and cultures and yet value one's own", "listen, negotiate and compromise" and "work with confidence" (17).

In Grades 10 to 12, the focus is on skills that are a training for the theatre (vocational), and skills that represent an induction into the academic

discipline of drama and theatre studies (academic). The only reference to group work skills at this level is mentioned in the learning outcome “work with drama processes alone and in groups with confidence, self-discipline and some organizational skills and initiative at times” (26). The focus at this stage has clearly shifted to the individual.

Whereas Grades 1 to 7 deal with drama as a general learning medium with a focus on inculcating group identity, Grades 8 and 9 employ the drama medium essentially as a preparation for life and the world of work, developing life skills and communication skills. The identity projected is that of the individual entering life and the world of work. In Grades 10 to 12 there is another shift as the activities at this level project the identity of learners preparing to either enter the world of the theatre, or to continue with studies in drama and theatre at a tertiary level.

These shifts indicate a hierarchical progression from the individual with a sound sense of group identity, to the individual capable of operating within a social group, to the individual as a drama/theatre specialist, the group becoming a facilitating mechanism for this identity.

#### 4.5 Discussion

The analysis above turns on the notions of voice and identity. The syllabus marks out and projects certain identities which indicate the discourses that are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus. Voice (the voice of the discipline) denotes the academic identity. Drama can be self-referential, and speak only in the language of the discipline, about the discipline, or it can focus outward and speak of the social context. The former indicates strong classification of the subject, and the subject drama is made up mainly by that which is intrinsic to educational drama knowledge. The projection of non-academic identities (e.g. the global citizen) is an indication of educational policy discourses that have been recruited in the constitution of the syllabus. Both voice and identity are indicators of the recontextualization of subject-specific and educational policy discourses in the making of the syllabus.

Apart from the specializing of voice and identity in the syllabus, there is also a **positioning** of the identities through a strengthening of the classification

and framing of the subject, and through the specialization of time. Throughout the grades in the syllabus there is a strengthening in the classification and framing of the subject. The shift is from a weakly framed and classified pedagogy in the early years to a more strongly framed and classified pedagogy in the higher levels. The change is evident in the specialization of the skills and the resources. In the early years the syllabus is described entirely in terms of what the learner does - "students make up stories"; "pupils have to decide on the meaning or outcome of the story"; "the pupils should become familiar with the rudimentary elements of drama" and so forth. At the higher levels, the terms pupil and student are used less frequently, and the syllabus is described primarily in terms of what is to be achieved, for example, "these theatre forms should be studied..."(24), "the final presentation must include..."(26). The framing is thus strengthened as the transmitter and the acquirer have less control over the selection, sequencing and pacing of the learning. Whereas in the early grades the drama is based on what the acquirer brings into the classroom, in the higher grades the learning is based on prescribed texts. The shift is thus one of acquirers making their personal texts (their everyday experience) available for the learning, to the transmitter making texts available to learners (in the form of prescribed literary and theory texts). The shift is one from a clearly learner-centred approach, to a more traditional pedagogy focusing on the transmitter as purveyor of knowledge.

Another shift in the syllabus is evident in the specialization of time that occurs. The specialization of time is evident in the content used in the different grades, which reflect a hierarchy of ages; a progression from childhood to early adulthood. In Grades 1 to 7, folk tales, myths and legends, as well as everyday knowledge, form the basis of the drama. In Grades 8 and 9 "social and personal issues relevant to young people" (15) are addressed, for example, "a teenager breaking the news of her unexpected pregnancy to her family" (15). In Grades 10 to 12, learners deal with more sophisticated and academically-oriented texts as students. Thus the progression from child, to teenager, to student.

The age hierarchy is also evident in the way that learners are referred to in the syllabus. At no point are the learners referred to as "learners". In Grades 1 to 3, the term "pupil" is used exclusively. From Grades 4 to 10, the terms "pupils" and "students" are used interchangeably, although the term

"student" is used more frequently as the grades progress. From Grade 10 to 12 the term "student" is used exclusively. If the Oxford English dictionary's definitions of the terms is taken, the hierarchy becomes clear. "Pupil" refers to "a person who is taught by another, especially a school child ... in relation to a teacher" or "a boy less than fourteen or a girl less than twelve years in age" , and "student" is defined as "a person who is studying, esp. at university or another place of higher education". The latter also implies a shift to a more academically oriented subject, suited to a more mature learner.

The learner is thus constituted differently at different levels according to a specialization of time. The learner is expected to do different things corresponding to their cognitive development at the specific stage. Thus in Grade 2 the learner is not expected to do an abstract analysis of form. There is an assumption of what is appropriate for learners at different levels, and this is based on an age structure and an implicit assumption of the learners' cognitive development.

At different levels in the syllabus different identities are projected, and these identities are positioned in a particular way. The specialization of voice and identity and time, and the change in the classification and framing of the subject are a means to analysing the content of the syllabus. The purpose of examining the syllabus in this way is to allow me to analyse in the following chapter how the syllabus is constituted through recontextualizing of subject-specific and educational policy discourses, and finally to describe the rules for selection in the process of recontextualization.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE RECONTEXTUALIZATION OF DISCOURSES IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SYLLABUS

In order to analyse how the syllabus is constituted through recontextualizing, I examine in this chapter the discursive conditions in the recontextualizing field. There are a number of discourses circulating in the recontextualizing field which act as reservoirs for recruitment in the production of the syllabus. I have isolated two sets of discourses inductively through the analysis of the syllabus: the *discourses of educational drama*, and the *educational policy discourses*. The discourses are evident in the specialization of voice (educational drama discourses) and the specialization of identity (educational policy discourses) in the syllabus.

The chapter is divided into two sections. Firstly I analyse the recontextualization of educational drama discourses in the constitution of the syllabus, and secondly I analyse the recruitment of educational policy discourses in the constitution of the syllabus. Each section begins with an overview of how these discourses came to circulate at the time that the syllabus was constructed, and follows with an analysis of the recruitment and recontextualization of discourses in the formulation of the syllabus. Each section concludes with a discussion of how the syllabus is constructed through the recontextualization of these discourses circulating in the recontextualizing field.

The syllabus writers are situated in the recontextualizing field, and act selectively on the discourses of educational drama and the educational policy discourses in developing the syllabus. To summarize, the recontextualizing field consists of two fields: the official recontextualizing field (ORF), and the pedagogic recontextualizing field (PRF). The ORF refers to the knowledge field delimited by the state and its functionaries; that is what the state wants taught and learned. The PRF refers to what teachers and their extended profession, academics, journals, and so on think should be learnt, and how it should be taught. As a result of drama's low status as a school subject, and the syllabus writers being situated in the PRF, the syllabus writers are positioned subordinately within the recontextualizing



field. For the purposes of the analysis in this chapter, I will discuss how the syllabus writers recruit discourses in constituting the syllabus. They are, however, also positioned by the discourses due to their placement in the recontextualizing field. This tension will be taken up in the following chapter.

## **5.1 Educational Drama Discourses**

### **5.1.1 The Development of Educational Drama Discourses**

In this section I examine the development of discourses in the intellectual field of educational drama. The reason for doing this is that the way in which the discourses are recontextualized in the making of the syllabus relates to the historical and intellectual developments in this field. The syllabus writers act selectively on these discourses circulating in the recontextualizing field in constituting the syllabus.

The development of drama in education in this century has been dominated by a reaction to "...the traditions of play acting and play reading...the skills of interpreting a script and performing it to an audience" (Havell 1987:163), and a struggle for the recognition of the educational potential of drama. This includes the emphasis on process rather than product, on experience rather than performance, and the notion of child-centredness in learning and a methodology that is activity-based. The developments have taken place largely in Great Britain, and have exerted a wide sphere of influence.

The first approach to drama teaching was introduced in South Africa in the 1920s. Supported and developed by the South African Guild of Speech and Drama teachers and nurtured in some universities (particularly in Natal), the approach to the subject was based largely in elocution, where the aim was to teach the English pronunciation referred to as Received Pronunciation. 'Speech and Drama' was found mainly in Natal in white schools.

One of the most influential drama practitioners in South Africa at this time was Elizabeth Sneddon, whose influence in drama education, particularly in the former Natal province was extensive. She introduced a change of emphasis in educational drama in 'Speech Training for You', in which she advocated

a shift from learning a particular accent towards a more holistic approach encompassing the physical, emotional and intellectual development of the whole person" (Dalrymple et al 1993:1).

The aims of the subject were: communication skills, imaginative insight, creative awareness and appreciation of theatre as an art form. The emphasis, however, remained on the 'Speech' aspect of drama, and drama as "speech used to the utmost limit of man's ability to convey his vision of what constitutes a civilized world" (Sneddon 1981:15). The syllabus was based on the British model, and indigenous culture, African and South African playwrights were not included.

In the 1940s and 1950s in Britain substantial new developments in educational drama took place, dominated by the thinking and teaching of Peter Slade. The essence of Slade's argument was that

children's ability to express themselves through play had been stifled by their exposure to the demands of performance and the technical training of the 'Speech and Drama brigade' (Havell, 1987:166).

Slade focused on spontaneous dramatic play as a natural way to learning through discovery. The emphasis was on child-centredness with the teacher's responsibility being to create the appropriate environment for learning.

Slade's legacy was significant, for although he did not reject entirely the importance of theatrical elements in drama teaching, he left in his wake a stream of purists who were vehemently anti-theatre. Slade's emphasis was on the psychological nature, and not the aesthetic content, of the child's expression, and many of his followers rejected entirely the aesthetic elements which, in the 1970s, in particular, were recognised as being crucial to the structuring of any dramatic activity.

The extent of the influence of thinkers like Slade in South Africa at this time was minimal. The 'Speech and Drama' tradition persisted, mainly in white schools, whilst in black schools the government's Bantu Education policies excluded the arts as a cultural activity inappropriate for a population being prepared for manual labour.

In the 1960s and 70s the ideas of a new wave of educational drama practitioners, advocating Drama in Education (DIE) flourished in Britain. According to Day and Norman (1983) the political climate of the time favoured the progressive principle that education should be child-centred, and the liberal principle that education should be seen as an end in itself, rather than as directed to any instrumental end, for example, vocational qualification.

There was nothing liberal or progressive about education in South Africa at this time, dominated as it was by Bantu Education for blacks and Christian National Education for whites. However, a number of teachers did adopt the principles being espoused by British DIE practitioners, seeing in them a challenge to approaches that were stifling the emergence of indigenous South African theatre. Simultaneously there was a search for a teaching methodology, which DIE seemed to offer, that drew on the traditions and experiences of pupils rather than re-enforcing the perceived oppression of a dominant culture. The potential of drama as an enquiry-based methodology was explored and developed in some universities and was nourished through the annual conferences organized by the South African Association of Drama and Youth Theatre (SAADYT).

During the 70s and 80s the theories of the DIE practitioners like Brian Way, Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton dominated the intellectual field of educational drama. Although there are great differences between the approaches of the three, they are all interested in drama as a teaching methodology, rooted in activity-based learning. The emphasis is on process rather than product, and on self-expression, of experiences, thoughts, feelings and beliefs. Although not vehemently anti-theatre, as in the Slade tradition, DIE theorists did not place much emphasis on the aesthetic and rejected the notion of performance being part of the learning process. There was an emergent interest in the theatrical form and theatre elements, though these were valued for their contribution to the learning experience rather than for any aesthetic purpose.

Way's development from Slade was in helping the individual to become more self aware. His concern was with the development of the whole personality. Drama in Way's meaning amounted to a psychological preparation for the 'real world'.

Heathcote took drama to be more of a critical tool. "It is more a matter of taking up an attitude, a way of looking at a situation and being involved with it" (Heathcote, undated: 23). For her the implications of entering a drama is that the consequences of actions and decisions have to be faced and that, as a result of facing them, values and attitudes will be challenged and new understanding reached. For Heathcote, at its most significant the experience in drama can produce a growth or change in understanding. The 'Basic dimensions' cited at the beginning of each level in the NAC syllabus resonates with this conceptual understanding of drama:

Learning in drama is an active process. The process has three basic dimensions: the pupil PARTICIPATING in the drama which leads to the pupil UNDERSTANDING something new which empowers the pupil in APPLYING recently acquired knowledge in new contexts (NAC, 1994:3; 6; 15; 21)

The relationship between process and product in drama education was still contested. Bolton showed an interest in the aesthetic dimension of drama learning, but his focus remained on the process. He referred to "a set of psychological processes which, when applied to experience, introduce an aesthetic dimension" (Havell, 1987:177). Thus, educational drama remained focused on the process of the experiential learning, and under the influence of the progressive paradigm, placed an emphasis on doing within a learner-centred pedagogy. In Britain drama was treated mainly as a teaching methodology rather than a school subject. With a growth in vocational education, drama teachers came under increasing pressure to use their expertise purely for the development of social and life-skills training.

In South Africa, 'Speech and Drama' has been offered as a matriculation subject, but in very few schools. The course has remained conservative, favouring the communicative function of drama, and focusing on the development of communication skills and an appreciation of theatre as an art form.

In the 1980s and particularly the 1990s there has been a change in the perception of what educational drama should be about, and a return to the notion of drama as a craft.

The strong emphasis which has traditionally been placed on process in drama - expressive, developmental or pedagogic - and corresponding conceptual invisibility of the dramatic product ... has obscured the idea of drama as craft" (Hornbrook 1991:70).

Recent trends also indicate a return to aesthetics and the importance of the drama product. This is reflected in much of the recent literature on educational drama, notably the work of Peter Abbs, David Hornbrook, David Best and Robert Witkin. It is also evident in some of the recent drama syllabuses developed in Australia and New Zealand and the United States. There is a shift to the study of theatre, not only as an academic subject, but in terms of a training in theatre skills.

In this new approach there is also a move away from the affective dimension of drama, to a more practical approach to the subject focusing on developing an aesthetic sensibility. Many of these writers claim that the basis on which the appeal for the arts in education is often made is self defeating, denying any reason can be given for particular understanding and experience, or for the value of the arts. Peter Abbs (1989) describes the new movements in drama education in terms of 'The Symbolic Order'. By this he means that an understanding of the historical, theoretical and aesthetic dimensions of arts subjects need to be addressed in the teaching of the various disciplines. The symbolic order is a reaction particularly to the DIE movement. Abbs writes that

In the teaching of the arts we have often failed to create an awareness of a dynamic tradition within achieved work and a variety of genres and conventions. In *Development Through Drama*, first published in 1967, Brian Way could write: "We are concerned with developing people, not drama (and certainly not theatre)". Way's book might have better been titled *The Death of Drama* for it excludes the concept of a complex symbolic order leaving only the artistically attenuated notions of 'groups' and 'feelings' of 'sincerity' and 'trust'(1989:xiii).

At the time at which the NAC syllabus was constituted, the syllabus being used in schools was the Natal Education Department's Speech and Drama Syllabus (1986). The focus of this syllabus was the "personal development" of learners. There was an emphasis on speech as communication, on voice production and interpretation of play texts and literature. The aims of the syllabus were divided between the development of personal communication skills (speech), and an appreciation of a realised art form (drama). There was no emphasis on South African or African playwrights, but the aim was

for learners to gain "a refined understanding through engaging with the great works of dramatic history" (NAI, 1993:10). The practical component of the course allowed teachers to introduce other approaches to drama teaching such as DIE. The syllabus was essentially conservative and Euro-centric.

From the above overview it is clear that within competing educational drama discourses there has remained a largely unresolved tension between drama and theatre. I will therefore conclude this section with a definition of the terms, especially since the theory of what drama and theatre mean in an educational context is highly contested.

Jonothan Neelands provides the following definition of drama:

Drama is a social (interactive) way of creating and interpreting human meanings through imagined action and language that simulates and corresponds to real life actions and language (1989:6).

What Neelands is describing is the symbolic mode of drama i.e. that drama is a fictional model of real life, and represents or symbolizes real life situations. In the symbolic mode drama simulates and represents real life situations in order to convey meaning; actions come to symbolize meanings beyond the particular context of the drama. Thus the symbolic mode constitutes the "meaning-making" aspect of the drama. So whether the drama takes the form of child play (described by most theorists as the genesis of drama) or the furthest developed form of drama, in theatre, what defines the different forms as **drama** is the symbolic mode.

Martin Esslin puts it another way: "Drama is a double of life, a controlled, simplified double" (1986:157), or a symbolic representation of life. The purpose of engaging in the symbolic mode, as both dramatist and observer, is that by participating and engaging in the drama, we are "enhancing our existence ... extending the scope of our experience and our understanding of the human condition" (Esslin, 1986:23). To phrase it in Bernstein's terms, one could say that drama is a recontextualization of real life situations; via the symbolic mode aspects of life are selected for representation in the drama, the purpose being to enhance our understanding of these real life situations.

Finally, I would like to offer a brief explanation of the difference between drama and theatre. Again the two terms are defined in the literature in a number of different ways. I will try to synthesize the approaches and offer one that is pertinent to this analysis.

According to Malan (1973)

Drama is an experiencing activity, not a communicating activity...in which all participate; and all bring to the activity not acquired skills but what is basic and common to all human beings (5).

Theatre for Malan on the other hand is a communicating activity, and requires the learning of a number of technical skills. He distinguishes between "...drama as an educational force or medium, as distinct from drama as a theatre art"(6).

Thus theatre is still drama, but with a wider system of meaning making for communication with an audience. The Queensland Curriculum Guide *'Drama Makes Meaning'* defines drama and theatre in a similar way:

Drama is an activity which involves a group of people agreeing to believe in a fictional context for the purpose of exploring life-like situations, roles and relationships. The context is shaped into dramatic action which has meaning for the participants. Drama becomes theatre when the purpose is to convey meaning to an audience other than the participants (1991:3).

To summarize, drama can be defined as an essentially experiencing activity. Theatre utilizes a wider system of meaning making (that is dramatic elements) in order to communicate this experience to an audience. Drama is process-oriented; theatre more focused on product. Both drama and theatre utilize the story or narrative, which is relayed in the symbolic mode.

### **5.1.2 Recontextualization of educational drama discourses in the constitution of the syllabus**

In this section I analyse how the discourses in the field of the production of educational drama knowledge described above have been recontextualized in the NAC syllabus. Identifiable in the syllabus are aspects from the "speech and drama" tradition, the drama in education (DIE) movement, and more

recent trends focusing on the aesthetic and craft aspects of educational drama, and a return to theatre.

Different strands of educational drama and varying approaches can be discerned in the syllabus at different levels. Teasing them out, it becomes clear that the document represents a wide range of views on the educative potential and purposes of the subject drama, and combines several of the conflicting discourses of educational drama outlined above. The document is thus constituted through the recontextualizing of various educational drama discourses which are produced in the intellectual field of educational drama.

The syllabus in some ways mirrors the developments in the field of educational drama, moving from the early years which are grounded in the philosophies of the DIE movement, to a pedagogy in the later years that reflects the more recent developments in the field.

Implicit in the early years of the syllabus are the theories of Peter Slade, Brian Way, and the major DIE practitioners, Gavin Bolton and Dorothy Heathcote. Although very different in their approaches, all four can be located in the progressive educational paradigm, with an emphasis on doing and activity-based learning, a greater emphasis on process rather than product and on experience rather than performance.

Thus there is no performance in the first six grades. The emphasis is on group work and communication, with the introduction of the drama skills of improvisation, role-play, movement and language skills. This is in keeping with Slade's philosophy that drama is rooted in play and has little to do with the performance of plays. However "drama processes" or the aforementioned skills are introduced, so that it becomes 'dramatic play'. The emphasis is not on the aesthetic content of the learner's expression, but rather on dramatic play (through role-plays and the improvisation of stories) as a means to learning through discovery. Slade referred to this drama as 'child drama' and the element of performance is absent.

Brian Way's explanation of experiential learning is suggestive in these first stages in the syllabus. Way begins his book, entitled *Development Through Drama*, by posing the question: " 'What is a blind person?' " He goes on to say that there are two possible answers: "The reply could be 'A blind person



a person who cannot see.' Alternatively the reply could be 'Close your eyes and, keeping them closed all the time, try to find your way out of this room.' " (Way, 1967:1).

As experiential learning through dramatic play underlies the pedagogy in the lower grades of the syllabus, the skills expressed as learning outcomes are the ability to 'pretend' and participate in the imaginary drama with emotional engagement. Or as Dorothy Heathcote terms it, the learners must be able to engage in the "Big Lie". The learners must also be able to reflect on the process and to speak about the drama; one of the learning outcomes is that the learners should be able to "recognise the problem that the story offers and attempt to find a solution" (NAC, 1994:4). The use of predominantly everyday situations corresponds to the everyday language required. Heathcote and Bolton, with their emphasis on reflection and engaging in the symbolic mode, are clearly at the heart of the syllabus at this stage. The use of story is also an indication of the influence of Heathcote and Bolton in using the drama narrative as a means for self-expression, and learning through the experience.<sup>1</sup>

In grades 8 and 9 there is a strong emphasis on communication skills. Shades of the Speech and Drama tradition filter through here, though the purpose for attaining these skills is to be able to communicate effectively in different contexts, both formal and informal. Grade 9 represents the first exit point (GETC level) and communication skills and social skills which prepare the learner for the world of work are emphasised. These social skills and life skills (the exploration of personal issues) could be a response to the notion that drama can be used as vocational preparation, as it was for a period in Britain.

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<sup>1</sup> Drama practitioners, particularly those adherents of DIE have been highly influenced by the work of Piaget, who regards the cognitive development of learners as traversing four periods. His view of the developmental stages is a constructivist view in which children actively build up new cognitive schemes and structures over time in interaction with the environment (Tyson, 1987:148). Time, in the syllabus, is a marker of different activities, according to the cognitive development of the learner. There is an explicit progression in the sequencing of the grades, and skills and knowledge are progressively extended and developed from one grade to the next. The Piagetian developmental scheme is deeply embedded in the theories of drama practitioners like Heathcote, Bolton and Way. Piaget's stage theory is recontextualized in the syllabus through the recontextualization of the DIE discourse in the constitution of the syllabus.

Communication skills are not focused on correct pronunciation (as in the speech and drama tradition) but rather on the ability to listen, "to show an interest in others feelings and ideas" and the ability to express oneself. The importance of communication is not the "art form of the craft of speech" as Sneddon puts it, or the notion that "drama is speech used to the utmost limit of man's ability to convey his vision of what constitutes a civilized world" (Sneddon 1981:15), but rather that the ability to communicate is important in a social sense. The focus is not on vocabulary, pronunciation and syntax but rather on the social relations between speakers and hearers in specific contexts as an essential prerequisite for the imputation of meaning. The emphasis is thus on expressive ability and the ability to respond to others in speech.

The communication skills emphasis at this stage has little to do with theatre or drama (not engaging in any way with the symbolic mode in order to experience or represent meaning) even though drama processes (such as role play and improvisation) are used to develop the communicative ability of learners. The emphasis at this level represents a disjunction in the continuity of the syllabus, as the utilitarian value of the subject is emphasized.

In grades 10 to 12, through the specialization of voice and identity, the learners acquire a drama voice and the identity of the theatre specialist, and there is an increasing emphasis on skills relevant to an aesthetic sensibility and an understanding of theatre craft. In constituting the syllabus, the writers are clearly recontextualizing the discourses of a renewed interest in the aesthetic, which represents to a large extent a rejection of the DIE tradition, and embraces the theatre arts.

At this level the subject is treated as an **academic** discipline and learners engage in a study of the broad knowledge base of the culture and history of the discipline. At this stage it could be argued that the syllabus writers are recontextualizing the notion of what the study of an academic discipline should entail. On the other hand, recruitment of recent discourses in the field of educational drama is also evident in this academic approach to drama. Under the influence of the DIE movement, which treated drama essentially as a learning medium, and the Speech and Drama communicative approach,

drama had not established itself as an academic discipline. Abbs states that historically educational drama had

forfeited any sense of intrinsic identity. Devoid of art, devoid of the practices of the theatre, devoid of artistic and critical terminology drama became a method of teaching without a subject (Abbs, 1991:ix).

The syllabus in the later stages can be seen as a response to the problems in defining drama as a subject. In constituting the syllabus at this level, the discourse that Abbs refers to as 'the symbolic order' is recontextualized. With the specialization of voice the emphasis is on the use of a critical drama terminology, theatre skills and an academic approach to the subject.

### **5.1.3 Discussion**

The question arises why the DIE principles are recontextualized in the early years and not later on. Certainly, this may be attributed to the syllabus writers' response to recent trends in the field of the production of educational drama, as has been explained above. But the question of evaluation also plays a part. The principles underlying DIE set up an essentially non-critical framework within which to learn, and the "business of success and failure disappears" (Malan, 1973:15). Adherents to the tradition of DIE reject the notion of pass-fail evaluation, and this has always been one of the central obstacles to establishing drama as a subject in the formal curriculum. The subject must conform to the exigencies of evaluation, particularly at exit points, with nationally determined examinations (the GETC and the FETC). Hornbrook (1991), writing of the new trends in educational drama, states that the challenge in educational drama is to be able to

find ways of building a dramatic curriculum which places the emphasis on the productive, cultural and aesthetic character of drama as opposed to its therapeutic or pedagogic utility and within which it is possible to identify clear routes of progression. (pg. 71)

The syllabus is a response to this challenge. The subject shifts from being process-oriented in the early grades to placing an emphasis on product; from experiential drama to theatre craft. This shift is described in terms of the specialization of voice in the analysis.

The syllabus is constituted through the recontextualizing of a number of educational drama discourses. Different discourses are recontextualized at different stages and are not integrated throughout the syllabus. There is no evidence of the DIE principles of learning in the later years, and there is no emphasis on the aesthetic, theatre craft or academic aspects in the early years. The modality 'playmaking' of the middle years would seem to suggest an integration of the two strands. However the focus here is on communication skills and life skills. The syllabus projects certain identities at different moments, and a hierarchy is developed through the levels in the syllabus which can generally be described as a progression from the experiential to the vocational to the academic.

In the following section I analyse the identities that are projected through the syllabus, and I attempt to explain the logic of the syllabus' hierarchy. I will argue that the recruitment of educational policy discourses in the recontextualizing field provides, to a large extent, an explanation for the way in which the syllabus is constituted.

## 5.2 Educational policy discourses

The syllabus is situated at the intersection of a number of discourses circulating in the recontextualizing field. I have isolated three educational policy discourses in this field that have been recruited in the constitution of the syllabus: the discourse of **reconstruction and development**, the discourse of **progressivism** and the discourse of **utilitarianism**. However, I am not suggesting that these are the only discourses circulating in the recontextualizing field. I have identified these three discourses inductively through the analysis of the syllabus; that is these are the discourses that are privileged in the syllabus and are represented through the identities that are projected. Although these discourses are in some ways intertwined, for example there is a utilitarian strand running through the discourse of reconstruction and development, for the purposes of the analysis I have separated them out. The following section describes briefly how these discourses arose in the recontextualizing field.

### **5.2.1 The development of the educational policy discourses**

The syllabus was constructed in 1994, after South Africa's first democratic election. The educational context was suffused with the discourse of transformation. "Reconstruction and development" encapsulated the project of the new government and became part of the educational policy discourse. What was paramount to all educational actors of the time was the dismantling of apartheid education and the development of a new educational dispensation. The process of reforming education did not, however, begin with the installation of a new democratically elected government. During the apartheid regime several educational reform strategies were undertaken, both within, and outside of, the state.

Under the National Party government, the de Lange Report was published in 1981. Parading as a reform strategy, the document was in fact an attempt to address the economic needs of the country through education, as well as restore political stability and legitimate the education system. Underpinned by a technocratic ideology, it was an attempt to streamline education and emphasized a vocational curriculum as a preparation for the workplace. The de Lange Report secured the discourse of utilitarianism in the educational context.

In 1991 the National Party initiated its Educational Renewal Strategy (ERS), coupled with the Committee of Heads of Education's Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa (CUMESA). In an effort to control the cost of education and relate educational practice directly to the economic needs of the country, both initiatives advocated an educational system that was essentially utilitarian and functional. The ERS and CUMESA documents proposed an education system which purported the "New Right" philosophy of educating people to "serve the needs of modern entrepreneurial capitalism" (Bennel and Swainson, 1990:7). A utilitarian discourse was thus entrenched, with little reform taking place.

Parallel to the strategizing by the state for the renewal of education, there was significant activity amongst the advocates of "Peoples Education". Opposing the government's inferior and racist education system, and its

resistance to transformation, the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) was formed in 1985 to lead the struggle against apartheid education, and to concretize policies on education in order to advance the principles of non-racism, non-sexism and democracy. Implicit in the opposition to apartheid education was the discourse of progressivism, as a reaction to the principles underlying "bantu education". Learning was construed as an active, critical and constructive enterprise. The learning **process** was emphasised, and the learner was placed at the centre of the learning (Kuiper & Van Harmelen, 1996:1). The discourse of progressivism embodied principles for the creation of a new education system in South Africa.

In 1990, together with the Education Policy Units at universities, the NECC set up the National Educational Policy Investigation (NEPI), in order to investigate policy options for a future educational dispensation in South Africa. The NEPI documents were published in 1992, and were a clear illustration of the range of conflicting discourses available to educational policy makers. NEPI became, after the elections, the point of articulation of the intersecting (and often conflicting) discourses circulating in the educational context, within which educational actors were constructing a new education system for the country.

### **5.2.2 Recruitment of discourses in the constitution of the syllabus**

In this section I analyse how the discourses described above, those of progressivism, utilitarianism and reconstruction and development, are recontextualized in the constitution of the NAC syllabus. I have selected these discourses through an analysis of the social identities that are projected through the syllabus. In the course of this discussion, I will describe how the educational policy discourses, to a large extent, determine what educational drama discourses are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus.

#### ***The discourse of reconstruction and development***

The syllabus was constructed in 1994 after South Africa had just emerged from its first democratic elections. A new political dispensation was established and a new political discourse, articulated through the ANC's

grand project of Reconstruction and Development, impacted on the way in which people considered change and on what was to be done in the dismantling of apartheid and the creation of a "New South Africa". The discourse was entrenched through the chant of buzz words: development, capacity, empowerment, reconstruction, participation, equity, equality, redress and democracy.

The syllabus recruits this discourse of reconstruction and development in that it has a definite social project, that of engendering equality, a sense of nationhood and developing a responsible, democratic citizenry with a multi-cultural understanding and sensitivity. It responds particularly to the vision of the "rainbow nation" and the celebration of the diversity of cultures.

The syllabus clearly states its reasons for the emphasis on what is termed throughout the document as 'cultural understanding':

A reconstructed system of education must ... encourage indigenous self-expression through conserving and adapting local traditions and expressive forms ... arts education must be culturally relevant and sensitive. It should draw on the students own cultural background and recognise the value of local culture as well as teaching new forms and combinations of different forms (NAC, 1994:iii).

This resonates not only with the educational policy discourse in South Africa at the time, and the multi-cultural trend in education, but also with a broader educational discourse which stresses that culture cannot be ignored in developing strategies for human development. From CUMESA to NEPI and the ANC's Yellow Book, the importance of affirming 'culture' in education is emphasised. Klitgaard (1993), in his article 'What if we Knew all about Cultures' states "In the 1990s, I believe taking **culture into account** will take centre stage in policy making and management" (49, emphasis in original). The syllabus projects identities that incorporate a wide range of South African cultures.

The emphasis on 'cultural understanding' also arises from a need for redress:

One of the chief ways in which certain groups and communities in South Africa have been disadvantaged or marginalized in the past has been through rendering their home culture, artistic works and cultural practices invisible by ignoring these in the school curriculum (NAC, 1994:13).

The project of enculturation projects certain identities in the syllabus, of both teachers and learners. The teacher is expected to refer to local stories, dramas and cultural traditions of the learners in order to "augment the pupils' self esteem and community loyalty and pride" (NAC, 1994:3). It is suggested that teachers undertake added research into finding material suitable for the cultural background of the learners. The central purpose of the project of enculturation in the syllabus appears to be for the development of nationhood, augmenting the principles of non-racism, equity and equality, of the reconstruction and development paradigm.

However the NAC syllabus appears to take an unproblematic approach to culture in this regard, casting the teacher as culturally neutral; as an objective facilitator of the circulation of a number of cultures in the classroom. Klitgaard problematizes this notion:

Teachers will not know in advance which patterns of interaction will be prevalent in their students' communities ... at least not without a detailed ethnographic study of each locality, which is clearly infeasible, as it requires intense observation, by a trained observer, over an extended period of time. With the needed knowledge unavailable, teachers may fall back on cultural stereotypes, which may only make matters worse. What to do? (1993:64)

The NAC syllabus' approach to culture relates to the political imaging of a 'rainbow nation' in another way. Despite the obstacles and real practical difficulties in attaining a multi-cultural sensitivity, the dream must be kept alive. This resonates with Muller's conception of democracy: "continuing democracy depends on losers believing that at some future time they may yet be able to win if only they keep playing the game. Disillusionment means giving up that belief" (Muller, 1993:50).

The reconstruction and development discourse is, in a sense, a discourse that has to be embraced in the pursuit of the 'ideal'. This is done throughout the syllabus, particularly through the project of enculturation, and the emphasis on citizenship and nationhood for the strengthening of society and social cohesion.



### ***The discourse of progressivism***

Recruitment of the discourse of progressivism is evident in the early stages of the syllabus. The first level, grades 1 to 7, is firmly located within the paradigm of the progressive movement in education, which contends that knowledge is socially constructed, and therefore learners should be taught to value their own experience as a source of knowledge. Learners bring their own resources and experience into the classroom, and this is utilized as relevant knowledge. The syllabus promotes a pedagogy that is learner-centred, and casts the teacher as facilitator for the learning. For example, the syllabus at this level is described entirely in terms of what the learner does; for example, "students make up stories"; "pupils have to decide on the meaning or outcome of the story"; "the pupils should become familiar with the rudimentary elements of drama".

The focus is on experiential learning and on a process-oriented pedagogy. Co-operative learning is at the heart of the syllabus at this level. Every single activity incorporates groupwork. This is in keeping with the notion that groupwork is the essence of drama, that it is a social activity, but that it also represents, in Gay Morris' words, "a balance to Westernized, individual learning" (Morris, 1996). With the emphasis on empowerment and the importance of the group, the moral project of the syllabus and how it relates to the discourse of progressivism becomes clear.

The syllabus at this stage is clearly rooted in the progressive notion of "the possibility of more democratic relations between the everyday world and...specialist domains" (Muller & Taylor, 1993:325). The everyday life experiences of the learners are used as resources for learning and there is an emphasis on the vernacular process of 'story', the assumption being that this is a conventional way of knowing for children. The weak classification and framing of the subject at this stage are indications of its progressive learner-centredness. The use of the learners' everyday lives as a resource in the classroom also indicates a focus on citizenship and social development. The progressive notion of education for social development is evident in the identity that is projected at this stage, that of the learner as a member of the group. The resources used are aimed at affirming the learner's culture and belonging to a specific national identity.

The theories of the DIE movement are drawn on extensively. This movement itself is located in the progressive paradigm. Without the demands of a nationally set examination at this level, or rigorous pass/fail assessment, the focus lies on the potential of drama in furthering a moral and social project.

### ***The discourse of utilitarianism***

Language structures the way we think about things, and the metaphors that are used reflect attitudes about a concept. Increasingly, the language used in reference to education is derived from the market place - the school is referred to as the 'plant' and the education system as the 'industry', students become 'consumers' who 'invest' in education from which they will hopefully gain certain 'returns'.

It is therefore evident that education is being brought into the market place, and that the way we think about education is changing from a traditional view of education as a social good without a price, to a more commodified concept of education that must respond to the market and to economic realities. The economic orientation of education is rapidly becoming part of the way we think and talk about education.

Because education is brought into the market place it must respond to the demands of the market place; in other words, education to a greater and greater degree is seen as providing an educated work force for the economy of a country. The economic orientation of education is made overt in the National Education Department's *Curriculum Framework for General and Further Education and Training* (1996):

Curricula should be relevant and appropriate to current and anticipated future needs of the individual, society, commerce and industry. Ever-increasing evidence suggests that economic growth in a competitive international system depends fundamentally on a generally well-educated population equipped with the relevant competencies and skills required in the economy at any point in time (1996:12).

Responding to this trend in education, the social project of the syllabus broadens in grades 8 and 9 to include not only empathetic learners with cultural understanding and tolerance, with the facility to communicate and

work effectively in a group, but also learners with skills that are useful in the workplace, that are marketable and have an instrumental value.

In Grades 8 and 9 the focus of the syllabus changes and emphasis is placed on social and life skills, as well as communication skills. On the one hand these skills (such as exploring personal issues) represent a connection between the subject and the everyday lives of the learners; on the other they are clearly a response to the vocational trend in education, that stresses the need for education to equip learners with skills that are useful in the workplace. Grade 9 represents the first exit point where many learners will leave the classroom in order to enter the world of work.

This is not to say that this is the only emphasis at this stage. The project of enculturation remains strong with the study of different South African cultures and cultural signifiers. The study of drama as a discipline is also a major part of the syllabus, with an emphasis on playmaking and using theatrical form. However, the prominent identity that is projected here is that of the learner with a solid sense of citizenship, preparing to enter civil society and the world of work.

The syllabus articulates the project of developing a capable work force and citizenry in its introduction: "The life skills which arts education engender will contribute to the production of an educated work force." (NAC, 1994:3). This is clearly a response to the shortcomings of curricula in the past, as expressed in the ANC's Policy Framework for Education and Training:

The curriculum in the past has emphasised division rather than commonality and has denied common citizenship and a national identity. The curriculum has been unresponsive to changing labour market needs and has failed to contribute to the development of learners who are prepared for the world of work and for active participation in the process of social and economic development (1993b:67).

The syllabus is clearly recruiting from the utilitarian discourse circulating in the field of education. From the Education Renewal Strategy (1991) and CUMESA (1991), through to the ANC's Policy Framework and culminating in the mighty National Qualifications Framework (1996), education has been set on a trajectory aiming towards an integration of education and training, an education system that integrates knowledge and skills and that corresponds to the everyday domain, that has relevance to the everyday world and the world of work. Phrases such as the "mental, manual", and

"head and hand" divides, as well as the repeated call for **relevance** in education, articulate these trends.

In the final phase, grades 10 to 12, the focus shifts once more. At this level two integrated strands can be identified: the vocational and the academic. The vocational strand is evident in the emphasis on theatre skills and fostering an aesthetic sensibility as a preparation for learners to enter the world of theatre.

The other strand is the academic, where learners gain an understanding of the broad knowledge base of drama as a field of study and are inducted into the discipline through the specializations of voice and identity discussed in the analysis. The academic strand represents an induction into drama as a discipline, part of the academic domain, and the learning is a preparation for further study at a tertiary level. Both the academic and vocational strands are clearly focused on the discipline of drama and theatre, and there is no localized knowledge component and very little reference to the everyday lives of the learners.

I wish to focus once again on the shift in the syllabus from a focus on the group to a focus on the individual and explain this further in the light of the discourses that are recruited in the constitution of the syllabus. This shift can be described as a movement from an emphasis on the acquirer and relations between social groups (inter-group) to an emphasis on the transmitter and the individual (intra-individual) whereby the "emphasis is upon the explicit effective ordering of the discourse to be acquired by the acquirer" (Bernstein, 1990:213).

The shift is also one from developing shared, common skills (inter-group) to individual graded performance (intra-individual). This shift could be accredited to the evaluation imperatives of curriculum construction, but it nevertheless represents what Bernstein describes as "the site of pedagogic struggle between conservative and 'progressive' positions within recontextualizing fields" (ibid.). This struggle is evident as the syllabus starts off with a highly progressive pedagogy, moving towards a more conservative pedagogy subscribing to conventional notions of curriculum formulation.

### 5.2.3 Discussion

There is also evidence of the syllabus' recruitment of the educational policy discourses in the language that is used in the syllabus. From the ANC's Policy Framework for Education and Training (Yellow Book) and the establishment of the National Education and Training Forum, through to the grand project of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), a new concept of education has been established. It is difficult to predict what the NQF will mean for education, but many of the concepts and jargon that it has generated have become established in the educational context. The grading of learners (from grade 1 - 12, as opposed to grade 1 and 2 and standards 1 - 10) is used in the syllabus. The syllabus acknowledges the General Education Certificate and the Further Education Certificate as the two nationally determined exit points. The syllabus also focuses on describing learning in terms of 'skills' and attainment of these skills are expressed as "learning outcomes". Outcomes-based education and a skills-based education lie at the heart of the NQF and much current thought on education. Although the syllabus does address the concepts of life-long learning, portability and access, which are also central to the discourse of the NQF, some of the concepts and terms are used in the syllabus. This is an indication of the influence of educational policy discourses on the constitution of the syllabus.

In this analysis I have focused on how the identification of the specializations of voice and identity provide a way of looking at the educational drama and education policy discourses that are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus. I have analysed how the syllabus authors act selectively on the discourses of educational drama and educational policy in constituting the syllabus. I have described the way in which the educational policy discourses also determine what educational drama discourses are recontextualized at different levels in the constitution of the syllabus. In the following chapter I will analyse the rules for selection, and discuss the operation of these rules in relation to the syllabus writers' positioning in the recontextualizing field.

## **CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS OF THE RULES FOR SELECTION IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SYLLABUS.**

### **6.1 The rules for selection**

Having analysed the discourses that are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus, I proceed in this chapter to examine what regulates the selection for what is recontextualized. In other words, I will examine the rules for selection. I have demonstrated how the educational policy discourses regulate rules for selection in that they explain the sequencing of the syllabus, the hierarchy that is developed, and the specialization of identity. To summarize briefly, the educational policy discourses of reconstruction and development, utilitarianism and progressivism regulate rules for selection of educational drama discourses for recontextualization in the constitution of the syllabus. In the first stage of the syllabus (grades 1 - 7), the discourse of progressivism regulates the selection of DIE principles for recontextualization in the constitution of the syllabus. The DIE tradition is itself rooted in the progressive paradigm. In the second stage of the syllabus (grades 8 - 9), the discourse of utilitarianism impacts on the way in which the communicative approach of the speech and drama tradition is recontextualized. The communicative approach is thus not used as a means to "perfect speech", or the "civilizing potential" of speech and drama, but in order for the learner to attain skills that can be used in society and in the workplace. In the third stage, the utilitarian discourse once again regulates rules for selection in the vocational aspects of drama in the syllabus; theatre craft and theatre skills are an induction into a career in the theatre. At this stage of the syllabus, however, two competing discourses are evident. One that is dependent on the market, that emphasizes vocational education, and one that is independent of the market and that is legitimated by the study of drama for its own sake. The discourse of reconstruction and development regulates the rules for selection throughout the syllabus, and this is evident particularly in the resources that are prescribed, and in the specialization of social identities.

However, it is clear from the analysis that the educational drama discourses also regulate rules for selection. The way in which the educational policy discourses are recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus is informed

by the educational drama discourses. For example, the notion of nationhood in the reconstruction and development discourse is recontextualized and is identifiable in the focus on groupwork (often termed the "essence of drama"). The educational drama discourse thus shapes the way in which the educational policy discourse is recontextualized in the constitution of the syllabus. I conclude that the educational policy discourses dominate in regulating the rules for selection. However, it is evident that the educational policy discourses and the educational drama discourses act on each other dialectically, determining the patterning and prioritizing of discourses in the syllabus. The educational policy discourses act on the drama discourses, and the drama discourses act selectively on the educational policy discourses in the recontextualization of both these discourses in the creating of the syllabus. Thus 'drama' as it is constituted in the syllabus is shaped by the educational policy discourses, and the identities projected in the syllabus through the recruitment of educational policy discourses are given form by the drama discourses. Thus the discourses, both subject-specific and educational policy, regulate the rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus.

I have described how the discourses recruited in the production of the syllabus regulate the rules for selection. Although this is the focus of the study, I am not suggesting that the educational policy discourses and the educational drama discourses are the sole determinants of the rules for selection. I have shown that the way in which drama has been constituted as an educational pursuit in the intellectual field of educational drama determines what is included in the syllabus. Thus the syllabus writers' positioning within the discourse of educational drama, their knowledge and experience of trends within this field to a large extent determines what is recontextualized in constituting the syllabus. In addition, the specialization of time in the syllabus, discussed in the analysis, also defines the rules for selection. The hierarchy from child to teenager to student defines what is appropriate for learners to learn in drama at different ages. Thus the social arrangement of the school regulates what is selected in the constitution of the syllabus. The way in which the school system itself is structured, with examination requirements and exit points from the system, also determines the prioritizing of discourses in the syllabus.

## 6.2 The operation of the rules for selection

In order to discuss how the discourses operate as rules for selection, it is necessary to consider the positioning of the syllabus writers in the recontextualizing field. The syllabus writers are situated in the pedagogic recontextualizing field in a subordinate position, for reasons I will elaborate shortly. The subordinate positioning of these agents can be seen to determine what discourses are drawn on in the constitution of the syllabus. I would argue that the recruitment of educational policy discourses is a strategy to overcome this subordination. The syllabus authors also recruit educational drama discourses for recontextualizing in the constitution of the syllabus<sup>1</sup>.

### 6.2.1 The positioning of drama in the recontextualizing field

In order to illustrate the subordinate positioning of drama in the recontextualizing field and to show how the promotion of the subject drama has largely been in the hands of agents in the PRF, I will firstly give an historical overview of the subject drama as it has been negotiated in the recontextualizing field. My data is drawn mainly from policy papers and statements, and papers on arts education policy by Carklin (1996) and Dalrymple *et al* (1993).

Drama is poorly established as a matriculation subject in schools in South Africa, except in Kwazulu-Natal, where Speech and Drama is offered in 49 secondary schools in the former NED, and 60 schools in the former DEC, House of Delegates. In the Western Cape approximately five schools offer speech and drama as a matriculation subject. There are no subject advisors for drama in the Western Cape.

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<sup>1</sup>At the same time, however, the writers are positioned within both sets of discourses, and could be seen to be positioned by these. This raises the question of agency. It is not within the scope of this study to examine this issue. The purpose here, rather, is to highlight the tension that an analysis of the rules for selection raises, between the recruitment of discourses by the recontextualizing agents, and the positioning of the recontextualizing agents within the discourses. I will suggest in the following discussion that to a large extent the syllabus authors can be seen to draw on the discourses because of their subordinate positioning within the pedagogic recontextualizing field (PRF). In the discussion I focus on educational policy discourses which come to regulate the rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus.



In 1991 the ERS and CUMESA documents were produced by the National Party government. The focus in these documents is on relating education directly to the economic needs of the country and there is a marginalization of arts and drama. The CUMESA document does state that arts education should be compulsory with an emphasis on "...practical participation and the development of skills in the three areas of creation, recreation and appreciation" (CHED, 1991:31). This was an important departure from existing arts policies in most education departments, but examination of the implementation of the recommendations indicates their limitations. In the primary school, for example, an integrated course is proposed but not evaluated for certification or promotion; in the secondary school, arts subjects are suggested as 'vocational options' and labelled as 'talent subjects'. They are not recommended as options for general matriculation subjects. Expressive arts were thus not recognised as central to general, formative education, but were seen as general or "supporting" subjects.

In the 1992 NEPI documents the arts in education do not receive specific attention, except to mention that "the role of creative and dramatic art and music needs specific consideration in terms of teaching creativity, other forms of communication, and physical skills" (NEPI, Curriculum, 1992:70).

In 1992 the National Arts Initiative (NAI) (non-governmental) was set up. Regional working groups were established to research future arts policy. Ninety percent of delegates agreed on the statement of intent to "ensure arts education for all at pre-primary, primary and secondary school levels irrespective of vocational training" (NAI, 1993: 5). The strongest supporters of arts education remained outside of the bureaucracy, ardent in their lobby for the arts in education, but met mostly with a government that had other priorities and was largely unsympathetic to their cause. The perception that arts education was a luxury and an "expensive frill" persisted and promoters of arts education appeared to be trapped in a lobbyist position.

In 1993, the ANC through the Department of Arts and Culture recognised that the arts and culture needed to play a central role in transforming society. Mtutezeli Matshoba (Media Spokesperson for DAC), co-opting the lobbyist position of arts educators, stated that

the aim of education under a democratic government shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace ... since all these virtues can be realised through cross pollination and interaction on the same platform as formal education, the integration of cultural and formal education is essential to the formulation of a productive education system"(Weekly Mail: 28 May 1993:24, cited in Dalrymple et al, 1993).

The ANC also held a conference in which an entire day session was devoted to educational and cultural matters. The main focus, however was on performance and the training of performers, rather than education in a broader sense. The Weekly Mail criticized the proceedings, stating that the "conference revealed a throwback to the 80s, to the days when culture was a weapon" (7 May 1993:24, cited in Dalrymple et al, 1993), and went on to say that the conference was part of election "build up", rather than real educational and cultural debate.

As a result of the lack of any real political commitment to arts education in the time prior to the elections, the National Arts Coalition (NAC) issued a policy statement from art educators in December 1993, clearly stating the belief that "...every child has the right to general formative education in the arts" (cited in Carklin, 1996:4). The fairly general statement issued by the NAC encapsulated the thoughts and ideas that art educators had been proposing for some time, and was an attempt to strengthen the lobby for art education as well as garner broad-based support for their ideas.

The 1994 RDP document made a positive statement, envisioning the arts as "a crucial component of developing our [country's] human resources" (ANC, 1993a: par 1.4.8.) stating that:

Arts education should be an integral part of the national school curricula at primary, secondary and tertiary level, as well as in non-formal education. Urgent attention must be given to the creation of relevant arts curricula, teacher training and the provision of facilities for the arts within all schools. (ANC, 1993a: par. 3.4.8.)

In 1994 the arts syllabus, *Syllabus Proposals for the Creative Arts: Dance, Drama, Music, Visual Arts* (the focal study of this research), was formulated by a group of educational drama practitioners, including teachers and academics, in the Western Cape. The production of the syllabus document was co-ordinated by the National Arts Coalition Arts Education Task Group and was written as a submission to the Western Cape Province Arts and

Culture Task Group's (WESTAG) policy document. The syllabus proposals were submitted to WESTAG in September 1994.

In March 1995 The White Paper on Education was released and stated:

Education in the arts, and the opportunity to **learn, participate and excel in dance, music, theatre, arts and crafts** must become increasingly available to all communities on an equitable basis, drawing on and sharing the rich traditions of our varied cultural heritage and contemporary practice" (Department of Education 1995:22, emphasis in original).

This was the first sign that the education ministry appeared to be taking on the responsibility for arts education. However, the use of the term theatre as opposed to drama was criticized as representing a particular understanding of drama which does not give its potential educational value its full due (Carklin, 1996:7).

In June 1995 a widely consulted and detailed report on arts education was published in the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG) Report. In the Western Cape, WESTAG, an equivalent body to ACTAG was formed by a voluntary task group under the auspices of the Ministry for Education and Cultural Affairs.

In 1996, the arts (including music, drama, dance and the visual arts) were isolated as one of the eight learning areas for the new South African school curriculum. Learning outcomes for the subject drama are currently being drawn up in the education department, and a 'learning programme' (syllabus) is being devised in terms of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Education Departments *Curriculum Framework for General and Further Education and Training* (1996). It appears that drama, at least in theory, is finally being established as a subject in the formal school curriculum, and the responsibility for its institutionalization is being undertaken by the Education Department.

It is clear from the above overview that the syllabus authors, at the time of writing the syllabus, were situated in a subordinate position in the recontextualizing field. In the following sections I describe the relationship between the ORF and the PRF and issues of subject competition in order to demonstrate how the syllabus authors can be viewed as drawing on the

educational policy discourses in the constitution of the syllabus. At the same time this goes some way to explaining how the educational policy discourses come to regulate the rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus.

### **6.2.2 The syllabus writers' positioning in the recontextualizing field**

The circulation of educational drama discourses in South Africa (largely emanating from Britain) happened within the context of an emergent interest in the sociology of education amongst drama practitioners in South Africa. During the 1980s the purpose of school subject drama was questioned. Educational drama practitioners, particularly in university drama departments, began to take a special interest in "...understanding the ways in which culture and education may act as a means of social reproduction of class, ethnic, racial and gender structures and therefore as a means of social control" (Dalrymple, 1987:2). In the past, "the refusal to develop a sociology of theatre studies has thrown the discipline into a state of crisis in which much of the work is outdated and irrelevant to the changing needs of society"(ibid.).

Taking a clearly social reproduction theory approach, actors in the PRF, in particular academics, articulated the need to imbue the subject drama with a social project. Muller writes of this period:

The left wing academics with their borrowed reproduction theory, were in effect practising, on the level of theory, what the activists were doing in the streets, that is, writing the implacability of the state and the need for absolute resistance. The effect was a totalizing stand off between the 'people' and the 'state' (1996a: 9).

During this period educational drama practitioners not only found themselves in opposition to the state on moral grounds, but also because of its attitude to arts education in general. Firstly, the government considered an education in the arts inappropriate for a (black) population being schooled for labour, and secondly, in terms of resources and priorities, drama was near the bottom of the list. Thus there was little support for drama education from within the state and most of the advocating for the establishment of the subject in schools came from lobby groups, academics and their organisations.

At the time at which the syllabus was constructed, however, there was a profound change in the relationship between the 'state' and the 'people'. 1994 saw the establishment of a legitimate government, and left-wing tactics employed by those previously in opposition to the government now seemed redundant. Morphet (1996) indicates the uniqueness of this context in the history of South Africa. Whereas in the past there had been a gap between the two fields, at this point in time the ORF and the PRF spoke the same language (that of democracy, equity, equality and redress), and the PRF indeed sought to align itself with the ORF. Promoters of arts education historically represented opposition to the state, and spoke the language of lobbyists. The syllabus represents a repositioning of arts educators as they face a government that is no longer "the enemy". The syllabus, constructed within the PRF, in several ways appears to seize at the opportunity of aligning itself with the ORF as a more definite way of establishing drama in the school system. Given the ANC's statements before the elections in 1993 on the importance of arts education (cited in section 6.2.1), the new government would have been perceived as being far more sympathetic to the cause of arts education.

However, the syllabus writers do express certain difficulties in ascertaining exactly what the state's agenda for arts education is. The syllabus was produced before the first Education White Paper was published and before the NQF became accepted as the new educational framework. The writers state in the introduction to the syllabus that

"...the Education white paper has not been released to date. There has accordingly been no opportunity to verify that our frame of reference accords with the forthcoming government regulations" (NAC, 1994:i).

Having operated as lobbyists, promoters of arts education have an established tradition of being ardent and insistent in their demands, making proposals from their specific comportment as drama practitioners. In the syllabus the tone is more constrained, more measured and prepared to address the state's vision of education as well as their own. They are tentative in their submission when they state that:

We have begun by pinpointing what needs to be taught - providing the syllabi, because it is difficult to estimate, without syllabi, what resources and teachers are necessary. Syllabi concretise the educational terrain which is helpful to

educational planners. We are committed to contributing to the planning for arts education (NAC, 1994:i).

and, in the *Frame of Reference* section, that:

...the syllabus material and commentary submitted here is also a series of working documents. Within the disciplines of Dance, Drama, Art, Music and Visual Arts there are movements and working groups nation-wide seeking to find the best syllabi and curricula for these disciplines. We associate ourselves with these movements and are offering these documents within all such forums to contribute to education research" (NAC, 1994: i).

It is evident that the syllabus writers are seeking co-operation with the ORF, rather than operating within an oppositional mode. There is evidence in the syllabus of an inherited lobbyist positioning, referring to one of the educational issues of arts education as "South African school pupils **deserve education in and through the arts**" (NAC, 1994:iv; emphasis in original). However the syllabus marks a change in the approach to policy that arts educators have had to adopt in the past.

The positioning of the syllabus writers in the recontextualizing field determines the rules for selection that are used in the constitution of the syllabus. I would argue that the syllabus writers, operating in the PRF, seek to align themselves with the ORF, and for this reason draw on the educational policy discourses as rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus. The fact that the syllabus was constructed in the PRF means that the state's imperatives for education did not automatically determine the rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus (as would be the case in the ORF).

### 6.2.3 Issues of competition

It is evident from the above discussion that the ORF and the PRF to a large extent spoke the same language, and the PRF sought to align itself with a legitimate government which seemingly sought fair and just objectives for education. The selection of educational policy discourses is also to do with subject competition. Goodson states that "much of the curriculum debate can be interpreted in terms of conflict between subjects over status, resources and territory"(Goodson 1983:3). In a climate of fiscal restraint and a lack of resources, subjects that are held to directly respond to the needs of the

economy (for example, science, maths, technology) have a higher status and take priority over arts education.

Drama as a subject is forced into a position where it must justify its existence in the formal curriculum. Its ability to compete within current discursive conditions becomes crucial to its subject status. If the present hegemonic discourse, that of the market, determines what gets prioritised, then statements in the syllabus like the "life skills which arts education engender will contribute to the production of an educated work force" (NAC, 1994:iii), form part of the subject's legitimizing process.

In order to establish drama as a subject in the formal school system it has to compete with other subjects. The deployment of educational policy discourses is an effort to bring drama in line with the educational imperatives in the ORF in order to legitimate its position in the school system.

In this chapter I have described the rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus. I have argued that the educational policy discourses, recruited in the constitution of the syllabus, to a large extent regulate the rules for selection. I have further examined how this can be attributed to the subordinate positioning of the syllabus writers in the recontextualizing field.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

In this concluding chapter I will provide an overview of how I addressed the research question, namely, how a syllabus is constituted through recontextualizing. I will also examine some of the limitations of the study, and point to further research.

### 7.1 The Study

This study set out to develop an analytical framework for the analysis of a syllabus. I used as a focal study for the research the NAC drama syllabus, which was drawn up in 1994. My interest in analysing the constitution of the syllabus was initiated by observing the current process of syllabus construction in the Western Cape Education Department, and my contact with the NAC syllabus document. This study focuses on what Goodson (1991) refers to as "curriculum as prescription". In surveying the literature, I found little evidence of the analysis of the written curriculum, but was interested in Bernstein's work on curriculum, particularly his theoretical concept of recontextualization, as a way of analysing the constitution of syllabus. Drawing extensively on this concept, and several other analytical tools provided by Bernstein's work, I set up a framework for the analysis of how a syllabus is constituted through recontextualizing. A summary of this analysis follows.

In order to focus my analysis of the NAC syllabus, I separated the text into resources, modalities and skills. I analysed each of these categories in terms of the specialization of voice and identity. The specialization of voice established the academic identity. The specialization of identity marked out social identities, such as "the South African citizen", "the person entering the workplace", indicating the recruitment of educational policy discourses in the constitution of the syllabus. I also examined the classification and framing of the subject and the hierarchies that were developed, in terms of the sequencing of the syllabus and the specialization of time.

I then analysed the recontextualization of discourses in the constitution of the syllabus. I isolated two sets of discourses on which the syllabus authors acted selectively in constituting the syllabus: educational drama discourses and educational policy discourses. I singled out three educational policy



discourses for the analysis: the discourses of utilitarianism, progressivism and reconstruction and development. According to my theoretical framework, both educational policy and educational drama discourses circulate within the recontextualizing field. Bernstein states that "it is the recontextualizing field which generates the positions and oppositions of pedagogic theory, research and practice"(1990:61). The recontextualizing field is subdivided into two fields: the official recontextualizing field (ORF) and the pedagogic recontextualizing field (PRF). Taking into account drama's low status as a school subject, and the syllabus writers' situation in the PRF, I argued that the syllabus writers are positioned subordinately within the recontextualizing field.

In the analysis of the recontextualization of discourses in the constitution of the NAC syllabus, I demonstrated how the educational policy discourses regulate rules for selection, in that they explain to a large extent the sequencing of the syllabus, the hierarchy that is developed, and the specialization of identity. In other words, I argued that the educational policy discourses of reconstruction and development, utilitarianism and progressivism regulate rules for selection of educational drama discourses for recontextualization in the constitution of the syllabus. To a significant degree, the educational policy discourses determine the patterning and prioritizing of educational drama discourses as they enter the syllabus.

In the final phase of the analysis I explained the operation and constitution of the rules for selection. I demonstrated that the way in which the rules for selection are constituted is related to a number of factors, an important one being the syllabus writers' subordinate positioning in the recontextualizing field. Due to drama's low status as a school subject, and the syllabus writers' location in the PRF, I concluded that the educational policy discourses are recruited as rules for selection in the constitution of the syllabus. However, at the same time the syllabus writers are situated within these discourses, and are therefore positioned by them. This raises an interesting tension in the analysis of the rules for selection.

## 7.2 Limitations

Due to the necessarily limited nature of the study I have identified the aforementioned tension in the analysis of the rules for selection, but was not able to resolve it. A resolution of this problem would require *inter alia* interviews with the syllabus writers in order to examine their relative positioning in recruiting discourses in the constitution of the syllabus. This does, however, point to further research, or an extension of this study. It is worth noting Ball's (1990) statement, in discussing the constitution of the subject English:

At any point in time, there is a whole set of influences at work in shaping and changing a particular school subject. While it is possible to accept at an abstract level that school knowledge is a selection from the available knowledge within the culture, and that those in positions of power will attempt to define what is to be considered as knowledge, it is much more difficult to identify those in positions of power, the extent to which their attempt is successful, and the extent to which alternative definitions compete for ascendancy within any subject (Ball, 1990:100).

A further limitation of the study is that I have looked only at the preactive aspect of curriculum, or curriculum as prescription. When the syllabus enters the classroom, new sets of discourses become available for recruitment in a further recontextualizing of the syllabus, where the discourses in the syllabus are again repositioned and refocused:

what is reproduced in schools may itself be subject to recontextualizing principles arising out of the specific context [e.g. family, peer, community relations] of a given school (Bernstein, 1990:199).

I would also, given the space and time, have liked to theorize more fully the recontextualizing field, not only the dynamics between the ORF and the PRF and the question of power relations, but also to examine these fields in terms of classification and framing values.

## 7.3 Concluding remarks

I have examined in this study the influence of socio-political meanings, as manifest in educational policy discourses, on the constitution of curriculum. I have shown how the recruitment of these discourses explains, to a large extent, the way in which the syllabus is constituted. Bernstein argues that the rules of relation, sequencing and pacing of a school subject **cannot be derived from some internal logic to the subject itself** (1990:185;

emphasis mine), and he states that the "rules of reproduction of a subject are social, not logical facts" (ibid.).

Although certainly not the only way of analysing the syllabus, I have found Bernstein's arguments and theories a useful and exciting way of examining how the discourses circulating at the time and place of the constitution of the syllabus both enter the syllabus and define how it is constituted. The notion of recontextualizing provides a way of examining the interplay between educational policy discourses and subject-specific discourses. The notions of voice, identity, classification and framing are useful analytical tools for marking out the specific discourses that have been recruited in the production of the syllabus. In this study I have attempted to offer a method of working that could interestingly be applied to other curriculum documents.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **NAC DRAMA SYLLABUS DOCUMENT**

# **SYLLABUS PROPOSALS FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS**

**DANCE**

**DRAMA**

**MUSIC**

**VISUAL ARTS**

## **TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF ARTS EDUCATION IN ALL SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE REGION**

Submitted to the Convenor, Western Cape Province Arts and Culture Task Group (WESTAG), 23  
September 1994

This proposal has been co-ordinated by the National Arts Coalition (NAC) Arts Education Task Group  
for the Western Cape Province.

Acknowledgement of receipt of this document, queries and a response should be sent to The Syllabus  
Convenor, NAC, PO Box 472, Athlone, 7760, Cape. Tel. 021-6969352. Tel. & Fax. 021-6971881.

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Some comments from the Art Educators Forum.

## 1. PREAMBLE

### 1.1 Composition of the NAC Combined Arts Committee.

- 1.1.i. This document is a compilation of new planning, research and collation undertaken by associations and interested teachers and lecturers in the four disciplines of Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts who consider it necessary to ensure that arts education is provided for every school pupil.
- 1.1.ii. Associations such as the South African Association for Drama and Youth Theatre, the South African Guild of Speech and Drama Teachers and the South African Music Educators Society have representatives who have been contributing to the syllabi under the auspices of the National Arts Coalition (NAC) Western Province Regional Branch. Research undertaken by the Art Educators Forum has been made available to the National Arts Coalition in the endeavour to achieve appropriate arts education for all.

### 1.2. Motivation for this submission to WESTAG.

- 1.2.i. The purpose of this submission is to bring the urgent and critical need for arts education to the attention of the Minister and her advisors.
- 1.2.ii. Voicing the need is however only the first step. The next is to propose ways and means to address the need.
- 1.2.iii. We have begun by pinpointing what needs to be taught - providing the syllabi, because it is difficult to estimate, without syllabi, what resources and teachers are necessary. Syllabi concretise the educational terrain which is helpful to education planners.
- 1.2.iv. We are committed to contributing to the planning for arts education: tabling syllabi is just the first step.

### 1.3 Frame of Reference.

This document is based upon certain assumptions. These are as follows.

- 1.3.i. We are aware that all existing syllabi are currently being reviewed to remove any material that is inaccurate or 'unfortunate'; with a view to these revised syllabi being implemented in 1995.
- 1.3.ii. We submit that the alterations referred to above are 'cosmetic'.
- 1.3.iii. We hold the view that some of the existing syllabi for the arts, revised or not, require radical transformation if they really are to serve the needs of the majority of South African school pupils.
- 1.3.iv. Accordingly the syllabus material and commentary submitted here is also a series of working documents. Within the disciplines of Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts there are movements and working groups nationwide seeking to find the best syllabi and curricula for these disciplines. We associate ourselves with these movements and are offering these documents within all such forums to contribute to education research.
- 1.3.v. It must be stressed that the deadline for submission to WESTAG of 23 September was published rather late, necessitating a rushed finish to research in progress. In addition the Education white paper has not been released to date. There has accordingly been no opportunity to verify that our frame of reference accords with the forthcoming government regulations.

### 1.4. Recommendations tabled thus far for South Africa's new, unified education system.

- 1.4.i. We have taken cognisance of the ERS, the CUMESA and ANC Discussion Document on Education (January 1994). This document assumes that the new education system will aim to implement ten years of free, compulsory schooling - from Pre-Sub A (Pre-Grade 1), Sub A (Grade 1) to Std 7 (Grade 9). The General Education Certificate will therefore be the standard exit point from compulsory schooling.
- 1.4.ii. Senior secondary schooling from Std 8 to Std 10 (Grades 10-12) will be voluntary and will lead to the Further Education Certificate.
- 1.4.iii. We understand that the combined arts are acknowledged as a core subject domain in GEC education.
- 1.4.iv. We are aware that it is likely that macro-education policy, including core syllabi for primary and secondary schools, may be generated at national level but will be implemented and realised at regional level.
- 1.4.v. We are aware of financial and other constraints which make the immediate implementation of the Pre-Sub A year unlikely.

1.4.vi. We take the view that as Arts Educators in the Cape, we have a responsibility to contribute to policy formulation and implementation at both national and regional level. We therefore offer these syllabi to contribute to policy development at both levels.

Copyright of these documents vests in the compilers.

### **1.5. Current provision for Arts Education in Schools.**

1.5.i. As far as we know, education in the arts is offered at less than one percent of ex-DET schools in any form whatever.

1.5.ii. The provision for Visual Arts and Music in ex-House of Representatives schools and traditionally 'white' primary and secondary schools in the Cape is mostly fair to very good. There are however schools in which the comparable provision is less favourable.

1.5.iii. Dance is relatively extensively offered for female pupils in ex-House of Representative schools as part of the PE syllabus. Ballet is accepted as a matric subject in ex-House of Representatives and traditionally 'white' schools, but seldom is actually offered.

1.5.iv. Drama is offered sporadically in traditionally 'white', and occasionally in ex-House of Representatives primary schools. Drama is accepted as a matriculation subject in ex-House of Representatives secondary schools and is offered in one or two. Drama is not accepted as a matriculation subject in traditionally 'white' secondary schools. It is accepted as a matriculation subject in private schools and the Natal Syllabus for Speech and Drama is utilised.

### **1.6 Arts education in a reconstructed education system.**

1.6.i. Now is the time when the education system is being completely revised and reconstructed. Now is the time - before all the attention is diverted to other areas of education - to call for **some education in the arts for every South African school pupil.**

1.6.ii. The provision of arts education for DET and other disadvantaged school pupils is an urgent matter requiring immediate redress. Resources, from the Arts and Culture AND the Education AND the RDP budgets must be made available to enable those schools with no current provision for arts education to introduce the arts.

1.6.iii. The reasons why arts education must be addressed immediately, given the pressing needs of literacy and numeracy, are covered in the General Introduction section of this document.

1.6.iv. In the short to medium term we propose that primary schools offer one or more of the arts (Dance, Drama, Music & Visual Arts) according to their preference and their access to resources and teachers.

1.6.v. One or more of the arts, namely Dance, Drama, Music or Visual Arts should be offered to all pupils in the junior secondary phase for GEC; and as an option in the senior secondary phase for FEC.

1.6.vi. In South Africa's cultural heritages the arts are not conceived of as distinct and unique as in the Western heritage. We recommend that in the medium to long term Combined Arts be introduced in the primary phase of compulsory education. This course would have flexipackages that would allow schools and teachers a broad choice in the way in which Combined Arts is offered, thereby utilising the strengths of the teacher(s) and the school(s) to best effect.

### **1.7. Future Proposals.**

1.7.i. This document does not presently contain a syllabus for Combined Arts, since the work on this is not yet sufficiently advanced. When this task is accomplished we will submit it to the minister for consideration to WESTAG and the SMT for consideration.

1.7.ii. We are also concerned with the following:

- a. Pre-Sub A syllabi,
- b. Arts education in special and remedial education and arts therapy
- c. In-service teacher education in one or more of the arts.
- d. Pre-service teacher education for the arts;

and we would welcome consultation with WESTAG or the SMT on these and any other matters which you may wish to raise.



## 2. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 The Creative Arts

For South African schooling the following major fields in the creative arts have been identified as they are reflected in the many cultural heritages of Southern Africa:

visual arts (includes craft & design)

music

drama dance

literature (taught in language courses)

media (video, film and television) education.

Each of these art forms offer distinct types of creative experience and aesthetic understanding - all of which should be developed as a part of a balanced educational process. This document does not however attempt to deal with the area of media education.

### 2.2 The relative importance of vocational training.

This is the age of technology and technical and vocational training are currently viewed as highly important. However, in order to prosper in a modern society all our human potential should be fully realised. The arts are important for the cultural, social, intellectual and spiritual development of every person and should be available to everyone and not just a select few. An education without the arts is schooling without soul. The life skills which arts education engender will contribute to the production of an **educated work force**.

### 2.3 Social Issues.

2.3.i. It cannot be over emphasised that the **creative arts are an integral part of life**. A reconstructed system of education must therefore encourage indigenous self expression through conserving and adapting local traditions and expressive forms. It is through the arts that the oral traditions of South Africa can be fostered. Arts education must be culturally relevant and sensitive. It should draw on the student's own cultural background and recognise the value of local culture as well as teaching new forms and combinations of different forms.

Engagement with the arts fosters enthusiasm for learning because young people enjoy expressing themselves orally and physically and this allows for success in the early stages which in turn fosters a culture of learning.

2.3.ii. The arts are a vehicle for **intercultural understanding**. Arts education should promote tolerance and understanding and be deliberately anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-chauvinist and anti-prejudice. It should challenge rigidified cultural stereotypes in creative ways. The arts offer young people the experience of learning about the world and its history through learning about and understanding other cultures. Cultural values are not only preserved and transmitted through the arts, they are examined and critiqued in order to forge new models of expression and **new ways of seeing and knowing** that are unique to each art form.

2.3.iv. The arts also offer learning experiences which develop **social skills** and have **healing qualities**. Many sectors of South African society are strife torn and the young are scarred by violence and death. The arts are a way of thoughtfully expressing the anguish and frustration of the past through artistic reinterpretations; and allowing the young to come to terms with traumas to which many have been exposed. Therefore the arts may serve to heal societal schisms and personal traumas and help build a functioning society.

### 2.4 Educational Issues

2.4.i. Arts education encompasses a **holistic approach** to education. It is concerned with the intellectual, emotional and spiritual growth of human beings. The methodology of arts education is process orientated and process sensitive and is based upon the recognition that there is no absolute right and wrong in the arts. The focus is on experiential learning. In our traditional heritages, the arts are an exciting way of learning because everyone participates. Story, song, dance and special clothing or ornamentation aim at the socialisation of the child as well as teaching young people cultural mores.

2.4.ii. Arts education's role in socialisation is an important one. It develops **life skills** as well as **motor and co-ordination skill**, **creative thinking** and **skills of critical analysis**. Arts education fosters communication, confidence to initiate and follow through on ideas and the ability to listen, negotiate and compromise.

2.4.iii. South African school pupils **deserve education in and through the arts**.

# A TRIAL/PILOT SYLLABUS PROPOSAL

## FOR

## DRAMA

### FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

DRAMA SYLLABUS for Sub A to Standard 5

### INTRODUCTION

#### **The nature of this document.**

This is an outline proposal for a Drama syllabus for the first phase of compulsory schooling, namely Pre-Sub A. Sub A - Std 5 (Grades 1-7). The proposal is a working document and is open to completion, correction or improvement.

The designers of this syllabus are Drama educators working in the Cape. The process so far has been broadly consultative and it is planned to continue that way, based upon the view that as many drama teachers as possible should have a say in planning what they teach. The Drama syllabus committee view it as desirable that pupils and parents should also have access to the process. The names of those who have thus far contributed is to be found at the end of the document. Copyright of this document is vested in the compilers.

Thus far the focus has been on pinpointing learning processes (including content) and defining outcomes for the chief phases of Primary Education. The next phase will involve obtaining feedback on the syllabus, possibly providing more detail, making the necessary additions, alterations and adjustments as desired.

Any persons (anywhere in South Africa) who feel that they can valuably contribute to the process are most welcome to write to the Syllabus Convenor, NAC, PO Box 472, Athlone, 7760. Tel. and Fax. No. 6971881. Similarly should any person or organization consider that this syllabus committee is duplicating work already done better elsewhere, this committee would be grateful for models already drawn up with which they are not familiar.

#### **The nature of learning in, through and about Drama.**

This syllabus takes the view that Drama is an active, experientially-based process through which students learn about themselves, drama and their world within a specifically South Africa-orientated approach.

#### **Cultural familiarity**

Although Drama frequently is developed in the realm of the imaginary, children in the first years of schooling should work from the known, the familiar, the everyday, towards the unknown and unfamiliar. The teacher needs to be sensitive to the cultural practices current in the home backgrounds of the pupils - whether diverse or uniform among a class - and firstly reinforce respected cultural mores of the pupil's home environments before posing alternative models. In other words the drama work should firstly have a local, South African flavour, and secondly a foreign frame of reference such as North African, American or Western European.

### **Research into Cultures**

One of the chief ways in which certain groups and communities in South Africa have been disadvantaged or marginalised in the past has been through rendering their home culture, artistic works and cultural practices invisible by ignoring these in the school curriculum.

Teachers trained under the 'old system' may in many instances have to redress imbalances with respect to their customary points of referral and frames of reference. Initially this may mean that the teacher has to undertake some added research to find suitable material for drama: searching for stories, songs and plays which have local relevance and reference rather than employing, for example, stories from a foreign tradition with which the teacher was supplied at teachers' college.

If local stories, dramas and cultural traditions are referred to, the backgrounds and local traditions of pupils will receive regular reinforcement which will continually augment the pupils' self esteem and community loyalty and pride. The value of this can not be over-emphasised.

### **Medium of Instruction**

The focus of the work in Drama should shift depending upon whether the pupils are working in mother tongue or a second language. Obviously where the work is in a second language, greater emphasis will be placed on all aspects of communication, including gesture, listening skills, language acquisition, language proficiency and practice, and the development of communicative clarity, fluency and confidence. Nonetheless the Drama class must not lose its dramatic quality and give way to rote learning or transmission teaching. Learning in Drama is active and participatory.

### **Assessment**

Assessment must be both continuous as well as summative and must focus upon the **basic dimensions of Drama**, namely the **processes of participating, understanding and applying**. Emphasis will fall on ensuring that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to practise the **drama processes** relevant to their age group and then the consequent acquisition of **skills, knowledge, values and attitudes** can be assessed in a range from 'Achieved and mastered very well' (A symbol) to 'Has yet to achieve' (E symbol).

Aspects of the syllabus must be assessed with due regard to their relative importance.

Assessment needs to take account of whether pupils are studying drama in their mother tongue or second language. Working in second language may require a focus upon language skills in drama and consequent shift of the balance of assessment factors. Furthermore second language work may, but will not necessarily, adversely affect the acquisition of other skills.

## DRAMA SYLLABUS FOR JUNIOR PRIMARY

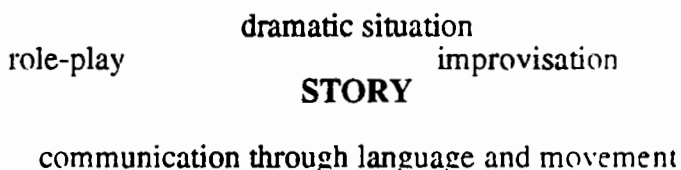
### Sub A to Standard 1 (Grades 1 to 3)

#### Basic Dimensions

Learning in drama is an active process. This process has three basic dimensions: the pupil **PARTICIPATING** in the drama which leads to the pupil **UNDERSTANDING** something new which empowers the pupil in **APPLYING** recently acquired knowledge in new contexts, both within the drama class and beyond it. Looking at it another way around, **applying** a new skill or idea may lead to **understanding** a new field of knowledge which may well empower a pupil to **participate** with renewed commitment and sharper focus.

#### Drama Processes

These three basic dimensions above are all skills heightened while learning through **drama processes**. At the junior primary level, the emphasis for **participating**, **applying** and **understanding** will be on introducing the child to basic drama skills, developing a sense of group, stimulating the imagination by dramatising and improvising stories and exploring other people's lives through role-play.



#### Areas of Study

##### 1. Working in a group

The pupil learns how to:

- i work in a group.
- ii make a circle.
- iii find a space.
- iv 'freeze' (ie stand still at a given signal - a bang on a tambourine, a clap etc) and respond to the teacher's instructions.

This degree of discipline is necessary for the pupil to participate effectively in the drama.

##### 2. Group story telling

2.1. As a whole group, the pupils act out stories that are read or told to them by the teacher. They work imaginatively from voice and pictures. The dramatising of the story is teacher led.

Stories are either based on:

- i their **everyday lives** and involve the pupil's close family experience (going next door for a braai, going to church, moving homes, a flood, going to the beach)
- ii or these stories take place in the **fantasy world** (Makhwibitsana [Red Ridinghood], tricking a crafty rabbit, climbing a rainbow, trying to make a sad chief happy).

2.2. The pupil explores **roles** that are:

- i **known** in their everyday lives (mother, father, sister, gogo, friend and community helper)
- ii **unknown** in the fantasy world (hunter, wolf, villager).

2.3. The pupil learns to:

- i participate in and discover the pleasure of group story telling.
- ii offer individual ideas that will change the story and make group decisions.

##### 3. Expressing in movement

The pupil learns to:

- i respond to and develop the story through movement and action.
- ii express feelings through their body's movements.
- iii discover the different shapes the body makes in space.
- iv experience different ways of moving through space.

#### 4. Expressing in language

The pupil learns to:

- i listen to the story and through understanding, act it out.
- ii use new words and make new sentences by acting out the story.
- iii offer ideas and express thoughts and feelings.
- iv listen and respond to each other.

#### Learning Outcomes

The pupil is able to:

1. introduce a story in the traditional way.
2. work imaginatively
3. use concrete objects to represent other objects in dramatic play.
4. pretend to be someone else with belief and act like them.
5. participate in a pretend situation and act as if it were real.
6. find a space in which to work without bumping into others.
7. move freely and with ease through space responding to verbal and sound signals to change direction, levels, sizes etc.
8. respond in movement to images created by sound, music, poetry.
9. use full sentences to express their feelings and thoughts in their mother tongue.
10. speak about their experiences and feelings in a small group.
11. listen to stories and others' experiences and feelings.
12. begin to use language and sound to express mood, feeling and emotion in dramatic play.
13. willingly participate in dramatic play.
14. recognise the problem that the story offers and attempt to find a solution.

#### Assessment

Throughout the year, the teacher can use the following categories to assess the pupil's progress in drama:

- Achieved and mastered very well
- Achieved and mastered
- Has achieved
- Is achieving
- Has yet to achieve

There are 4 areas of assessment:

##### 1. Drama Processes

The pupil must have learnt:

- i the traditional way of introducing a story and can respond to it (Chosi, Chosi Ngantsomi).
- ii to focus and listen to the story for at least 15 minutes.
- iii to engage emotionally in a story.
- iv to participate in the acting out of whole group stories.
- v to use any object given to him/her in a creative way.
- vi Communication skills:
  - to display good spatial awareness and orientation.
  - to be aware of space and to move through it with ease.
  - to work on more than one level (ie close to the ground, arms in the air).
- vii Role-play and Improvisation:
  - a. to discriminate between the real and the imaginary world (ie know when the drama starts and ends).
  - b. to verbally recall what happened both inside and outside the drama.
  - c. to respect and respond to other pupil's roles.
  - d. to shows signs of commitment to a role.
- viii to be confident enough to respond freely within the drama lessons.

**2. Groupwork skills**

- i to contribute ideas towards story-making in the classroom.
- ii to show an interest in others feelings and ideas.

**3. Language skills**

- i to answer simple questions about the story.
- ii to speak at least one or two sentences audibly and clearly.
- iii to be able to form a sentence correctly in the mother tongue.
- iv to have a very basic second language vocabulary.

**4. Cultural Understanding**

- i to understand the purpose of stories.

**5. Critical Awareness**

- i to share responses to stories in a small group.

## DRAMA SYLLABUS FOR SENIOR PRIMARY

(Standards 2 to 5 : Grades 4 to 7)

### Basic Dimensions

Learning in drama is an active process. This process has three basic dimensions : the pupil **PARTICIPATING** in the drama leads to the pupil **UNDERSTANDING** something new which empowers the pupil in **APPLYING** recently acquired knowledge in new contexts, both within the drama class and beyond it. Looking at it another way around, **applying** a new skill or idea may lead the pupil to **understanding** a new field of knowledge which may empower a pupil to **participate** with renewed commitment and sharper focus.

### Drama Processes

The three basic dimensions above are all skills heightened while learning through **drama processes**. At the middle primary level, the emphasis for **participating**, **applying** and **understanding** will be on dramatising **stories**, improvising and making up **stories**, and exploring the world and its peoples through dramatic situations, role plays and rudimentary playmaking and performance.

role play

dramatic situations

### STORY

communication through movement

communication through language

**improvisation and playmaking**



## STANDARD 2 AND 3 (Grade 4 and 5)

### Areas of Study

*Drama processes and story content are learnt at the same time. The focus is on continual improvement of the pupils' mastery of the drama processes coupled with increasing dramatic skill and cultural knowledge.*

#### 1. Language - through story building

Students make up stories, learn new words for the story, order the happenings of the story into a sequence, and develop the confidence to express feelings, opinions and ideas to their classmates and the teacher in small groups.

#### 2. Dramatic Action - through dramatisation

Using expressive movement, sounds, song and language, pupils make up or improvise and act out stories or dramatic situations, thereby developing their sense of dramatic structure, form, expression and use of space.

#### 3. Group skills - through improvisation and story

When the pupils have to decide upon the meaning or outcome of the story with each other and their teacher, they learn how to work together in a group.

#### 4. Role play

The pupil adopts the life role, profession or attitude of a specified character. For example:  
a *gogo* (grandmother) who is a witchdoctor who has had her supply of magic herbs stolen from her. She is very old and angry and suspicious.

#### 5. Stories in everyday life

For example:  
the class plans a presentation to announce the new recycling programme at the school; or to celebrate the anniversary of President Mandela's inauguration; or the class makes up a play around children who are hit by their parents and explore and express their feelings on this issue.

#### 6. Myths of *Nkosi* and *Tikoloshe* : Heroes and Demons

Through improvising myths and legends the pupils explore values, beliefs and cultural practices important to different South African communities. For example:  
the story of Van Hunks and the Devil, of Racheltjie de Beer, of *Klein Riet-Alleen in die Roerkuil*.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of Std 3 pupils should have achieved certain **SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, VALUES & ATTITUDES**.

The student should be able to:

#### 1. Drama Processes

- 1.i. Create simple dramatic sequences employing basic drama elements of an enacted story which begins, develops to a climax or important stage and then concludes.
- 1.ii. Role Play : Take on the profession, life role or attitude of a very specific character.

#### 2. Group work skills

- 2.i. Participate in and contribute to group dramatic activity, taking ideas from the group and helping with suggestions or actions.
- 2.ii. Listen and use the ideas of others as well as offer ideas of their own.

## STANDARD 2 AND 3 (Grade 4 and 5)

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- 1.ii. Role Play : Take on the profession, life role or attitude of a very specific character.

#### 2. Group work skills

- 2.i. Participate in and contribute to group dramatic activity, taking ideas from the group and helping with suggestions or actions.
- 2.ii. Listen and use the ideas of others as well as offer ideas of their own.

- 2.iii. Begin to take responsibility for one's behaviour and be responsible towards family, friends and the natural environment.

### 3. Language skills

- 3.i. Confidently express simple thoughts and describe situations verbally or in movement.  
3.ii. Listen and talk about work in an ordered way in a small group without the direct help of the teacher.

### 4. Cultural Understanding

- 4.i. Refer to a store of stories or dramatic situations which express the values of the community.  
4.ii. Apply knowledge discovered in drama to a new situation.

For example:

the students have been practising interviewing in class. Next they are assigned to interview a friend or family member who is not in the class and bring the results back to class with them.

### 5. Critical Awareness

- 5.i. Express opinions about stories which embody certain values or attitudes.

### Assessment

1. If it is felt necessary to assess each student individually and accord a mark, the following scale is suggested:

- A = Achieved and mastered very well
- B = Achieved and mastered
- C = Has achieved
- D = Is achieving
- E = Has yet to achieve (Fail).

2. By the end of Std 2 the teacher should ensure that all the areas of study and opportunities for participating, understanding and applying have been provided for the pupils.

3. At regular intervals during the year, the pupils' degree of achievement of certain drama **skills, knowledge, values and attitudes** can be checked off against the list of **Learning Outcomes**, and an **Assessment Profile** will emerge.

For example:

#### 1. Drama Processes

- 1.i. Can the pupils create simple dramatic sequences employing the basic drama elements, viz. beginning, development, climax and conclusion?  
1.ii. Role Play : Can the pupil take on the profession, life role or attitude of a very specific character?

## STANDARD 4 AND 5

(Grade 6 and 7)

### Areas of Study including Learning Outcomes

#### *Areas of Study*

*There are two important aspects to learning at this stage, namely*

*1. dramatic skills and 2. content of the drama. Most of the time these two aspects will fuse together and develop simultaneously. They are divided into two categories below ONLY for the purposes of simplicity and clarity.*

#### *Learning Outcomes*

*These are evident when the pupils master the necessary **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, VALUES and ATTITUDES** within the areas of study. Continuous Assessment, as well as the final examination at the end of Std 5, is therefore essential.*

#### **DRAMATIC SKILLS**

##### **1. Drama Processes**

- 1.i. The pupils should be encouraged to participate in whole class dramas with sustained concentration, application, and engagement.
- 1.ii. The pupils should practise forming the drama in small groups without the direct intervention of the teacher. They must have opportunity to shape and rehearse their initial spontaneous improvisations and perform them for the class group.
- 1.iii. The pupils should become increasingly familiar with rudimentary elements of drama, namely beginning, middle and end, focus, climax, language and meaning.

##### **2. Group work**

- 2.i. Pupils must increasingly learn to work effectively together in a group.
- 2.ii. Pupils must be encouraged to listen to each other and display tolerance for the ideas and feelings of others.

##### **3. Language skills**

- 3.i. Physical communication : the pupils should understand the use of space, use different levels, informal stagings, and transform the classroom space into a different imaginary environment, for example a wine farm in the Boland or a fishing fleet in Kalk Bay harbour.
- 3.ii. Oral Communication : the pupils should be encouraged to develop listening skills, vocabulary, fluency and clarity in communication situations and deal with formal as well as informal communication. For example:  
the presentation of a song, dance and poetry programme; or giving a speech of thanks.

##### **4. Cultural Understanding**

- 4.i. Teachers may use, or encourage the pupils to obtain and then use, extracts from literature, poems, pictures, photographs, newspaper articles, objects and discussion to stimulate whole-class dramas. The class therefore works from stimuli to create drama and explore dramatic forms for presentation.
- 4.ii. Each pupil keeps a **Drama File** in which all the material, for example the stories and poems they collect, are stored. These should be periodically checked by the teacher. The purpose of this file is that students learn to value their own research.

##### **5. Critical Skills**

- 5.i. The pupils must have opportunity to discuss their dramas, to appraise the content and evaluate their own contributions.
- 5.ii. The pupils must be encouraged to question their own contributions both in terms of their commitment to the drama and the quality of the content.

##### **6. Initiative, creativity and leadership**

- 6.i. The pupils must be encouraged to act on their ideas without prompting from the teacher.

- 6.ii. The pupils must be encouraged to respond creatively, intuitively and spontaneously within dramatic situations so long as they are working with focus and concentration.
- 6.iii. The pupils must be encouraged to take responsibility for quality of drama they make.

## 7. Presentation

- 7.i. At some stage during Std 5, the pupils must devise, and present for performance, theme programmes or short plays on a specific theme. This performance may be accompanied by posters or a visual display. Properties and costumes (as may be appropriate) could be created in class from scrap materials.

## CONTENT FOR THE DRAMA

The pupils find out about, or read, or are told, and then dramatise the problems or possibilities inherent in:

- 7. **Legends, Myths and Folktales** such as the legend of the grave of Sjeik Yusuf, of Shaka paramount chief of the Zulus, of the *Heks* of Hex River.
- 8. **Stories from history** of Nonquasi's prophecy to the Ama-Xhosa: of the youth and student-days of Steve Biko: of Emily Hobhouse: of Mujaji, the Sotho Rain Queen.
- 9. **Events across the world** such as the Laingsburg flood, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius over Pompeii, the Los Angeles earthquake or Neil Armstrong's moon walk.
- 10. **Themes** such as war and peace, gangsters and water conservation expressed in stories, poetry and dance drama and music or song.

## Assessment

- 1. The following scale is suggested for assessment purposes:

- A = Achieved and mastered very well
- B = Achieved and mastered
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- D = Is achieving
- E = Has yet to achieve (Fail).

- 2.i. At regular intervals during the year and at the end of Std 5 the pupils' degree of achievement of certain knowledge, **values and attitudes** evident in the *Learning Outcomes* must be assessed in the following categories. The percentage of marks awarded to each category is indicated in square brackets:

1. Drama Processes	[20]
2. Group Work Skills	[10]
3. Language Skills	[10]
4. Cultural Understanding	[20]
5. Critical Awareness	[5]
6. Initiative and/or Leadership and/or Creativity	[5]
7. Presentation	[30]

- 2.ii. No. 7. Presentation must include an assessment of each pupil's contribution to:

- 7.i. the process of making up the theme programme or small play
  - 7.ii. the performance [which may be for another class]
  - 7.iii. the visual elements, ie properties or costumes or posters or visual displays created by the pupils
- AND

7.iv. each pupil must submit their **Drama File** which contains written records of all their work in Std 4 and 5; for examples stories, pictures, records of interviews, reports written on issues from history and geography which they have researched, poems and any other material which has fed into their drama work.

## A TRIAL/PILOT SYLLABUS PROPOSAL

### FOR

### DRAMA

## FOR JUNIOR SECONDARY STANDARDS IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

### INTRODUCTION

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Students who are beginning with drama in Std 6 (Grade 8) should work from the familiar and local towards the unknown and foreign. The teacher needs to be sensitive to the cultural practices in the home backgrounds of the pupils - whether diverse or uniform among a class - and reinforce respected cultural mores of the pupil's home environments before posing alternative models. In other words the drama work should firstly have a local, South African flavour, and secondly a foreign frame of reference such as North African, American or Western European.

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If local stories, dramas and cultural traditions are referred to, the backgrounds and local traditions of pupils will receive regular reinforcement which will continually augment the pupils' self esteem and community loyalty and pride. The value of this can not be over-emphasised.

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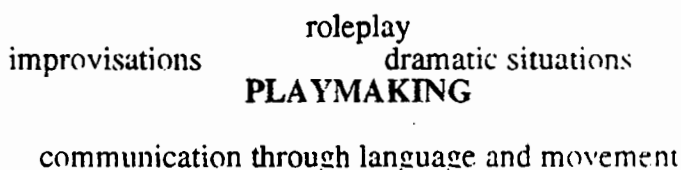
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### Drama Processes

The three basic dimensions above are all skills heightened while learning through **drama processes**. At junior secondary level - the last phase of GEC, the emphasis for **participating, applying and understanding** will be on **PLAYMAKING** through the means of roleplay, improvisation and dramatic situations.



### Areas of Study

*There are FOUR major areas of study. Each covers a different field of learning. Two school terms should be spent upon each.*

#### 1. Communication projects

- 1.i. Development of communication skills for discussion and conversation: listening, negotiating, structuring and articulating an argument clearly.
- 1.ii. Debates, forum discussions and symposiums - including reading and interviewing research.
- 1.iii. Formal and informal oral presentations, for example explaining how to make ginger beer, or a speech to persuade the class to participate in a recycling project.
- 1.iv. Improvisations, roleplays and whole-class dramas.  
 For example: A young woman is being prosecuted in court for being in possession of drugs. Each member of the class assumes a role, such as prosecutor, judge and jury. The case is argued.

#### 2. Social Drama

- 2.i. The drama processes of roleplay, improvisation and dramatic situations should be used to explore social and personal issues relevant to young people in South Africa.
- 2.ii. Through the selective use of drama processes students will have opportunity to:
  - be exposed to,
  - experience at first hand in a controlled situation.
  - emotionally engage with in a controlled situation.
  - reflect upon,
  - critically deconstruct
 a range of information and attitudes stemming from contentious and sensitive issues.

For example:

2.iii. **Role play:** A job interview

2.iv. **Improvisation:**

- a) A teenager breaking the news of her unexpected pregnancy to her family.
- b) A food vendor being harassed at a taxi rank.

**2.v. Dramatic situation:**

- a) Security guards, harassed and threatened, hold a meeting to decide what course of action to take to improve their conditions of employment;
- b) A troupe of youth scouts who are engaged in a beach litter clean-up project are made fun of by holiday-makers.
- c) A nearly illiterate old-age pensioner wants to send a parcel to her daughter in the city, but the harassed Post Office Clerk refuses to help.

**2.vi. Interview:**

- a) A group of farm workers feel that access to the law is always beyond their reach. They approach the local Legal Aid Clinic for advice. The legal advisor comes to the farm to find out what the problems are.
- b) A teenager is anxious about his/her sexuality. The teenager approaches a youth counsellor for advice.

**2.vii. Media Reporting:**

- a) Three newspaper reporters, one from the local weekly newspaper, one from a city daily and one from a conservative, fundamentalist monthly; report on the problems that food vendors experience with their clientele at taxi ranks. They support their views on television. How do their reports and views differ?

**3. Cross-cultural Drama Studies**

- 3.i. Students explore different cultures, represented within the class group, South Africa and abroad (as is appropriate), with respect to :
  - 3.i.a. research (written and oral eg. interview) into the origins and meanings of cultural practices to be utilised in playmaking,
  - 3.i.b. dramatic and theatrical forms in the different cultures.
  - 3.i.c. rituals, myths, songs and dances of different cultures.
  - 3.i.d. cultural signifiers at issue today, such as local statues, the national flag, the anthem;
  - 3.i.e. extracts from play texts which deal with this issue.

For example:

3.ii. **Role play:** A young Moslem woman questions her new employer's ruling that she may not wear her traditional clothing to work.

3.iii. **Improvisation:** A student from a rural area moves with his family to a large city. His new classmates confront him about his lifestyle and 'old fashioned ways' (ref. D.E.T. Boys High).

3.iv. **Playmaking:** A Jewish family's response when the middle daughter announces her intention to marry a Christian (ref. The Fiddler on the Roof).

**4. Playmaking Project**

- 4.i. Playmaking requires that a central idea, facilitated by the teacher, be crystalised into theatre form by the students, either as a whole class or in small groups. The process should sustain for a term and involve oral and written research on the topic, improvisation, roleplay or characterisation, a skillful use of the elements of drama, namely focus, tension, dramatic context, mood and dramatic symbol. The process will culminate in the performance - for fellow students or at a school function as is appropriate.
- 4.ii. Follow up must include a critical appraisal of the process and presented play by means of discussion or written review;
- 4.iii. a written record from each student recording the process:
  - their personal responses to the project.
  - an analysis of their own project's dramatic strengths and weaknesses.

## Learning Outcomes

Through **participating in, understanding and applying**

- the research skills of questioning, listening and reading
- roleplays
- dramatic situations
- improvisation
- verbal communication and movement skills
- playmaking

by the end of Std 7 the students should possess the following **skills, knowledge, values and attitudes**:

1. Be able to listen, question, clearly argue or explain, negotiate and compromise within a dramatic context, and somewhat in real life situations.
2. Be aware, and have developed a degree of mastery, of the changes of language style and manner demanded by different contexts, particularly the shift from formal to informal contexts.
- 3.i. Use language to adequately express their acceptance or rejection of certain social behaviours and substantiate their preferences with reasons.
- 3.ii. Be able to tolerate the opinions of others.
4. Have the confidence to offer ideas and explore or test them with commitment in improvisations.
5. Be able to use the drama processes with sufficient flexibility and confidence so that the drama structures become a safe arena within which students can test the opinions and values they hold dear, and explore sensitive social and personal issues.
6. Have researched, shared, explored in drama processes, recorded and critically appraised, such aspects as the customs, attitudes, rituals, values and mores of their own and some other cultures.
7. Have employed drama processes to develop empathy with, and respect for other cultures.
8. Have mastered the drama processes sufficiently to use them effectively for playmaking in class groups.

## Assessment Checklist

The teacher needs to ensure that the pupils have achieved a degree of mastery of the skills, knowledge and values stipulated below.

*Does the student have the ability to:*

### 1. Drama processes

- 1.i. Engage and function within the drama processes with sincerity and absorption.
- 1.ii. Recognise the value of these processes.
- 1.iii. Be familiar with the elements of drama: dramatic shape, focus, tension, language, narrative, mood and dramatic symbol.

### 2. Group work skills

- 2.i. Tolerate other people's opinions and cultures and yet value one's own.
- 2.ii. Listen, negotiate, compromise
- 2.iii. Work with confidence.

### 3. Language Skills

- 3.i. Structure and articulate thoughts, express feelings and ideas in words and movement.
- 3.ii. Understand the appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal language in different dramatic contexts.

#### 4. Cultural Understanding

- 4.i. Understand one's own and other people's cultures.
- 4.ii. Be sensitive to cultural differences and know how these are expressed through folktales, rituals, customs etc.
- 4.iii. Write a coherent record of the research undertaken into different cultures, and the drama structures with which these were explored on the course.

#### 5. Critical Awareness

- 5.i. Pinpoint differences and similarities in theatre forms and styles of presentation, and analyse these - through an increasing understanding of drama processes.
- 5.ii. Pinpoint cultural differences, similarities and the student's own preferences - through increasing cultural understanding.
- 5.iii. Record events and perceptions with critical awareness.

#### 6. Initiative, leadership and creativity

- 6.i. Are one or more of these qualities evident in the drama work so that they positively enhance the student's contribution?

#### 7. Presentation.

- 7.i. Present a playmaking project arising out of 3. *Cross-cultural Drama studies* OR 4. *Playmaking project*. This constitutes a major part of the GEC final examination and is assessed in the latter half of Std 7. It must include an assessment of each pupil's contribution to:

7.i.a) the process of making the play and performing it

7.ii.b) mastery of the elements of drama so that these serve the meaning of the play

AND

7.iii.c) each pupil must submit their **Drama File** which contains **written records** of their work in Std 7 and their report on the final playmaking examination project.

#### Assessment

Conventional assessment symbols applied to Drama would indicate the following standards of work:

- A : Excellent
- B : Very Good
- C : Good
- D : Fair
- E : Satisfactory
- F : Unsatisfactory (FAIL)

*At the end of Std 7 the Assessment Checklist above should be applied to assess the quality of the student's work in Drama. The percentage of marks awarded for the year's work in each category is indicated in brackets:*

1. Drama Processes	[20]
2. Group Work Skills	[20]
3. Language Skills	[20]
4. Cultural Understanding	[40]
5. Critical Awareness	[10]
6. Initiative and/or Leadership and/or Creativity	[10]
7. Presentation (final examination)	[80]
<b>Total Mark</b>	<b>[200]</b>

\* \* \* \* \*

## A TRIAL/PILOT SYLLABUS PROPOSAL

### FOR

### DRAMA

### FOR SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

## INTRODUCTION

#### **The nature of this document.**

This is an outline proposal for a Drama syllabus for the final phase of secondary schooling which is voluntary, namely Std 8,9 and 10 (Grades 10-12). The proposal is a working document and is open to completion, correction or improvement.

The designers of this syllabus are Drama educators working in the Cape. The process so far has been broadly consultative and it is planned to continue that way, based upon the view that as many drama teachers as possible should have a say in planning what they teach. The Drama syllabus committee view it as desirable that pupils and parents should also have access to the process. The names of those who have thus far contributed is to be found at the end of the document. Copyright of this document is vested in the compilers.

Thus far the focus has been on pinpointing learning processes (including content) and defining outcomes for the final phase of Secondary Education. The next phase will involve obtaining feedback on the syllabus, providing more detail, making the necessary additions, alterations and adjustments as desired.

Any persons (anywhere in South Africa) who feel that they can valuably contribute to the process are most welcome to write to the Syllabus Convenor, NAC, PO Box 472, Athlone, 7760. Tel. and Fax. No. 6971881. Similarly should any person or organization consider that this syllabus committee is duplicating work already done better elsewhere, this committee would be grateful for models already drawn up with which they are not familiar.

#### **The nature of learning in, through and about Drama.**

This syllabus takes the view that Drama is an active, experientially-based process through which students learn about themselves, drama and their world within a specifically South Africa-orientated approach.

#### **Cultural familiarity**

Although Drama frequently is developed in the realm of the imaginary, children in the first years of schooling should work from the known, the familiar, the everyday, towards the unknown and unfamiliar. The teacher needs to be sensitive to the cultural practices current in the home backgrounds of the pupils - whether diverse or uniform among a class - and firstly reinforce respected cultural mores of the pupil's home environments before posing alternative models. In other words the drama work should firstly have a local, South African flavour, and secondly a foreign frame of reference such as North African, American or Western European.

#### **Research into Cultures**

One of the chief ways in which certain groups and communities in South Africa have been disadvantaged or marginalised in the past has been through rendering their home culture, artistic works and cultural practices invisible by ignoring these in the school curriculum.

Teachers trained under the 'old system' may in many instances have to redress imbalances with respect to their customary points of referral and frames of reference. Initially this may mean that the teacher has to undertake some added research to find suitable material for drama : searching for stories, songs and plays which have local relevance and reference rather than employing, for example, stories from a foreign tradition with which the teacher was supplied at teachers' college.

If local stories, dramas and cultural traditions are referred to, the backgrounds and local traditions of pupils will receive regular reinforcement which will continually augment the pupils' self esteem and community loyalty and pride. The value of this can not be over-emphasised.

### **Medium of Instruction**

The focus of the work in Drama should shift depending upon whether the pupils are working in mother tongue or a second language. Obviously where the work is in a second language, greater emphasis will be placed on all aspects of communication, including gesture, listening skills, language acquisition, language proficiency and practice, and the development of communicative clarity, fluency and confidence. Nonetheless the Drama class must not lose its dramatic quality and give way to rote learning or transmission teaching. Learning in Drama is active and participatory.

### **Assessment**

Drama must be offered on Higher Grade and Standard Grade.

The situation has pertained in South African schools in which pupils did not know what criteria were being employed to assess them. Therefore the assessment policy should aim for clarity and transparency.

Assessment needs to take into account that many pupils will be studying drama in a second language and therefore there may need to be particular emphasis on language skills. Furthermore working in second language may affect the acquisition of other skills.

Assessment must be both continuous as well as summative. Assessments which focus upon the processes of participating, understanding and applying (both dramatically, orally and in writing), by means of research records and reports, reviews, class preparation and participation as well formal performances and written examinations must be employed to accurately monitor the students' progress.

Aspects of the syllabus must be assessed with due regard to their relative importance.

## DRAMA SYLLABUS FOR Stds 8, 9 and 10.

### Basic Dimensions

Learning in drama is an active process. This process has three basic dimensions, namely **PARTICIPATING** in the drama which will lead to **UNDERSTANDING** which empowers a student in **APPLYING** recently acquired knowledge in new contexts, both within the drama class and beyond it. Looking at it another way around, **applying** a new skill or idea may lead to **understanding** a new field of knowledge which may well empower a student to **participate** with renewed commitment and sharper focus.

### Drama Processes

These three dimensions are all skills heightened while learning through drama processes. At the Further Education Certificate level, the emphasis for **participating, applying and understanding** will be on the process of planning for, making, presenting and critiquing theatre, through:

improvisation                      roleplay  
    playmaking  
**THEATRE**  
 communication through movement  
 communication through language

### Complete list of setwork and teacher reference books for Stds 8 to 10

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE THEATRE, Phyllis Hartnoll, Thames and Hudson, London 1989.

ACTING WITH STYLE, John Harrop and SR Eipstein, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1982.

BOESMAN AND LENA AND OTHER PLAYS, Athol Fugard, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1978. Plays included are:

Boesman and Lena, The Bloodknot, People are Living There, Hello and Goodbye.

COMPLETE WORKS, William Shakespeare.

DRAMAWISE, John O'Toole and Brad Haseman, Heinemann Educational, London, 1988.

ENGINEERS OF THE IMAGINATION, Tony Coult and Baz Kershaw, Methuen, London, 1983.

GAMES FOR ACTORS AND NON-ACTORS, Augusto Boal, Routledge, London, 1992.

PLAYS FOR THE THEATRE : AN ANTHOLOGY OF WORLD DRAMA (3rd Edit.) ed. OG

Brockett & L Brockett, Holt Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1979. Plays included are:

Oedipus Rex, The Menaechmi, The Second Shepherd's Play, King Lear, Tartuffe, The School for Scandal, The Wild Duck, From Morn till Midnight, The Good Woman of Setzuan, The Death of a Salesman, The New Tenant, A Raisin in the Sun, Streamers.

SOUTH AFRICAN PLAYS : NEW DRAMA FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA, selected & ed. Stephen Gray, Nick Herne Heinemann, London, 1993. Plays included are:

Somewhere on the Border, The Hungry Earth, Over the Hill, Curl up and Dye, Just like Home.

THEATRE AND CULTURAL STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA, Robert Kavanagh, Zed Books, London, 1985.

TRITS: MIS, MIRAKEL, DRIF, Reza de Wet, Haum Literer, Pretoria, 1993.

WOZA AFRIKA! AN ANTHOLOGY OF SOUTH AFRICAN PLAYS, selected & ed. Duma Ndlovu,

George Braziller, New York 1986. Plays included are:

Woza Albert!, Gangsters, Children of Asazi, Born in the RSA, Asinamali! & Bopha!

## STANDARD 8

### Setwork Books

For Teachers:

Dramawise. Games for Actors and Non Actors.

For Students:

Two plays to be chosen for study from the following list:

Drif. Curl Up and Dye. Woza Albert! and You Strike the Woman you Strike the Rock.

### Areas of Study

This year of study is divided into two equal halves:

January - June

#### 1. Elements of Drama

1.1. The elements of drama provide the framework for the study of drama. They are categorised as:

the human context, focus, tension, space, time, movement, language, mood, symbol and meaning.

1.2. The students study the elements of drama in the context of small scene presentations from Dramawise in which each student is involved. They also study the elements of drama by means of reading and discussion.

1.3. The students display their understanding of the elements of drama in performance of scenes from the set text (Drif or Curl Up and Dye or Woza Albert! or You Strike the Woman You Strike the Rock).

1.4. The students write an essay critically analysing the use of dramatic elements in relation to the presented scenes.

July - December

#### 2. Drama and Theatre for Social Action

This area of study deals with theatre and its role in development. It should focus on creating plays for conscientising or social action.

2.1. The students study Boal's Games for Actors and Non Actors practically and theoretically to understand theatre as a way of exploring cultural, political and social issues that are relevant to their community.

2.2 The students devise plays for social action. In small groups they:

- i identify an area of social, political, economic or cultural concern.
- ii identify a target audience for whom this issue is relevant. For example: 'farm workers and alcoholism' is devised in a rural senior secondary school for farmworkers.
- iii research into the issue, for example interviewing local farm workers, local legal aid clinic, newspapers and churches about problems.
- iv playmaking around the issue which involves:
  - use of research in dramatic action
  - improvising and/or scripting the play
  - rehearsing the play to reinforce its dramatic quality
  - exploring audience participation
- v presentation of the project to target audience

2.3 The students submit a written record, evaluating the process of playmaking and presenting within the theoretical field of theatre for social action.



## STANDARD 9

### Setwork books

For Teachers:

Acting with Style. Theatre and Cultural Struggle in South Africa  
(Refer back to Games for Actors and Non-Actors)

For Students:

Asinamali. Born in the RSA or The Hungry Earth. A Concise History of the Theatre and relevant plays from Plays for the Theatre: An Anthology of World Drama.

### Areas of Study

This year of study is divided into two equal halves.

January - June

#### 1. South African Theatre

1.1 History, trends and foci of South African Theatre. How Apartheid and the cultural hegemony of the past manifests in theatre, by means of:

- i. Venue, target audience and funding.
- ii. Role of director, actor, playwright and audience.
- iii. Subject matter
- iv. Character
- v. Use of language
- vi. Structure of plays
- vii. Music and dance
- viii. Staging and visual elements

and how these elements inform the purpose and the meaning of the play in its historical context. The historical periods to be studied are:

- 1. The Township Musical of the 1950s (Kente etc)
- 2. Black Consciousness Theatre (Manaka, Maponya)
- 3. Fugard and the development of group devised theatre
- 4. Afrikaans Theatre
- 5. Protest Theatre
- 6. Worker Theatre
- 7. Current theatre trends:  
satirical revue  
physical theatre

1.2 The students explore the theory and working methods of Grotowski and Brecht through rehearsing and performing scenes from Asinamali and Born in the RSA or The Hungry Earth respectively.

1.3 The students must present an essay which examines aspects of South African Theatre.

July - December

#### 2. World Theatre

2.1 Students must study four from the following categories, with at least one from each category:

- 2.1.1a West European Theatre :  
Classical Greek Theatre  
Medieval Drama  
Commedia dell'Arte  
Elizabethan  
Realism: the theatre of Ibsen or Chekhov

## STANDARD 10

### Setwork Books

For Teachers:

Engineers of the Imagination. Acting with Style

For Students:

Relevant plays from Plays for the Theatre: An Anthology of World Drama.

### Areas of Study

This year of study is divided into two halves:

January - June

The students two major areas: **Acting and Production** and **Alternative Theatre**.

#### 1. Acting and Production

The students study:

- i text analysis and concept
- ii methods of characterisation (with specific reference to Stanislavsky).
- iii design and stage craft
- iv directing

both theoretically and practically. The work is process orientated and exploratory. The students explore these areas by working on scene extracts in groups. The students decide on:

- a) the concept that they would like to work with in relation to their interpretation of the play extract.
- b) how character should be approached and presented in relation to their concept.
- c) how the concept can be directed and realised visually, spatially and aurally through the dramatic elements.

The focus is on the students experimenting with these elements and not producing a product.

The students:

- share their work, discuss ideas and offer critical commentary.
- may use a text from the reading list of their choice.
- record and critically comment on the exercises used and discoveries made in this process.

#### 1.2 Alternative Theatre

The students research one of the following areas of study:

- i Political Theatre
- ii Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty
- iii Street Theatre
- iv Theatre for Africa
- v Dance Theatre (for example the Jazzart Dance Theatre)
- vi Theatre in Education

1.2.a. Based on their research, the students in small groups, devise a short piece of theatre (10 mins) that demonstrates their creative understanding of their area of study.

1.2.b. The students are required to present a paper which critically evaluates their research, process and presentation.

July - December

#### 2. Devising a play

This semester's project together with a written examination, constitutes the final FEC exam.

2.1. The students are required to go through the process of devising and presenting a play for an audience.

The students must:

- i choose an idea, theme or issue that interests them.
- ii devise a piece of theatre around their choice

The final presentation must include:

- iii dialogue
- iv characterisation and character relationships
- v a critical awareness of visual and aural elements
- vi an appropriate use of stage space
- vii a chosen style eg comedy, farce, protest theatre etc

It can include:

- viii narration
- ix monologues
- x dance, song and poetry
- xi costume

2.2. The students are required to write a long essay that outlines:

- i the aims and objectives of their play
- ii the theoretical framework of the practitioner/ method/ style subscribed to in the play.
- iii a critical evaluation of the performance(s) in relation to their aims and objectives and their actor/audience relationship.
- iv a critical evaluation of the process
- v a record of research
- vi a copy of the script

The learning outcomes serve as further guidelines for the accomplishment of the task.

2.3. A written examination of 2 hours. This examination tests the students' understanding of the final two years of study.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The projects must ensure that opportunities for students to learn and be assessed in drama - individually and in small groups - through **participating in, understanding and applying**

- oral and reading research.
- active theatre work
- oral and written critical comparisons and evaluation

are all provided.

By the final examination students should possess the following **SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, VALUES & ATTITUDES** evident in drama processes and relevant to the selected projects. (These skills are numbered, but are not sequentially achieved.)

The student should be able to:

1. **Plan for, undertake and complete** a performance or presentational project and submit all the required research submissions associated with the project.
2. **Document**, using a **drama vocabulary**, the processes undertaken for a project and **apply comparisons from general drama knowledge**.
3. Demonstrate in improvisation, playmaking, theatre work and examination answer an understanding of the influence of the **cultural and/or historical context** upon the meaning of the drama.
4. Appreciate that drama and theatre depict the **meanings** we make of our society; and identify what drama and theatre **contribute to South African society**.
5. Make drama that reflects sensitivity, commitment and an understanding of **aesthetic considerations**.
6. Work with drama processes alone and in groups with **confidence, self discipline** and some **organizational skills** and **initiative** at times.
7. Identify and utilise the basic **elements of drama** to achieve a specific dramatic meaning.

8. Identify and work with some variety of **dramatic forms** and **conventions of presentation** in a way that demonstrates that theatre communicates meaning through form.
9. Demonstrate in performance, discussion or written work, both the development of **critical thinking skills relevant to understanding drama and theatre** and some **tolerance of and interest in** the attitudes and viewpoints of others.
10. Be aware of the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication skills, and depending upon the nature of the project, whether the student is working in mother tongue or second language, the emphasis in communication skills may fall on **clarity, fluency** or variety of **language styles**.

### Assessment

Conventional assessment symbols applied to Drama would indicate the following standard of work:

- A : Excellent
- B : Very Good
- C : Good
- D : Fair
- E : Satisfactory
- F : Just Adequate
- G (FAIL) Unsatisfactory

The teacher needs to ensure that the pupils have achieved a degree of mastery of the skills, knowledge and values stipulated in the following table.

In Std 8, 9 and 10, the value awarded to each of these criteria will vary. At the end of matriculation, calculating **Higher Grade** out of **400** marks, the number of marks awarded each category is indicated.

Year Work	
PERFORMANCE	60
Drama Processes	20
Group work skills	20
CRITICAL SKILLS	40
Cultural Understanding	30
LANGUAGE SKILLS	20
INITIATIVE, CREATIVITY and LEADERSHIP	10
<b>Year Mark Total</b>	<b>200</b>
Exam	
PERFORMANCE	100
Long Essay	30
WRITTEN EXAM	70
<b>Exam Total</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>TOTAL MARKS</b>	<b>400</b>

\* \* \* \* \*

## CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors to this syllabus are Drama and language teachers working in the contexts of primary and secondary Schools, teacher colleges and university. Their names follow:

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- 'Developing a National Curriculum for Drama Studies'. Fred Hagemann, in SAADYT Journal Vol 14(1) November 1993, pp.51-8.
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- 'General Principles' for education in the Creative Arts, NAC Working Paper, July 1994.
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