

**University of Cape Town
Faculty of Education**

DISTANT VOICES
A study of distance education text strategies
in relation to adult learning styles.

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

Master of Philosophy

by

Elizabeth Anne Mackenzie

March 1998

The University of Cape Town has approved this dissertation for publication in whole or in part. Copyright is held by the author.

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Abstract

Distance education promises to broaden access to education to an increasing number and variety of learners in the "new South Africa". The construction and presentation of course texts is a critical factor in whether that promise is fulfilled. The producers of texts, working in their specific socio-cultural contexts, select and sequence the concepts they teach and create voices in the text which work in place of actual teachers. These textual voices interact with readers in a variety of communicative and educative ways, opening to greater or fewer styles of learning, and constructing a wider or narrower range of identities for readers. This results in learning styles being more or less able to be engaged, and learners being more or less able to identify with identities constructed for them by the text. The learner identities so constructed are sustained by combinations of political, educational and global discourses which reflect, challenge or perpetuate social power relations, such as gender.

Preliminary note on terminology

The reader should be aware of the conventions which have been adopted in this study:

1. The writer uses the pronoun of her own gender throughout the text. All quotations have been left unchanged so that they reflect the pronoun preference of the authors concerned.
2. The terms 'construction and presentation' of a text, 'rhetorical form' and 'text strategies' are used interchangeably throughout the text.
3. The terms 'identity' and 'subjectivity' are also used interchangeably.
4. Acronyms used throughout the text are:

Aseca:	Alternative Secondary Curriculum for Adults
Sached:	South African Committee for Higher Education
Saide:	South African Institute for Distance Education
Unisa:	University of South Africa

Acknowledgements

To my partner Hugh Tyrrell for your steady loving support and wise counsel, and my daughter, Megan Jess, for the tone of love and laughter we have created between us, which has enabled the work to be done.

To my supervisor Tony Morphet, thank you for the quality of deep listening you brought to our sessions which helped me to speak out, the incisive feedback you gave, and the spaciousness I experienced in working with you.

To my colleague and friend Roy Crowder, for the unflagging encouragement and regular mutual feedback sessions, which helped to set and keep me on the road.

To the many dear friends and family members who have supported me in working through this thesis, which catalysed a subterranean process in recalling lost, and very distant, voices. It has been a seven league journey and I thank you all. I particularly thank Shauna Westcott, Keriesa Botha, Hedley Pocock and Kay Mackenzie.

To Karin Ensink, Jane Toerien, and Mavis Meaker, my gratitude for your help in finding the maps and redrawing them.

To Magdalene Jurgens and Cheryl de Villiers for keeping Megan happy while I worked.

To Alex Lawrence for your swift assistance with the layout.

To the tangible presence of my many unseen helpers.

Contents

<u>Chapter One</u>	1
Distance education texts in the new South Africa	
<u>Chapter Two</u>	16
Constructing conceptual devices	
<u>Chapter Three</u>	52
Methodology	
<u>Chapter Four</u>	67
Opening up the two texts	
<u>Chapter Five</u>	117
Exploring learning styles, identities and discourses	
<u>Bibliography</u>	141
<u>Appendices</u>	152

Chapter One

Distance education texts in the new South Africa

Introduction

Distance education courses are promising thousands of adults, many of whom were previously excluded from educational opportunities, a “chance to learn” during the establishment of South Africa’s democracy.

The content of distance education courses is communicated largely through printed texts. These are required to teach a diverse group of learners. Whether and how the texts enable a variety of students to learn is a vital field of investigation. It is therefore necessary to examine how the texts are constructed and how they communicate with a range of learners who have different background knowledge and ways of knowing.

In this chapter I examine why this study of the construction of distance education texts is necessary, and why I am particularly interested in how construction of texts relates to adult ways of learning. I then outline the social and pedagogic background to the research questions and sketch the social and institutional contexts for the specific texts that are analysed later. In concluding, I describe the study’s aims and methods.

Why the study is necessary

Distance education, which allows learners to choose when and where they will study, is an important way to widen access to learning for adults, both socially and geographically. Course texts, which convey the bulk of the content to learners, are poised to educate many more learners in South Africa, especially those previously excluded.

The "many millions" of people internationally who have been brought into formal learning through distance education increase every year. "There can be few if any educational inventions which have had as wide an impact in widening access to education" (Moore, 1985:39).

Print-based programmes, although supplemented by other media, are the primary mode of teaching in distance education throughout the world (Lemmer, 1995:vii; Moore, 1985:30). According to Bates' data, Lemmer estimates that print media accounts for 70% of distance education delivery world-wide (Lemmer, 1995, quoting Bates).

Printed texts are likely to continue as the main means of teaching distance courses in South Africa, where there is limited access to resources such as television and computers, particularly in rural areas. Radio is more widely available but its use in distance education is currently minimal. Experience in other countries, except China and Japan which favour TV and radio, also indicates the continuing predominance of print media (Moore, 1985). Northedge (1995) confirms that Britain's Open University surveys show that students prefer the printed text.

Correspondence teaching in the United States was invented during the 1870s and 1880s. An "amazing renaissance of interest" in distance education in the 1970s and 1980s world-wide saw the establishment of more than a dozen large, publicly funded, autonomous, distance teaching universities (Moore, 1985:9). The potential for distance learning to meet the needs of individual learners, as well as being a means of social and even national development, became globally recognised.

In the mid-1970s, several writers (McKenzie et al and Koumi, quoted in Charnley et al, 1981:65-66) indicated the need for research into the impact of print media materials in distance education courses and how "they relate to the learning processes undertaken by adults" (Koumi, in Charnley et al, 1981:66). "Not much is known about the non-measurable, non-intellectual effect of such materials," noted McKenzie et al (in Charnley et al, 1981:65). In the early 1980s, Holmberg (in Sewart, 1983) proposed the use of a "guided didactic conversation" in constructing distance education texts.

In the early 1990s, writers continued to note a paucity of research in this area. Textbooks occupy a highly visible position in society. However, no field of textbook analysis exists and methods for analysing textbooks are rarely mentioned in methodology texts (Venezky, 1992:436-7). Moore (1985:23-4) notes that in distance education there has been little systematic research to test which medium carries various types of educational messages most effectively. Despite a recognition that research into the relationship between distance education texts and learning processes is important, it appears that little actual research has been conducted (Van Wyk, 1995:1).

Marland and associates (quoted in Lemmer et al, 1995 and Van Wyk, 1995) suggest there is a complex interaction between the learner, the text and contextual factors in shaping the learner's mediating processes which give rise to learning outcomes. There is a "keen sense of uncertainty surrounding the merits and demerits of in-text instructional devices and the ways distance students learn from texts which has sparked off a new round of question-posing ... for researchers" (Marland et al, quoted in Lemmer, 1995: 11).

Crismore (1989) is one of the apparently few researchers who has systematically studied the effects on learners of text construction and presentation. Although she focuses on textbooks which are used in a face-to-face situation in United States schools, her work confirms that investigation into the complex social process of using a textbook for learning is important. Her research shows that the extent to which social studies textbooks are used by students is influenced by the way they are constructed and presented. Crismore uses the term "rhetorical form" to mean the "construction and presentation" of a text.

In South Africa, Langhan's (1993) investigation shows that difficulties with primary school geography, experienced by teachers and learners whose first language is not English, are largely due to inappropriate textbooks that are difficult to read and understand. Once reconstructed and rewritten, teachers' reading and comprehension were significantly improved.

In the case of distance education, where learners work mainly on their own, the way a text is constructed and presented plays an even more important role in enabling learners to engage

with the content. It is therefore essential to find ways to examine how the construction and presentation of texts both enables and disables access to the knowledge which courses promise their learners.

Why I am interested in the research question

Why it is an issue for me

My work at the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) included creating self-instructional texts for a diverse audience. I became intrigued by the question of how to construct and present the content of these texts so as to inspire learning for a wide variety of people. The work involved creating learning materials from live educational events. These events were designed to prompt in-depth investigation by diverse groups into unequal power relations such as gender and race.

A core assumption of these educational events was that the experience and knowledge of the adults present, both as facilitators and participants, would contribute to the learning process. Each person would both teach and learn. Other core assumptions were that different people learn best in different ways and secondly, that adults learn most fully when they are engaged in active reading and listening, as well as watching, talking and doing. It was necessary to build different ways of learning into the workshops, and thus the texts I developed.

The printed texts constructed from these events were intended to equip other adult educators to run similar workshops. Therefore, the texts had to be able to stand on their own and "speak" for themselves. This provoked the question: how could one best create print media texts which would enable a "learning-teaching dialogue" between text and reader, particularly for diverse readers?

Why it is an issue for South Africa

According to the South African Institute for Distance Education (Saide, 1995:75), meeting South Africa's education needs requires a radical transformation of current distance education provision, which is fragmented along racial, ethnic and gender lines and is "of poor quality".

Access to education and training is unequal, and the inequalities are based on ethnic and gender differences. For the most part, "the major decisions are being made by small numbers of white males who have shared a common experience" (Saide, 1995:75-78). A marked increase in demand for distance education is projected for the next decade (Saide, 1995:78).

Why it remains an intellectual issue

An important intellectual issue for South African education for the next decade is whether distance texts do widen access, for an increasingly diverse audience, to education and critical learning processes and, if so, how they do this.

The pertinence of the issue is highlighted when one considers that access to education is only one side of the coin. Success rates constitute the other. Currently the completion rates by students enrolled at the two largest providers of distance education, the University of South Africa (Unisa) and Technikon SA, are "extremely low" (Saide, 1995:63). For example, only 4,7% of students enrolled for a Bachelor of Science degree at Unisa in 1984 had graduated by 1992. A slightly higher 11,2% of Bachelor of Commerce Degree students graduated during the same period. The statistics for the postgraduate degree of Bachelor of Education provide an exception to this, with 36,7% of students who enrolled in 1984 graduating by 1990 (Saide, 1995:6-8).

Something happens in the relationship between a text and a reader that is hidden from public view but has major implications for distance learning as a key to mass education. What are the processes involved? It is this question that prompted my investigation of how the construction and presentation of distance education texts affects learners and their learning processes.

I will now place the issues involved in a more detailed social and pedagogic background, providing a context for the theoretical framework in Chapter Two.

Social and pedagogic background of learning and distance education texts in South Africa

In order to lay the ground for exploring how the form of a distance education text relates to the ways in which adults learn by reading, I will outline first the relationship between texts and learning and, second, the general problems of learning from texts. Third, I will examine the problems specific to learning from distance education texts. Fourth, I will open up issues relevant to distance learning texts in the present context of building a new political democracy in South Africa. Lastly, I will show why the notion of the construction and presentation of a text is an important analytic device for examining how distance education texts reach and teach learners.

Texts and learning

Curriculum texts have to be mastered in order for the learner to acquire the certificate. This means that learners have to enter the canons of education, with their specialised discourses and disciplinary conventions.

While conveying knowledge that is considered important for the learner to access, these texts embody belief systems, values and assumptions about the world. They manifest socially constructed notions about gender, race, class, culture; about ways of knowing and what constitutes knowledge; and about what kinds of knowing and knowledge are appropriate for what kinds of people.

Texts are constructed by teams of people with their own partial views of the world, vested interests and unconscious processes. The planners, writers, editors, proof-readers, designers, layout artists or desktop publishing (DTP) operators, shape the way that the knowledge, embodied in the text, is selected, arranged, emphasised and communicated.

Texts project "imaginary representations of socio-linguistic reality" which correspond to the interests of the dominant section of a society or an institution (Fairclough, 1992:48). South Africa's immediate history provides a clear example of this, with the lives and interests of black people, women and working-class people either inadequately or negatively represented

in education texts. Thus the majority of the population saw little of themselves reflected positively in the texts they had to study in order to gain their certificates.

Access to knowledge via texts

Educational texts attempt to impart knowledge in a way that enables the learner to engage with it. In order to do this, texts have to speak to or communicate with learners; they have to engage the reader in some kind of dialogue.

The selection, construction and presentation of knowledge affects the ways in which a reader can access it. Texts can be more, or less, explicit about their assumptions, intentions, structures and procedures. They can be more, or less, overt about how they are positioned in terms of other texts. They can be more, or less, clear about who they understand the reader to be. At the same time, texts may hold contradictory assumptions and intentions. They may speak to the reader with competing voices, leaving the reader unsure about which assumption or voice to take seriously.

People learn from texts by interacting with them. Readers approach texts with their own knowledge backgrounds or schemata (Anderson, 1977, 1984, in Crismore, 1989). They accept, reject, question, modify and integrate parts of the text for themselves. In this way, readers deconstruct and reconstruct the content which already has been constructed and presented in particular ways. I will go into more detail about this aspect of learning from texts in Chapter Two.

In reconstructing the knowledge presented by a text, learners employ their own customary learning styles or ways of knowing. Learners' background knowledge and ways of knowing the world are likely to be influenced by their culture, gender, race, class, age and religion, as well as by other personal and psychological factors.

Issues specific to distance learning and texts

Swift (1992a:1) states that definitions of distance education are attempts to pin down a "rapidly developing field of work and thought". Distance education is broadly defined by Kaye (1989) as education which does not imply the physical presence of the teacher appointed

to dispense it, or in which the teacher is present only on occasion, or for selected tasks.

The assumption in much distance education discourse is that since the learning is not limited to classes at a particular time and place, greater access can be achieved, both geographically and socially. Yet, while distance education and open learning are sometimes used interchangeably when regarding access, they are not the same. Swift (1992a:1) notes that while "Distance Education (DE) is structured learning where student and teacher are separated by space", "Open Learning (OL) describes an approach ... which seeks to remove all unnecessary restrictions to learning", emphasising a flexible, client-oriented approach.

Distance education is thus not a method, but a catch-all term to describe a collection of education practices employed to avoid the spatial and other constraints of traditional schooling. Many very different kinds of institutions or programmes call themselves "distance education", says Swift (1992a:2).

Most of these practices use printed texts to convey the curriculum to learners working largely alone. The text must be self-instructional, and include what the student requires to inspire and effect learning. It has to stand in place of a teacher and mediate itself to the learner, by telling, showing and discussing the content with her. However, since the text is fixed in print, it cannot respond to learners' questions, frustrations or disagreements spontaneously. The text therefore has to pre-empt possible problems or blockages the student may encounter. It also has to interact on an emotional level with the learner, taking on a personality in a sense. But texts must not become so overlaid with personality that learners cannot find their way into and around the content.

Expository or instructional texts are commonly used for distance learning. These texts often include unfamiliar vocabulary, which is more difficult to understand, especially for second language speakers, when the learning is not bound in a story set in an everyday context. Texts may carry alien academic discourses and practices, which include conventions and procedures relevant to specific disciplines. Also unfamiliar may be the style of expository texts, which have their own conventions for use and interpretation. A teaching voice in the text may therefore need to make these conventions explicit.

Traditionally, according to Moore (1985:23-25), distance education materials should be well structured, be self-sufficient and have "personality". Moore (1985:25) adds a fourth key concept of "learner-contribution" which requires distance education courses to "provide enough space for students to explore outside the course and to use their own experiences".

Among the three problems most often raised by distance students in interviews is "anxiety about learning", meaning their ability and performance as students (Moore, 1985:27-28). Students in a Unisa study used phrases such as "lonely", "no contact with your lecturer", "everything is on your own shoulders" and "initial disorientation" to describe their distance learning experience. This problem appeared most acute for first-timers (Van Wyk, 1995:2). Such emotions of anxiety, loneliness and disorientation require acknowledgement and action. A teaching objective, particularly for first year students, should be to develop their ability to learn independently (Saide, 1995:62). Therefore I believe that Moore's concept of "learner contribution" could be usefully modified to require an effective text to "offer emotional and intellectual support for learner contribution". Texts need to actively inspire and support self-directed students, both in learning and in gaining different ways of learning or knowing.

Distance learning texts speak to "you" in both singular and in plural, and this is a central paradox. Texts must speak to each reader personally, yet readers constitute a variety of different people, in terms of social categories such as culture, gender, race, class and religion, as well as more personal categories such as values, attitudes, and assumptions about the world.

Thus, while widening access is an aim of distance education courses, texts include only a limited number of imaginary learner subjectivities, or identities, to whom they speak.

Distance learning texts in the new South Africa

As the foregoing indicates, constructing distance learning texts which are fixed in print, accessible and inspiring for diverse learners is a complex pursuit.

In the current South African context of rapid social change, the distance education audience has broadened, and will increasingly broaden, to include many new, and different kinds of

students. It is taken for granted that distance learners will be mainly black and that widening access to education specifically includes groups who were previously deliberately marginalised on the basis of their race, gender, class and linguistic affiliations.

Ngegebule, Glennie and Perold (1992) identify the three main and very different groupings as: marginalised youth; adults defined as breadwinners who are also involved in community life; and women, who constitute an overlapping but distinctive audience. According to Saide (1995:81-84) priority consideration in distance education should be given to: deprived rural people, particularly women; parents, teachers and care-givers of young children; youths who have not finished their schooling; students of science and technology; great numbers of teachers, trainers and adult educators; and people in leadership positions. A striking feature about this audience is that most of the target groups are out of touch with formal education and training systems.

Unisa, the largest distance education provider, had slightly more African (44,1%) than white (43,9%) students in 1993, with coloured (3,6%) and Asian (8,4%) making up the total (Saide, 1995:4). In the same year, women constituted 50,9% and men 49,1% of student enrolments (Saide, 1995:5). The majority of an Alternative Secondary Curriculum for Adults (Aseca) course learners are black, with some coloureds and a few whites. Women make up an estimated 60% of the learners (Lucy Alexander, personal communication, 1995). Therefore black people and women constitute the majority of distance learners for the two institutions under study. In terms of class, most of the 10 black Unisa students studied by Lemmer et al (1995) were the first tertiary students in their respective communities, and therefore could receive little parental support in academic matters. On the language front, only 8,68% of the population speaks English at home (NEPI, 1992:22). According to Harley (1992) 42% of Unisa students speak an "indigenous" (meaning a black African) language as their mother tongue.

Despite the recognition that the needs and interests of these "new learners" are distinctive for distance education programmes, however, both the content of distance education courses and their construction and presentation can continue to exclude learners on the basis of social power relations such as gender, race, class, culture and religion. Learning materials may fail

to directly include women, black people, or those from non-dominant cultures and religions, or may fail to represent issues and life experiences that concern them. Generally, distance education course books have been written from a predominantly white, middle-class, masculine point of view. The result has been texts with varying degrees of racist and sexist undertones as well as a bias towards the values, attitudes and assumptions of the middle class in particular, and Western, Christian culture in general.

The second major obstacle to the stated aim of widening access is that the text may be presented to readers in an educational format which does not engage their customary ways of learning. For example, the way in which learners are addressed by the author, or the way the content is sequenced, with abstract formulations preceding concrete examples, may hinder engagement with the text. Other obstacles may be the text's lack of clarity about its own assumptions and intentions, and such issues as unsuitable typography or layout which impose an inappropriate tone.

Until recently, "distance education" in South Africa has been essentially correspondence education with students enjoying very little assistance other than that provided by study materials themselves (Saide, 1995). This general absence of teaching support is compounded by "the poor quality of most of the study materials to which students are required to respond" (Saide, 1995:61).

Lemmer et al (1995) found that Unisa students were sharply focused on assignments and exam preparation and were unlikely to challenge the authority of either the lecturer or the written word. Furthermore, "the majority of the participants in the study seemed to equate acquiring 'knowledge' through the texts with the memorisation of content" (Lemmer et al, 1995:xii). Many were learning through the medium of a second language; had inadequate pre-tertiary schooling; lacked study skills and were underprepared for the literacy required for academic achievement. Texts were thus required to fulfil a "remedial function" (Lemmer et al, 1995:3). Harley (1992) appears to concur, stating that experience has shown that weakness in English as the medium of study is the greatest single cause of concern.

Without dismissing this kind of problem, I want to suggest that in seeking to widen access to education it may be more useful to re-examine many presuppositions and values which are currently taken for granted in the construction of distance education texts. It is particularly important to re-examine the conventions (Fairclough, 1992) embedded in texts which may hamper learners' access, their ways of learning, critical thought and creativity.

As Swift (1992b:3) so aptly puts it: "Distance Education structures that principally generate failure cannot be used seriously to increase education opportunity" at least not in the massive ways envisaged for South Africa. "By definition, all human organisations have regularities of behaviour, rules of conduct and definitions of standards. The aim of openness in education is to identify those taken-for-granted attitudes; assumptions about people and social processes; and ritualised practices, which hinder the achievement of educational and social goals."

There is thus a great challenge in creating curricula texts for a fledgling democracy in South Africa. It is to create texts which give learners, particularly those previously excluded from educational opportunities, access to an education which valorises two main aspects of the learning process. One comprises the mainstream canons of knowledge and ways of knowing. The other embraces each learner's own experiences, knowledge and ways of knowing. The gap between the mainstream and the individual aspects of learning is narrower for English-speaking, white, middle-class male students than it is for black rural women who speak English as a second or third language. In the case of both, however, the challenge is to find a way or a language with which to speak to learners about dominant discourses, canons of learning and the specifics of traditional disciplines, while also showing them methods acceptable to that discipline for critiquing its assumptions and values from their own particular perspective. It implies a text which gives learners the emotional and intellectual supports to subject themselves to the learning process without being overwhelmed or "turned off". The question then becomes: how may the construction and presentation of a text support such learning processes and ways of knowing?

The social and institutional contexts of the texts to be examined

Current providers of distance education courses in South Africa, particularly the four major public providers, carry the legacy of apartheid heavily. All are seeking, in various ways, to redress the past but all have a long way to go (Saide, 1995).

Of the four major public providers of distance education courses in South Africa, the two largest, the University of South Africa (Unisa) and Technikon SA, between them enrol about 185 000 students, but since their completion rates are extremely low, "students experience overwhelming failure" (Saide, 1995:xxii).

Some innovative work is occurring in all four institutions but it is hampered by the prevailing "outmoded" and "very limited" conception of distance learning (Saide, 1995:xxi). For the most part this limited conception is replicated in the programmes of other providers.

The two new distance education texts examined in this thesis originate from Unisa and an Alternative Secondary Curriculum for Adults (Aseca), part of an NGO initiative. They are studied as part of the process of investigating whether and how the popular promise of distance education is being fulfilled. While the texts are not necessarily representative of all the texts produced by each institution, given that different texts are produced by different people under different conditions each time, with varying degrees of quality, each has been sanctioned by its originating institution.

Unisa

The Unisa text was produced by the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Department at Unisa. The oldest and most extensive distance education university, Unisa has provided distance teaching since 1946 and accounts for about 38% of all university enrolments in the country.

It employs about 3 300 staff members, with whites comprising 93% of academic staff and 100% of executive and management staff in 1994. Males comprise 54% of academic staff and 91% of executive and management staff (Saide, 1995:5).

In 1993 Unisa had 122 586 registered students, grouped demographically as follows:

African: 44,1% White: 43,9% Coloured: 3,6% Asian: 8,4%

and

Female: 50,9% Male: 49,1% (Saide, 1995):

Critics saw Unisa as upholding the status quo under apartheid. According to Vice-chancellor Professor Marinus Wiechers, however, Unisa's "study guides have been rewritten" in accordance with "learner-centred teaching", so that "there is a free flow of information between students and lecturer rather than a one-way teaching situation" (Bosch, 1996).

Unisa's distance education courses are widely used nationally and to a lesser degree in other countries. The Unisa Adult Basic Education and Training social studies text, therefore, is likely to have wide currency.

Aseca

The other text I will examine was developed by an NGO called Alternative Secondary Curriculum for Adults (Aseca). It is a recently established offshoot of the South African Committee for Higher Education (Sached) Trust, which has a long and vigorous anti-apartheid profile in the history of education.

The Aseca initiative is overtly aimed at responding to the urgent need for distance education programmes that are representative and inclusive of South Africa's whole population. It involves the creation of a new curriculum and the development of a secondary-level distance education programme for adults. The aim is to offer courses from standards five to ten in five subjects. The curriculum is based on an integrated approach to learning.

There is a small staff of less than 20 people; comprising white, African, and coloured members.

Initially it appeared that the Aseca material stood to gain wide currency in government and non-government structures. Aseca texts were estimated to have a potential audience of about five million, comprising half the adult population aged between 16 and 40. In 1995, one of

their earliest years, 800 learners registered. However due to various factors not pertinent to this context, such as a drying up of funds, the programme seems unlikely to develop to the scale envisaged.

The Aseca target audience comprises adults who wish to complete secondary education, who are generally poor and have extensive family, social and work commitments. The demographic profile of the target audience was estimated by staff to be largely African, with some coloureds and a sprinkling of whites. The male to female ratio was estimated at 40% to 60%.

The aims and methods of this study

This study is an in-depth textual analysis of how two distance education texts reach and teach diverse learners. The research question is situated in a context of socio-linguistics, critical language study, and feminist and intercultural research on ways of learning and knowing. The thesis aims to explore the following research question: what is the role of the construction and presentation of the text as it relates to adult learners' ways of learning in giving access to the content of two selected distance education texts?

I will identify and describe three distinct levels of each text's construction and presentation. I will interpret how the text strategies chosen for each text give insights into the interaction between the text producers and readers. I will offer an explanation of how the interactions involved in each text relate to the broader social action, suggesting that the accessibility of texts for certain kinds of readers relates to larger social power dynamics, with particular reference to gender. I will complete the thesis by discussing the implications of the findings for the construction and presentation of future distance education texts.

In the next chapter I will discuss two angles from which to analyse distance education texts. The first angle is the form used by the producers of a text to construct its content. The second angle comprises the ways of learning used by readers to access the content of the text.

Chapter Two

Constructing conceptual devices

Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed the intricate business of developing fixed, printed texts for diverse distance learners in the social context of South Africa in the mid-1990s. In this chapter, using the literature of distance education, the analysis of educational texts, learning style theory and theories about gendered and encultured ways of knowing, I construct two sets of conceptual tools and demonstrate how they operate in the analysis of texts. The first set of devices is the way that the developers of texts construct and present the content - the rhetorical form of texts. The second is the way that learners using the texts approach the process of learning - adult learning styles. Analytical devices which enable the reading of texts from both sides make it possible to reach conclusions about how distance education texts operate.

I will first discuss texts from the standpoint of text developers, and will show why rhetorical form is an important analytic tool. I draw on the socio-linguistic work of M.A.K. Halliday, and writers who have used his ideas, to discuss the way a text's construction and presentation may be analysed in detail.

Construction and presentation of a text

Crismore (1989) uses the term "rhetorical form" to describe the way the content of a text has been constructed and presented. After an investigation into the rhetorical form of social studies texts in the USA, Crismore concluded that "the degree to which textbooks are actually used by students and teachers is influenced by the rhetorical form of textbooks, the way the content is presented" (1989:133). Other writers (Enkvist, 1987; Graddol, 1993) have used terms such as "text strategies" to refer to the same idea.

Rhetorical form or text strategies include such elements of a text as: the selection of concepts, the way the author addresses the reader, the kinds of arguments and logical sequences used, and the design of the page. Rhetorical form is thus an analytical device which enables the examination of concept selection and sequencing, the way the text speaks to and interacts with the reader, how it deals with academic or disciplinary conventions, and how design enhances or obscures meaning.

The rhetorical form of a text is not neutral, however. Like the text itself, it is embedded in wider social power formations. Examination of the rhetorical form of a curriculum text and its interconnections with both learners' ways of knowing and asymmetrical power formations therefore offers important insights into the question of how to widen access to distance education courses as South Africa's democracy takes shape.

The internal rules of the production of a text

Halliday (1978; Halliday and Hasan, 1989) asserts that people use language to fulfil three principal meaning-making functions. One is the "ideational" function, which refers to meaning as content. This operates when people are reflecting on, or expressing, knowledge and information about the world and consciousness. The ideational function includes an experiential level and a logical level. This function of language represents the speaker as able to make meaning as an observer, reflecting on phenomena. It is language as reflection.

A second potential function of language for making meaning is the "interpersonal" component. It operates when people are interacting, both in expressing their own attitudes and judgements and in trying to influence those of other people. The interpersonal function expresses the relations between people. This includes those relations defined by language itself, for example, questioner-responder. This function represents the speaker as able to make meaning as an intruder in a context. It is language as action.

A third function of the semantic system of language is the "textual" one. It operates when people form their language into connected text. It is apparent in the way language is related to

both the preceding meaning of the text and the situation, both verbal and non-verbal. The textual function makes language relevant and gives it thematic patterns. It represents the speaker's text-forming capacity. It is language as "texture".

Halliday views the ideational and interpersonal functions as equally important components of language. This is an important point to remember in relation to instructional texts, which tend to emphasise the ideational function at the expense of the interpersonal one, and I will return to this point later. Halliday sees the textual function as a linking one, essential to enable meaning to occur.

In Halliday's (1978:187) account, the semantic potential of language is organised into these three functions and each is relatively independent of the others. The way a sentiment is expressed, for instance, argumentatively, does not constrain to any great degree what may be said. Thus it is possible to separate out the functions for analysis, while bearing in mind that each function is simultaneously realised in almost all utterances in everyday interactions.

Texts operate within what Malinowski (quoted in Halliday and Hasan, 1989) termed a specific "context of situation", an immediate, living environment, for example, a classroom or home, as well as a broader "context of culture". Both are important in understanding texts. The social contexts within which texts exist are themselves systems of meanings. Thus, for Halliday (1978), text is encoded in language, and language encodes the social systems of meaning. The essential feature of text is that it is interaction, it is a process which both expresses the meaning systems of a culture and changes or modifies those systems. There is a constantly shifting relation between a text and its environment. The dynamic nature of meaning becomes more apparent when one considers the social system and the text together.

Therefore, language operates at several meaning-making levels both in terms of language itself and as an encoder and shifter of culture. Like the content of a text, its form also communicates meanings, for example, what is selected and highlighted, how it is sequenced and organised, how the author speaks to the reader. Thus the form of a text may be understood at the levels of these three systemic functions of language and meaning-making.

Avon Crismore (1989), Nils E. Enkvist (1987) and Malcolm Coulthard (1987) have variously applied Halliday's concepts and this thesis draws on their work in turn. Like Crismore (1989), I will also use the term "rhetorical form" to mean the construction and presentation of expository texts, which may be examined in terms of Halliday's three functions.

The term "rhetorical" refers to pedagogical communication which is aimed at the educative influencing of students. In classical rhetoric, the particular effect of discourse was narrowed to persuasion. Modern rhetoricians broadened the effects to include expository, didactic modes of discourse which seek to produce rational acceptance of information and explanation. According to Crismore (1989:141), today's new, interdisciplinary rhetoric, which draws on sociology, pragmatics, anthropology and "narratology", considers "language as human action, a manifestation of roles, intentions, goals, fears, hopes and creative capacities". Thus the new rhetoric defines dialogue, rather than monologue, as the normative speech event, viewing language as a collaborative, social phenomenon.

In this context, cultural and linguistic diversity should be acknowledged as a classroom resource which can produce benefits for all, rather than being seen in the light of educators providing a better "service" to "disadvantaged groups". In The New London Group's (1996:69) account: "When learners juxtapose different languages, discourses, styles, and approaches, they gain substantively in meta-cognitive and meta-linguistic abilities and in their ability to reflect critically on complex systems and their interactions." At the same time, "the use of diversity in tokenistic ways" to add "ethnic colour" to classrooms "must not paper over real conflicts of power and interest"(The New London Group, 1996:69). The term "multiliteracies" has been coined by The New London Group (1996) to emphasise that the pedagogic process should focus on learning how to learn and learning how to decode and encode literacies of various types.

Deploying the concept of the rhetorical form of a text therefore enables me to examine the communicative and pedagogic effects of a text's construction and presentation.

A similar term, "text strategies" is used by Enkvist (1987) to point to "guiding principles of text production", noting that they involve an adjustment of goals to resources and vice versa.

He defines text strategy as a "goal-oriented weighting of decision parameters" (1987:206). For example, if little money is available for the design of a text, then the goal of illustrations may be abandoned. The problem with Enkvist's definition is that it may imply that text strategies depend on conscious processes. He disregards the unconscious patterns and culturally normative practices which inform the decisions made. For example, educational text developers in the last few decades have absorbed and display tacit agreements about which kinds of texts are suitable for different groups of people.

I will use the term "text strategy" as an alternative term for "construction and presentation of text" and "rhetorical form". But I do this with the understanding that unconscious patterns and normative practices form an inevitable part of decisions made in creating educational texts.

Viewed in terms of Halliday's three functions of language, the concept "rhetorical form" enables analysis of an expository text for its selection of concepts at the ideational level, and for the way such concepts are expressed and discussed at the interpersonal level. It makes it possible to analyse the textual level in terms of the sequencing of its concepts, the disciplinary conventions that adhere to them and the way they are visually presented. This, then, enables analysis of various elements involved in the ways a text interacts with its readers, including its assumptions regarding the kinds of learners to whom it "speaks".

I will give the interpersonal function the greatest attention since it has been neglected in favour of the ideational in the development of education texts.

The interpersonal function of a text

In the absence of a teacher, the interpersonal level of a text is what provides a human presence for solitary distance learners. I agree with Halliday that it is as crucial to language in use as the ideational function.

I also agree with Crismore that the interpersonal function is currently neglected in the creation of educational texts, and that it is vital in terms of how learners do, or don't, engage with the content of a text. I will follow much of Crismore's (1989) description of the interpersonal function, given below.

Crismore (1989:140-1) uses the term "metadiscourse" to refer to an author's presence in a text, asserting it as a manifestation of the interpersonal function. She argues that, on the level of what she terms "primary discourse", authors convey subject-matter material, while on the level of metadiscourse they help readers to interpret, assess, respond to and classify the information.

In Crismore's (1989:141) description, metadiscourse helps the reader to understand both the content of a text and the author's perspective. Metadiscourse allows the author to talk about "coming attractions", change the subject, assert something with or without certainty", for example, "this is possibly... ", "point out an important idea, note the existence of readers", for example, "you as the trainer," and "express an attitude toward an event".

At this level of the texts, I will focus on how the author/narrator/teacher is constructed, and how the reader/learner is constructed. For instance, following Halliday (1978:187-188), a communicator might choose to: "offer a proposition", "pitched in a particular key" (contradictory-defensive), "with a particular intent towards you" (convincing you), "with a particular assessment of its probability" (certain), and "with the indication of a particular attitude" (regretful).

Crismore terms a "rhetorical text" one which is aware of its rhetorical form and effectively communicates "both the desired content, information and the author's ideas about it by means of a metadiscourse and by means of the voice the author chooses for presenting the metadiscourse to the readers" (1989:143).

Authors of rhetorical texts are aware that readers who are unfamiliar with the subject matter or the conventions of a discipline may need explicit guidance into the specialised discourse they are learning and may need a text "which establishes a close interpersonal relationship between writer and reader" (Jarunud, in Crismore, 1989:143). It is important to remember that metadiscourse is the function of language that provides "a footing ... between author and reader" and "between author and subject matter" (Goffman, in Crismore, 1989). It also serves as a footing between the reader and the subject matter.

As Crismore (1989) notes, authors choose voices to present the metadiscourse to readers. In other words, the concept "voice" captures the way that authors, in the role of teachers, speak to readers as learners. The notion of voice makes it possible to open up a further layer in understanding how distance education texts speak to learners. The notion of voice carries the idea that "multiple voices are brought to bear in the curriculum development process" (Walker, 1994:vii) and therefore also in the development of educational materials.

Thus, a distance education text speaks with many voices. There are the obvious voices - of quotations, of set readings, and course team authors. In addition, there "exists the heteroglossia which necessarily arises from collaborative production and the use of multiple sources" (Graddol, 1993:27). Comments and suggestions made by the course team, pilot testers, critical readers, and so on insert further voices which may not be compatible with those included by the original author.

David Graddol (1993) argues that no text is as closed as is sometimes imagined and text developers might as well use an open textual strategy by design rather than by default. Closed texts, which speak with a single voice, are intended to control the state of knowledge of the learner stage by stage and to ensure that all students obtain similar experiences and understandings from the course. Open texts, on the other hand, are created to be read at different levels, from simple to rich, and deliberately encourage different readers to arrive at different readings.

Graddol (1993: 27-8) points to two levels of voice in the construction of a distance education text. The first occurs as the "heteroglossia" of the authorial team during the process of creating the text. The second exists as the "narrative structure" of the text, which attempts to contextualise the different voices. This level has two components. One is the administrator's voice which guides the reader through the material ("now read this ... "). The other is the teacher's voice, which summarises and evaluates different readings and quotations. Graddol (1993:28) cautions that anything stated at this level of narration "takes on high factual status" and that authors should therefore act responsibly when writing in this voice. I would like to add a third category of voice. This is the "character's voice", which speaks in actual or

manufactured case studies used in the text, or in direct quotations lifted from other sources, in order to highlight certain teaching points.

Voice in its political sense addresses the right to speak and be represented (Fincham, 1994). According to Roger Simon (in Fincham, 1994:7), voice is related to "the discursive means whereby teachers and students attempt to make themselves present and to define themselves as active authors of their own world. Frequently, dominant school culture represents, legitimates and privileges the voices of white, male, middle/upper classes to the exclusion of those economically and socially disadvantaged".

Administrators', teachers' and characters' voices in a distance education text may express individual identities and membership of social categories. They may be intentionally or unintentionally contradictory. In analysing the interpersonal component of any text, one may ask how the author is variously constructed in interactions with assumed readers. For example, is there a speaker who is constructed as a "transcendental" impersonal authority on a subject? Is there a speaker who instructs the learner about what to do next, or who guides the reader through the process of learning? Are there several speakers in a case study who give alternative viewpoints?

In this regard, the analysis undertaken in Chapter Four focuses on how the interactions between the voices in the text and the assumed reader are constructed. These constructions may take the form, for example, of questioner and respondent, or knower and not-knower, or problem-poser and problem-solver.

Enkvist (1987), like Crismore, argues that interaction between communication partners is increased by text strategies at the interpersonal level. He adds the point that this occurs partly in terms of co-operation, for example, turn-taking conventions.

In the same way that the voices of a text project its tone, so too does its "body language", its non-verbal, or gestural communication. How design enhances rather than obscures meaning is also an important feature of how texts engage with learners. Although visual design was not a main focus of Crismore's (1989) study, it was seen as an important feature, particularly in the

light of the fact that students and parents rated visually pleasing texts far more highly than did teachers and educational authorities. I believe that design is an under-researched aspect of the way a text is constructed and presented, which may profoundly affect the way learners are enabled to engage with it. Graphics, illustrations, diagrams, tables, page design, typography and colour are important ways of arranging the content for particular audiences.

The relationship between the design and the verbal messages of the text, or between its different functional levels, is important. Discrepancies between a text's injunctions to the reader at different abstract levels, for example, between the verbal metadiscourse and the non-verbal organisation or design, can place the reader in a double bind situation. Gregory Bateson (1987), who identified the double bind syndrome, defined it as a sense of impasse caused by contradictory injunctions at different abstract levels, especially those uttered by the same authority. In our case, the text is in the role of an educational authority and the potential for double binds arises in contradictions between various abstract levels of the text's message. For example, a text may state in printed words: "We want you to think about your own situation and give your views". At the same time, the non-verbal aspect of the text may show that the only views that will be admitted in an evaluation are those already given in the text. The effect is to leave the student unsure about which injunction to take seriously and act upon.

Thus the metadiscourse of a distance education text is required to make explicit these different orders of abstraction, and to ensure that a message at one level of abstraction is not denied by a contradictory message at another. This is important in ensuring that the voices and experiences of learners from different cultures, classes and genders who are apparently being invited into the content of the course are not being unconsciously reclassified in terms of a dominant, consensus reality.

Coulthard (1987) asserts and I agree, that it is the interpersonal function, or the sense of audience, which allows writers to keep the ideational within manageable limits. However, it is this interface between the ideational and the interpersonal which causes most difficulties for writers of educational texts. This interface is concerned with what a writer can assume a reader will know, and also, what of this knowledge it is necessary to repeat (Coulthard, 1987).

The ideational function of a text

For Crismore (1989), the ideational level of a text conveys information or propositional content which the author thinks the learner does not already have.

Her discussion is based partly on the work of a cognitive psychologist (Anderson, in Crismore, 1989) who asserts the necessity of considering the relational nature of knowledge. A person's knowledge is organised into categories between which relations form. In our minds, abstract knowledge structures, called schemata, organise different masses of knowledge. Schemata are complex networks of relationships describing typical characteristics of things, events, sequences, attitudes.

However, language communicates knowledge in a more linear fashion. McConkie (in Crismore, 1989:139) believes that readers often fail to reconstruct "non-linear knowledge networks" from the linear descriptions of relationships in their texts, and therefore often fail to understand what they read, and thus to learn from texts. McConkie identifies strategies to improve the way knowledge is communicated in language, such as providing author's instructions to the reader on how to put the information together, for example: "this is one point of view ... another point of view is ... ". However, this type of conversing with a reader falls more logically into the interpersonal function discussed earlier, while the ideational function relates more closely to the selection of ideas.

Enkvist (1987) asserts that text strategies in an ideational perspective appear as patterns of ideas for textualisation. Patterns through which different types of ideas can be linked to each other in terms of before and after, cause and effect, and so on, would therefore be the logical strategies of texts.

Coulthard (1987) notes the absence of agreed procedures for working from a text to its ideational content. He argues that any summary of the ideational content of a text is only one of many possible summaries. How much, and what, of any ideation is to be textualised depends mainly on the text's audience and purpose.

At the ideational level of the text's rhetorical form, I will focus on the selection of concepts.

The textual function of a text

Ideas in expository texts must be coherent if the learners are to engage with the information. The structure of the text and the sequencing of concepts is important in achieving textual coherence. At this level, I will examine the global structure, the pedagogic sequences and thematic patterns of the text. I agree with Crismore (1989) that disciplinary concerns may be included at this level and require attention, since they constitute an important element of educational texts, particularly for distance learners.

I want to refer here to Derek Rowntree's (1985) distinction between different types of distance education texts and the courses they teach. These categories will assist me in examining the texts in terms of organising principles, presuppositions about education, disciplinary concerns and the sequencing of concepts.

Rowntree identifies the main types of distance education texts as teaching a) knowledge-oriented courses; b) methodology-oriented courses (which are either task-oriented or discipline-oriented); and c) mixed knowledge and methodology orientations, which may take the form of either issue-based or interdisciplinary approaches. Most courses are mixed.

In Rowntree's (1985) account, an issue-based course generally aims to provide learners with a mix of concepts and methodological tools for resolving an issue. Instead of teaching a pure body of knowledge, prescribed by the traditions of the subject or discipline, the teaching focuses on a problem or issue. The teaching aims "to provide students with the conceptual and methodological tools for resolving the issue or arriving at a reasonable solution of the problem" (1985:8). The issue will be one that can be seen as relevant or significant by the students. A justification for this type of approach is that it can make the course interesting or relevant. While issue- or problem-based courses have considerable potential, they have pitfalls for the unwary, says Rowntree (1985:8). "For instance, the chosen issue or problem might turn out to be one that allows only a distorted or incomplete grasp of the subject or discipline."

According to Rowntree (1985), an interdisciplinary approach is one in which different disciplines are brought together to examine a common topic, period or issue. Thus an issue-based text also could be interdisciplinary. In an interdisciplinary course, different disciplines

must be brought to bear on the same content so that they interact and gain from one another, producing an approach greater than the sum of its parts. Such an approach is usually justified either as being relevant to real life ways of putting across concepts, or as introducing students to integrated multi-faceted thought processes which are required in pursuing many new subject areas. Rowntree (1985) suggests the former intention would tend to result in a knowledge-oriented course, while the latter would indicate a discipline(s)-orientation. The latter's success depends on whether the integration is real or alleged.

Crismore (1989:146) quotes Armbruster and Anderson to stress the importance of structuring texts in accordance with both the "paradigmatic patterns of thinking" in the discipline and the "conventions of coherent ... written discourse in general". The more apparent and consistent the organisation of ideas in a text, the more likely it is that the ideas will be learned. Therefore an effective text is likely to have explicit, consistent patterns and structures. In this sense, design is an important feature at the textual level as well as at the interpersonal level.

Sequencing and signalling are important aspects of textualising the ideational (Coulthard, 1987). Coulthard states that to textualise is to impose a linear sequence, although often one requires a multi-dimensional representation for ideas. Signalling relationships between clauses one has placed together with words such as "because, however, so that" is an important aspect of textualising ideas. Coulthard also describes textualisation in terms of the thematic organisation of texts.

As is evident from the preceding discussion, each component for creating and exchanging meaning may be analysed discretely and in detail. While wanting to pay attention to all three levels, I wish to listen most carefully to the way each text "sounds" at the interpersonal level, as this will give me entry to the tone of the relationship constructed between the author and the reader. Enkvist (1987) lends support to this approach by arguing that the three components of a text strategy fit together like Russian dolls, with the ideational and textual strategies being formed to satisfy requirements set by interaction and thus fitting within the interpersonal component. At the same time it is necessary to acknowledge again that in real life and texts the semantic elements are always realised together in utterances, interweaving with each other.

The social contexts of texts

While a distance learning text can be examined in detail in terms of its rhetorical form, it needs to be remembered that texts are embedded in cultural contexts. In this section, I will examine the idea of the social context of the production of a text.

The concept of “social discourses and practices” can be employed here to illuminate the way a text relates to its context, both embodying and shifting cultural systems of meaning. Gee (1990: xix) defines discourses as “ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing that are accepted as instances of particular roles by specific groups of people, whether families of a certain sort . . . bikers” or “lawyers” of a certain sort.

Fairclough (1992) asserts that the cultural contexts in which texts are embedded are characterised by unequal power relations such as gender, race and class. Discourses are ways in which people claim and keep membership of certain social groups as well as being ways to exclude people from groups on the basis of social power relations. Thus, social discourses and practices also reflect and maintain values and power relations in a culture.

As Gee (1990:xx) states:

Each discourse incorporates a usually taken-for-granted and tacit ‘theory’ of what counts as a ‘normal’ person and the ‘right’ ways to think, feel and behave. These theories crucially involve viewpoints on the distribution of ‘social goods’ like status, ‘worth’ and ‘material’ goods (who should and who should not have them).

Bernstein (1993) agrees, adding the idea that educational discourses operate as apparently invisible discourses. They are, however, related to social rules regarding the distribution of social goods, including who shall have access to the resources and benefits of society, such as authority. According to Bernstein (1993), educational discourses select knowledge constructs, remove them from their contexts and recontextualise them so that they appear as “the way things inevitably are” or “natural” in the “invisible” educational discourse.

Gee (1990:xviii) notes in this regard: "There is no such thing as 'reading' or 'writing', only reading or writing something (a text of a certain type) in a certain way with certain values."

Producing a distance text, like any other literacy activity, is thus imbued with specific discourses. Distance learning texts embody assumptions about the education interactions between text authors and large numbers of readers. Decisions about how to construct and present distance education texts are embedded in a variety of intersecting departmental, institutional, educational, cultural and global/Western discourses and practices.

I have referred earlier to the social contexts of the two institutions that produced the texts under study. Here I will focus on the wider context of educational and global discourses.

Educational discourses

Lester (in Bond, 1996) suggests that there are three dominant paradigms or perspectives on education and training at present in the West. The first is a technocratic approach, which is said to be the current dominant paradigm in United Kingdom (UK) higher education. In Bond's (1996) terms, this pedagogic discourse views knowledge as an objective reality that can be packaged in discrete disciplinary areas, termed the curriculum. A technocratic discourse relies on a rational, problem-solving approach.

The second paradigm dominant in the West is a competence-based approach, which sees professional education, training and practice as rooted in the technical rational sphere. This discourse is a modern version of the technocratic discourse, assuming that humans are rational, equally free individuals. The competence-led pedagogy is typically concerned with what people can do rather than what they know and is based on "defining clear occupational standards of performance through functional analysis" (Bond, 1996:13). This approach has gained more currency recently with the development of a national framework for vocational qualifications in the UK, and in South Africa.

Gaining currency is the third main trend, a constructivist approach, which views knowledge as "not absolute but something that individual learners internalise and reframe for their own purposes" (Bond, 1996:13). Learning is seen to happen through reflection, inquiry and

creative action rather than just “the accumulation of an existing body of knowledge” (Bond, 1996:13). In this pedagogic discourse, knowledge thus both informs and arises from action and experience.

However, in their extreme forms there are disadvantages to each of the paradigms. For a distance text to teach the substance and methods of social studies in an accessible and effective manner, it would be required to deal with the potential narrowness and rigidity of a technocratic approach and the potential “anything goes” confusion of a constructivist one.

A major weakness of both the technocratic and competence-led discourses is that they assume that humans operate as rational, equally free individuals. As humans, we are constrained in a variety of ways by the social relations of power which shape our identities and which we in turn respond to and renegotiate. We also operate from parts of ourselves other than the purely rational, such as the unconscious, instinctive and imaginative levels.

An argument put forward by Crismore (1989: 144) addresses the disadvantages of much of current technocratic and competence-led approaches to social studies. She states that an implicit assumption in much social studies pedagogy is that a “realistic view of knowledge and certainty is what counts, rather than inquiry, exploration, creativity, hypothesis formation and tentativeness”. She argues further that a teaching community that “polarises fact and value”, ignores probability and upholds only certainty, “rewards the mastery of verifiable information”. In this kind of community, textbook writers would have no incentive to promote critical inquiry and a stance of probability. In this way, education text developers obey the tacit rules of traditional social studies discourses (Gee, 1990), perpetuating a fixed view of reality from a dominant perspective and speaking with an impersonal, authoritarian text voice.

Constructivist discourses, which attempt to enable the learner to cross the barriers set up between everyday knowledges and school-based knowledges also have their disadvantages. It is important to record the doubts of certain educationists in this regard. Dowling (quoted by Muller and Taylor, 1995) concluded that mathematical texts used by “lower ability” students in the United Kingdom which include copious examples intended to replicate

everyday situations succeed only in further debarring these students from the esoteric discourse. Muller and Taylor (1995:14) summarise Dowling's argument in this way:

The recontextualisation of public domain (what we would call the field of everyday life) material into the curriculum for disadvantaged learners involves a two-fold deformation. First, it does violence to its public domain setting in that the material in which the learner is supposed to recognise him/herself parades as real life, but is recontextualised according to the curricular needs of the mathematics it purports to exemplify. The result is neither "real" maths nor recognisably "real life". Second, it does violence to the student in inculcating a view of mathematics as a series of specialised solutions to particular problems, rather than as a connected set of axioms and theorems; in substituting procedure for discourse, constructivism obscures the esoteric or sacred nature of school mathematics and precludes the induction of the student into the discipline of mathematics because the "localising strategy" of indigenous examples induces the student to mistake "algorithmic" solutions for generalisable principles, and thus to mistake the nature of mathematical practices. For "higher ability" students by contrast, the discursive elaboration of generalisable principles is foregrounded; they must learn to "speak mathematics".

Muller and Taylor (1995:15, quoting Walkerdine) maintain that the important point is to theorise the nature of recontextualisation: to tease out "what happens when a set of signs which make sense in one discursive domain are transformed into a different set of meanings in another". Words in everyday life do not always mean the same when used in the discourse of a specific discipline. For example, the opposite of "more" in eating practices at home is likely to be "no more", rather than "less", which is its opposite in school-based mathematical practices. Muller and Taylor (1995:15) ask how this transformation can be achieved in order to make the formal discourses accessible to a wider range of learners. It is important, say Muller and Taylor (1995:15-17, quoting Walkerdine) to recognise that the everyday and school-based domains are different and that school practices involve an abstract reasoning which is related to "conscious reflection on the linguistic structure" and the kind of logical relations inherent to the school-based discourse itself. Another important step is to identify which relations of signification in the everyday world of the learner

However, text construction and presentation is only one side of the coin in relation to the accessibility of distance courses. The reader reception of a text is the other side, and both determine the effectiveness of the distance education course. The preceding section has dealt with an analytical instrument responsive to the internal rules of a text and their social contexts of production, one with the capacity to distinguish between different kinds of texts. The next section attempts to explicate an instrument which is finely tuned to the learning styles and social identities of individual learners and their social contexts. The combination of these two analytical instruments, which are deployed in the analysis of the distance education texts under study, can be envisaged as a set of binoculars, with one lens focused on the construction and presentation of texts and the other lens sensitive to the reception of texts by readers, who bring a variety of styles of learning and social identities.

Reader reception of a distance text

The reader's reception of a distance education text depends on many factors at personal, interpersonal and social levels. Crucially, reader reception depends on whether the specific ways of knowing and being that a reader brings to the text find resonance there or not. Specific ways of knowing (approaches to learning) and specific ways of being (social identities) are sustained by specific social discourses and practices.

For example, a writer using a technocratic discourse is more likely to construct an adult learner whose identity is a "student who knows less than the text" than a "student who knows less about this particular discipline than the text but may have much other knowledge to contribute in her learning more about this discipline". However, a text employing a constructivist pedagogic discourse may fail to induct a learner into the discipline-specific discourse of the subject under study, for example, mathematics, or social sciences, which have their own linguistic structures and internal relations of logic.

While I discuss the learning styles of readers in depth, learning style literature and the large body of research at the micro-context level of how students learn, "has paid little attention to the issue of student identity and the social factors affecting learning", as Thorpe,

Edwards and Hanson (1993:8) point out. Educational research has been more interested in the experience of learning as it occurs in the micro-world of the institution, as if this were separated from the wider influence of society. This reflects the research tradition of the 1970s and early 1980s, argue Thorpe et al (1993:9), which was less pressured to increase student numbers and which generally “took as axiomatic the traditional goals of higher education, the elitism of its entry procedures”, and established “attitudes to knowledge” and to ways of knowing. The “access movement challenges such assumptions” and “offers the possibility for studying a body of students who experience a more overt form of culture shock and personal disjunction” than those interviewed by William Perry in his classic study on intellectual development in the USA in the 1960s, state Thorpe et al, (1993:9). Access to education is not necessarily achieved simply through getting more working class or black students, or women, through the gates of institutions.

Widening access includes actively challenging the power formations that keep certain people out. For this reason, I will discuss readers’ learning styles in conjunction with their social identities, and expand on the traditional learning style theories from which I draw, in order to develop an instrument more sensitive to the social factors that affect learning.

Part of challenging exclusive power formations involves examining the social identities and discourses with which readers are expected to identify. Part involves examining the ways texts teach and the learning styles with which readers are expected to learn.

Social identities of readers

Reader reception of a text partly depends on whether the reader is able to identify with the social identities constructed for her, as reader-learner, by the text. If a text constructs social identities for readers that do not intersect with those that readers can be expected to identify with, then some sectors of the student group will be hampered in engaging with the text.

Distance courses are specifically targeting readers who comprise sectors of society that have been traditionally alienated from mainstream formal education. The distance learners increasingly being targeted are:

- black
- women
- rural
- English 2nd or 3rd language speakers.

In Gee's (1990) terms, these target learners use "primary discourses" which are their original home-based discourses, and multiple "secondary discourses", for example, a school-based discourse, a club discourse, a discourse particular to a group of friends.

Discourses and practices, says Gee (1990:67) are inevitably

embedded in the particular world-view of particular social groups; they are tied to a set of values and norms. In apprenticing to new social practices, a student becomes complicit with this set of values and norms, this world-view. The student is acquiring a new identity, one that at various points may conflict with her initial enculturation and socialisation, and with the identities connected to other social practices in which she engages.

In the case of disciplines such as the social sciences, the discourse employs abstractions and internal relations of logic about human social systems. However, these abstractions have been distilled from the points of view and concrete experiences of a dominant sector of human society. Certain disciplinary abstractions and principles may therefore be skewed in favour of particular politically invested perspectives and identities.

Thus, as discussed earlier, the production of a distance text includes the assertion of the skills, attitudes, values, ways of being and knowing of its dominant social discourses and practices, with their ideological and political investments. Some of these ways of knowing and being, or more specifically social identities and ways of learning, may align with, some may be at odds with, and some may even compromise those of the target readers.

Learning styles of readers

The ways of learning that a distance text expects from the learner is a neglected area in the literature. It is vital in enabling learning to proceed and it is this crucial aspect of the different ways in which people learn that I will focus on in the greatest depth in terms of reader reception.

Different people learn differently. If a text provides for some ways of learning but excludes others that readers are likely to require, then the learning processes of certain sectors of the student population will be disabled rather than enabled. In ordinary classrooms, this lack in a text can be offset by the ongoing face-to-face contact with other students and by teachers who take account of individual learning differences. In a distance education text, however, a variety of learning styles is required if readers are to be enabled to access the content and methodology of the discipline or subject.

This section explores the idea that different modes of learning predispose readers to texts in specific ways. First I will outline the concept of learning style and will discuss a set of four relatively discrete, equivalent learning styles on which individual learners can be expected to draw in their own approach to learning. The aim is to prepare the ground for the analysis undertaken in Chapters Four and Five which attempts to show how the textual strategies of specific distance education texts will resonate with some learning styles and not others.

The concept of learning style refers to the way a person approaches learning. An early instance of learning style theory (Cropley, in Lee, 1971) distinguished between divergent thinkers, who score well on open-ended tests for creative thinking, and convergent thinkers, who do well when a single answer is required. The idea of learning style "attempts to explain learning variation between individuals by differences in the way they approach learning tasks, rather than by differences in level of ability" states Toye (1989: 226-7).

Attempts to understand how adults who study alone organise their learning have been stimulated by the growth of distance education and by dissatisfaction with other theories about how people learn, such as formal learning theories which are often remote from practical educational action (Toye, 1989:227).

As the heterogeneity of student bodies at South African universities increased, a 1987 report by the Committee of University Principals noted the need for research into students' learning styles (Moelwyn-Hughes, c 1990:1). As Halliday (1978:106) stated: "Built into the educational process are a number of assumptions and practices that reflect differentially not only the values but also the communication patterns and learning styles of different subcultures", thereby favouring certain modes of learning over others. It is therefore important to gain a sharper understanding of how distance education texts currently speak to a variety of learners who have different ways of learning and how these texts may guide learners to expand their learning style repertoires.

Learning style theory burgeoned in the 1970s. Some theorists visualised learning styles as a pair of opposing styles, for example, Cropley's divergent and convergent thinking (in Lee, 1971) and Pask and Scott's holistic versus serialist learning styles (in Cashdan, 1971). Holists take a broad look at a new area of study, including information they do not need, before deciding what is relevant. Serialists work through a narrow sequence of information, coming to a broader view later on. Most academic work is prepared in serialist form, therefore holists taking distance courses may need to read recommended articles before the correspondence text (Cashdan, 1971).

Another oppositional pair still used in adult education is field-dependence versus field-independence (Witkin et al, in Cashdan, 1971). This refers to the ability to disembed elements from a total perceptual field. This specific ability has been generalised to include mental style as a whole. The generalised meaning is usually now denoted by the terms "global" versus "analytic" or "articulated". However, it is questionable whether one specific ability can be generalised to a person's entire mental style. Second, "global" is conceptualised as the negative of "analytic" and it is implied that those with a global approach are somehow deficient. Third, the experiments that Witkin et al set up evidence cultural bias, purporting to show that a "global" mental style is associated particularly with working-class people and females.

Later learning style theories, such as those of David Kolb (1984, 1993, and quoted in Moelwyn-Hughes, c 1990) and Honey and Mumford (1992), emphasise the important role of

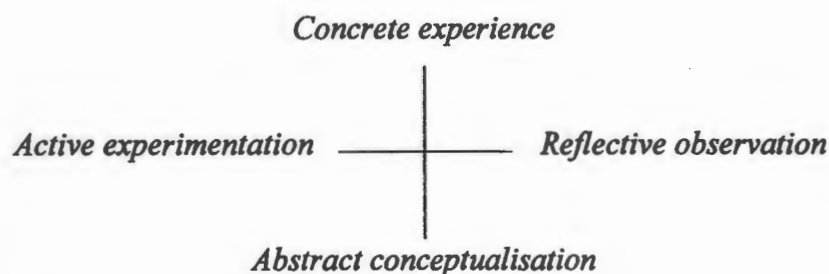
subjective experience as part of the process of learning. Learning is viewed as a combination of experience, perception, cognition and behaviour. By contrast, cognitive theories emphasise the learning of abstract symbols, while behavioural theories ignore the role of consciousness and subjective experience in the learning process (Kolb, 1993). In seeking to understand how text construction affects the subjectivity of readers, it is therefore to experiential theories of learning that we must turn. The basic framework applied to the analysis of texts undertaken in Chapter Five was developed by Kolb (1984, 1993, quoted in Moelwyn-Hughes, c 1990) upon whose work Honey and Mumford (1992) based their learning style categories.

The theories of Kolb, and Honey and Mumford are well known in the field of learning style theory. Both have been used locally by the adult education departments of the University of Cape Town and the University of the Western Cape.

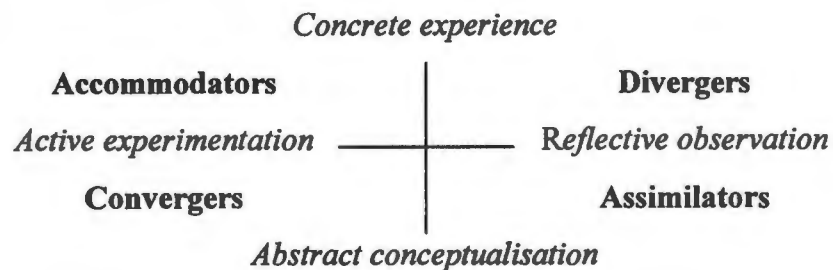
Kolb's learning style theory

Here I will give an outline of the learning styles identified by Kolb (1984, 1993, and in Moelwyn-Hughes, c 1990). Then I will critique Kolb's theory before drawing on the insights of other writers concerned with ways of learning in order to provide a modified and elaborated description of Kolb's learning style categories.

I begin with Kolb's conceptual format of a set of four equivalent, relatively autonomous learning styles which the learner population is said to employ individually in various combinations. These learning styles are derived from four modes of learning set on a Cartesian co-ordinate. Kolb (1984) sets the learning mode of active experimentation opposite that of reflective observation on the horizontal axis, while setting the mode of concrete experience opposite that of abstract conceptualisation on the vertical axis.



These four modes of learning give rise to four learning styles: (Kolb, 1984 and quoted in Moelwyn-Hughes, c 1990) accommodators, divergers, assimilators and convergers, shown in the diagram below. For example, the combination of active experimentation and abstract conceptualisation, gives rise to a “convergent” learning style.



Accommodators have a strong intuitive understanding of situations and prefer learning contexts where they can be actively involved in new experiences in the “here and now”.

Divergers have well-developed imaginations and are interested in people and their emotions. They like to learn from watching and reflecting and enjoy lectures.

Assimilators prefer working with theoretical models. They like the learning situation to have stated objectives and to require conformity to directions, for example, assigned readings, and they enjoy lectures.

Convergers enjoy the practical application of ideas, doing best when there is a single correct answer to a problem. They prefer discussion which relates subject matter to the physical world.

According to Kolb (1984), most people show a mix of styles, with one or two predominating and his theory provides a method to ascertain which style an individual habitually favours in any given learning situation.

However, while I employ Kolb’s theory as a starting-point, it is necessary to elaborate on it in order to hone an instrument that is particularly sensitive to the interpersonal processes involved in learning from a text and to the broader social contexts within which they occur.

The contextual aspects I focus on are gender and culture, both powerful social constructs with the capacity to create blockages in a student's learning processes.

In critiquing and amplifying Kolb's four learning style categories, I draw on the insights of other writers. These writers have not been classified with the traditional learning style literature of the 1970s and 1980s, but they are concerned with how ways of learning intersect with interpersonal processes and learners' social contexts. They include Belenky et al (1986), who identified five "ways of knowing" extrapolated from the experiences of 135 women during the course of study of the gendered nature of ways of knowing, and Howard Gardner (1985), who has surveyed a wide variety of cultures and their ways of knowing.

Three of the theories from which I draw, those of Kolb, Honey & Mumford (1992) and Belenky et al (1986), are designed for metropolitan situations and thus texts. However, I require a model that can be used with reference to the majority of South Africa's population, which was systematically marginalised from mainstream education. These exclusionary practices have taken shape most crudely via the construct of race but also via that of culture. Gardner's (1985) intercultural work has assisted me in developing a model for learning situations that occur outside as well as inside Western, metropolitan contexts, which is important for a learning style instrument to be used in South Africa.

The ways of knowing according to Belenky et al

I require an instrument that is fine-tuned to how certain ways of learning have been gendered, or more specifically, how certain ways of learning have been traditionally attributed to women and at the same time marginalised from mainstream education. Belenky et al (1986) provide insights into this. However, their five "ways of knowing" are seen as developmental phases, whereas I require a model with a variety of equivalent learning modes which a population of learners can be understood to span. I will discuss my reasons for this below.

With regard to intellectual development, Belenky et al (1986) provide an important counterbalance to William Perry's study on intellectual and ethical development of predominantly male students at Harvard University. Perry's study formed a normative

template in the field of education, purporting to explain how people, men and women, learn. Belenky et al (1986:7) argue that the habit of "using male experience to define the human experience" is nowhere "seen more clearly than in models of intellectual development". The work of Belenky et al (1986) is important for recognising and reclaiming ways of knowing that have been systematically dismissed in a traditional Western middle-class world-view. This paradigm has split up ways of understanding the world into the mental processes involving "the abstract and impersonal" which have been termed "thinking" and attributed mainly to the masculine, and processes dealing with the "personal and interpersonal" which are labelled "emotions" and attributed largely to the feminine, assert Belenky et al (1986:6-7). The processes affiliated with men have been valued and studied while those affiliated with women have been largely disregarded. This has resulted in a research tradition concerned with the "development of autonomy", "abstract critical thought" and a "morality of rights and justice", and relatively unconcerned with the "development of interdependence", "nurturance" and "contextual thought" argue Belenky et al (1986:6-7). An education system or course which is unaware or uncritical of this long trend, reflects and perpetuates it, with masculinist pedagogic discourses giving authority and value to one way of learning and not to another.

Women learners, who have been socialised more often to favour personal, interpersonal and social values (Ehrman, 1990; Hayes, 1989), contextual or relational thinking (Weil, 1993) or gestalt knowing, are negatively impacted upon by social power relations which exclude those ways of learning.

Even when distance education texts overtly target women and represent a variety of social identities for them, it is important to remember that the text construction itself can deny ways of learning that have been labelled feminine. This is not to say that women are inherently geared to learn in specific ways. It is rather to assert that social gendering is a complex process in which certain attributes, and ways of thinking and knowing, are labelled feminine and relegated to the inferior side of a binary opposition, and that this, as Bondi (1991) states, has everything to do with the fact that women and the feminine are oppressed.

Some learners therefore may find that their ways of learning are not provided for by a text and may be caught in a learning bind that reflects and serves to maintain social power relations.

Gardner's multiple intelligences

Gardner's (1985) work also describes ways of knowing that have been marginalised in Western educational discourses. Surveying a wide variety of cultures, he identifies six types of relatively autonomous human "intellectual competences", or "multiple intelligences", for example, musical or spatial intelligence. These intelligences are intimately bound up with ways of learning and knowing.

Gardner (1985: 4) notes that current Western methods of educational assessment fail to account for a wide range of human intellectual capacities, for example, a Puluwat youth learning to navigate by the stars amongst hundreds of islands. Gardner believes that the problem lies in the ways in which we customarily think about the intellect and intelligence, and he asserts that only by "expanding and reformulating our view of what counts as human intellect" will we be able to "devise more appropriate ways of assessing it and more effective ways of educating it".

Critique of Kolb's framework

In using a set of four equivalent learning styles rather than developmental learning phases, I attempt to avoid valorising some learning styles as "more advanced" than others. In this way I hope to avoid embedding unnecessary cultural biases in a system which aims to help understand how texts provide for the variety of learning styles which exist across a broad spectrum of the population. However, Kolb's (1984) framework polarises concrete experience and abstract conceptualisation. Since traditional understanding in the field of education maintains that abstract conceptualisation is a "more advanced" mode of learning than concrete experience, Kolb's formulation has the potential to distort the equivalent values of the four learning styles.

In order to counter this bias, I want to note that Kolb's mode of learning termed "concrete experience", which gives rise to his "accommodators" and "divergers", correlates closely

with Gardner's (1985) description of the "personal intelligences". In elaborating on Kolb's categories, I will draw particularly on insights into the "personal intelligences", which are modes of knowing that are crucial in many, if not all, societies in the world. According to Gardner (1985: 241), the personal intelligences, comprising both intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, have hitherto been all but ignored by students of cognition and "this omission has spawned a view of intellect which is all too partial and makes it difficult to understand the goals of many cultures and the ways in which these goals are achieved". While the personal intelligences are not gender-specific they tend to be gender-related in traditional Western thinking where they have been associated with the domain of women, reserved mainly for the private realm and seen as less important in public life. Although the personal intelligences have been neglected, they are critical to human social interaction, and thus to teaching and learning. Therefore, the adapted version of Kolb's learning styles which I set out in the next section understands "accommodators" and "divergers" as learners with well-developed ways of knowing about people and their interrelations. They are thus learners with people-oriented styles as opposed to object-oriented styles.

Similarly, the mode of learning Kolb terms abstract conceptualisation, which gives rise to his "assimilators" and "convergers", correlates with Gardner's understanding of the logical-mathematical way of knowing. Gardner (1985:129) notes: "In confronting objects, in ordering and reordering them, and in assessing their quantity the young child gains his or her initial and most fundamental knowledge about the logical mathematical realm". Emphasising that knowledge of objects and the connections amongst them has been of "singular importance in the history of the West" but "less important elsewhere", Gardner (1985:167) notes that logical-mathematical intelligence is one intelligence amongst several and, while it is "powerfully equipped to handle certain kinds of problem", it is "in no sense superior to, or in danger of overwhelming, the others". In the adapted and expanded version of Kolb's learning styles that follows, I will discuss assimilators and convergers as favouring an object-oriented approach to learning as opposed to a people-orientated one.

In relation to the potential bias in polarising concrete and abstract approaches to learning, Gee (1990) provides a useful distinction. This is between a learner "acquiring" or actively practising the discourse-practices of a subject or discipline, and thus being able to

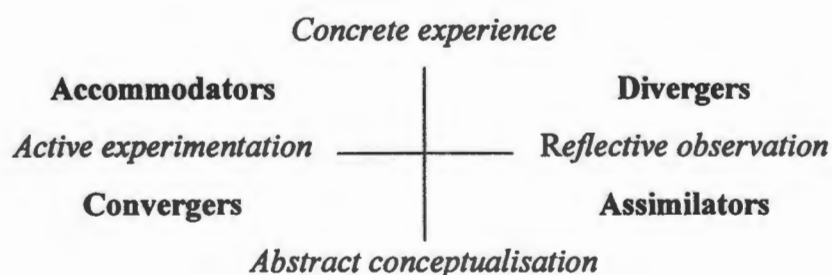
“perform” within it (but not necessarily “talk” about it), and a learner “learning” about the discourse-practices of a discipline and thus being able to “talk” about it (but not necessarily enact it). Gee’s distinction reveals that both concrete and abstract, and both active and reflective ways of learning are important ways of mastering subjects and disciplines.

While they employ different learning typologies, each of the writers (Kolb, 1984, 1993 and in Moelwyn-Hughes c 1990; Honey and Mumford, 1992; Belenkey et al, 1986; Gardner, 1985 and Gee, 1990) that I draw on identifies a small number of autonomous ways of learning. Each writer also emphasises the centrality of the individual’s experience in any learning process. This is an important premise for a model which is attempting to be sensitive to those learners’ experiences, perspectives, knowledge backgrounds and ways of learning that have been marginalised in the past.

While I retain Kolb’s basic framework, I modify and elaborate on his descriptions of the four learning styles, using insights from the writers discussed above to both expand their applicability to current South African distance learning conditions and to maintain their internal equivalence. This modified version of Kolb’s (1984, 1993 and in Moelwyn-Hughes c 1990) model of learning styles will require testing in the field.

An adapted version of Kolb’s learning styles

The learning style theory I thus employ is based on two axes, resulting in four learning styles. Following Kolb, the active-reflective axis produces the two modes of active experimentation and reflective observation, while the abstract-concrete axis produces concrete experience and abstract conceptualisation. I employ this polarisation of concrete and abstract modes subject to the qualifications and nuanced readings discussed above.



An adapted version of Kolb's accommodators

Accommodators are people-oriented more than object-oriented and they learn through being active rather than reflective.

These learners learn by being actively involved in the subject matter, in the here and now. They enjoy new experiences and are comfortable taking risks. They often take the role of catalysts for action. They have a sophisticated sensory apprehension of the world, and they prefer direct experience and a personal connection with the matter under study. These learners have a well-developed intrapersonal intelligence and they value having open access to their own inner feeling life. They learn by listening to and watching their interior landscape. They often trust personal knowledge above that offered by "experts". Their intuition is strongly developed. Intuition, states Myss (1997: 179-85) is the ability to use information from the emotional, psychological and spiritual elements of a given situation in order to make decisions in the immediate moment. These learners follow their gut instincts. Accommodators dislike authority figures and authoritarian styles of teaching. They enjoy team work, such as collaborative explorations, and group work such as role plays, or discussion groups, where each participant can speak from her or his own valued view-point. They are inspired to express themselves in non-verbal and artistic ways.

With regard to texts, accommodators like a text which is interactive in a friendly, personal way. They are self-directed, for example, they prefer to determine their own criteria of relevance, and they respond well to a teacher who presents herself as a coach or helper, as though the teacher were part of the same team as the learner. They need to be able to interweave their own experience with the material the text is teaching. In working with the text, they prefer to perform activities, such as drawing a visual representation of information, doing brainstorming, or practising creative visualisations. They enjoy gaining information by being actively involved in the immediate moment, for example, interviewing people. These learners find peer feedback and the teacher's personalised feedback helpful. They do well working with others on projects and in small group discussions.

An adapted version of Kolb's divergers

Divergers are people-oriented more than object-oriented. They learn through reflective rather than active modes.

Their imaginative capacity is well-developed and they are divergent rather than convergent thinkers. They have acute powers of observation and can see situations from many different perspectives. These learners prefer to keep their options for solutions and answers open. They learn by watching, listening, being aware of feelings and thinking. Divergers are empathetic with a strong interpersonal intelligence – they are interested in people and their emotions and have a refined ability to notice and make distinctions between others, in terms of their temperaments, values, intentions, motivations and moods. They enjoy accessing other people's knowledge via empathy and human stories rather than cold facts. They tend to explore symbolic rather than literal modes of representation. They may have a well-developed linguistic intelligence, for example, enjoying poetry. They like collaborative work in which there is time to explore the subject in an unpressurised way. They prefer lectures in which they can respond to the lecturer as a person. They require time to prepare and review their learning activities.

With regard to texts, divergers enjoy stories about people's lives, relationships, intentions and emotions. They prefer being able to use their imaginative powers to understand situations and answer questions. They do well when encouraged to prepare for, research and review their learning activities. They prefer to have a relationship with the teacher in the text where the teacher reveals him- or herself as a person. They enjoy working with the text as though part of a team with the teacher and other students, with both feedback from peers and expert interpretations from the teacher. They enjoy a blend of the sharing of feelings and personalised feedback as well as having their work judged by the external criteria of the field.

An adapted version of Kolb's assimilators

Assimilators are object-oriented rather than people-oriented and are reflective rather than active.

They prefer drawing mainly on their logical-mathematical intelligence. These learners like working with concepts, theories and models. Theories must be logically sound and precise. Their strength is inductive reasoning: working from the specifics to the more general. They prefer to analyse, reason and generalise. They enjoy exploring assumptions about, and the interrelations amongst, phenomena and ideas. They are more interested in abstractions and principles than in people. Assimilators prefer a structured learning situation with a clear purpose and want to know what is expected of them. They like lectures and activities where they can follow specific directions. They prefer to express themselves in reasoned argument, where their own feelings and beliefs are not necessarily important.

With regard to a text, assimilators require objectives to be set out for the learning, with clear directions they can follow in organising their work with the text. They require the teacher to provide expert interpretations. They prefer their performance to be judged by the external criteria of the field. They enjoy case studies, theory readings and thinking alone.

An adapted version of Kolb's convergers

Convergers are object-oriented more than people-oriented and more active than reflective.

Convergers enjoy relating the subject matter to the physical world. Their strengths are problem-solving, decision-making and implementing solutions. Abstractions become real for them when they can apply them to the "real world". Through hypothetical-deductive reasoning, their knowledge can be focused on specific problems. They do well where there is a single correct answer or solution to a problem, for example, a technical hitch. They are convergent rather than divergent thinkers, deciding on a solution and implementing it, or clarifying a course of action and putting it into action. They learn best by doing, performing and trying things out. They prefer to practise a method or technique. They need to actively apply their learning. Convergers have a sophisticated bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, which is the ability to use the body in "highly differentiated and skilled ways", for example,

performance of mime, as well as the “capacity to work skilfully with objects”, for example, surgery (Gardner, 1985: 206). Convergers enjoy expressing themselves by physically working with or making an object. They like to manifest ideas in physical, concrete terms. To maintain their interest, the material being learned must have practical advantages.

With regard to texts, they enjoy a clear connection between the learning and its application. They like to be given activities which involve the physical implementation of ideas or the relating of the subject matter to the physical world. They enjoy a blend of case studies, theory readings and thinking alone with projects, homework, small group discussions and peer feedback.

In conclusion, these four learning styles of accommodators, divergers, assimilators and convergers, adapted from the leaning style theory of Kolb (1984, 1993, and in Moelwyn-Hughes, c 1990) are the models I will draw on in order to evaluate what kinds of discriminations each text under study carries.

Chapter Three

Methodology

In the previous chapter I constructed conceptual tools and discussed how they operate in the analysis of texts. In this chapter I will describe the nature of the study and a procedure for applying the conceptual tools. In the following two chapters I will undertake the analysis, using this procedure to apply the conceptual devices to the selected texts.

The nature of the study

This inquiry focuses on the construction and presentation of distance education texts by means of case studies of two key adult education distance texts. The purpose is to gain insights into the ways that newly developed texts construct identities for students, as they teach increasingly heterogeneous learners.

The theoretical framework outlined in Chapter Two relies, on the one hand, on the literature of distance education and the analysis of educational texts to describe the constructs of the internal rules of production of a text and the social context of production of a text. On the other hand, it relies on discourse theory, learning style theory and theories about gendered and encultured ways of knowing to describe the concepts of learners' modes of learning and learners' socially inscribed identities. Learners' predispositions to ways of knowing and being are two of the important aspects they bring with them to a learning process.

These ideas will be applied in a three-phase procedure developed by Fairclough (1992). Fairclough's critical language study (CLS) approach to texts makes it possible to examine the relations between the producers and readers of texts, as well as how those relations are embedded in wider social power arrangements. In order to do this I focus particularly on gender but also on culture as important aspects of power dynamics in both social and educational discourses.

I take a qualitative approach in the case studies, enabling an in-depth study of the texts. This approach implies a concern with the wider institutional and social processes which provide a context for the meanings of the texts. The sociolinguistic concepts I will use to investigate text strategies enable me to show that distance education texts form a pivot for interactions between the producers and interpreters of the texts. Thus I apply sociolinguistic theories about language in use to the interactions between a text (in the role of a teacher) and its readers (in the role of learners). Viewing the texts in context, it is clear that these educational interactions both constitute and challenge current power arrangements, for example, in terms of gender. Therefore, I also apply feminist pedagogic theories to cast light on educational discourses and practices which privilege masculine experiences and voices over feminine ones.

A case study approach also implies an interest in gaining a rich array of insights into a specific context rather than attempting to find the widely generalisable rules of the natural sciences. At the same time, however, my operational assumption is that I will be able to move from specific observations about the two texts to insights about more general patterns regarding the text strategies of distance education texts and how they interact with diverse learners.

A case study approach to research enables the researcher to immerse herself in the case but, in order to minimise the projection of one's own selective consciousness onto it, one requires a language of description and an explanatory framework. In this regard, Atkinson and Delamont (quoted in Thesen, 1994:12) warn that a case study approach can suffer from a lack of "methodological self-awareness". One solution to this difficulty is to develop formal categories of analysis, or "generic analytic categories" (in Thesen, 1994:12). This is an approach I have followed in the development of abstract categories such as rules of production and context of production, on the one hand, and learning typologies and learner identities on the other. The former are abstract, linguistic representations of the internal structure of texts and the social contexts within which texts make meaning. The latter are representations of the variously defined ways that people approach learning and the socially inscribed differences such as gender, culture, race or class that affect learners' identities.

A research method is a way of proceeding in gathering evidence. Social inquiry can be undertaken by way of three fundamental methods: listening to informants, observing

behaviour and examining historical records (Harding, 1987). I have chosen to examine real texts which are used in educational courses and are open to public scrutiny. They can be seen as cultural artefacts which materialise and make apparent particular social and educational discourses, which are currently operating. As a way of deepening the investigation of these textual records, I draw on the other two methods by listening attentively to the voices within each text (how it speaks) and closely observing the behaviour of each text (what it does).

Criteria for selecting the two texts

The texts chosen for study are both important new distance education texts, constructed for new courses which were due to begin in 1995. Both aim to cater for a wide variety of adult learners in the "new South Africa". However, they are from historically different institutions in terms of their relation to the social establishment. Both induct learners into a popularised, multi-disciplinary social studies course. Both recontextualise knowledge constructs from social science disciplines (such as sociology, anthropology, psychology) into a post-apartheid, South African educational discourse.

Equally important as a criterion for selection is that both are the first texts of a series in a new course. Each is envisaged as a prerequisite for courses in either general education or educational work. The first texts of a course are particularly crucial, since they set the tone, frame of reference and standard for the rest of the course. If learners encounter difficulties in engaging with the first texts, they may be discouraged from continuing with the course.

The two texts and the courses of which they form a part

The Unisa text to be analysed is titled "Module 1: Contextual Studies". It is the first text in Unisa's training course for adult basic educators and trainers. The course is called "Practitioner training course for Adult Basic Education and Training". This text is hereafter referred to as the "Contextual Studies/Unisa text", or the "CS/Unisa text".

The practitioner training course has four modules: 1) Contextual Studies; 2) Adult Learners; 3) Facilitating learning; and 4) A generic ABET options course. Each module is presented in a "study guide", which forms the main part of a "study package". The study package for Contextual Studies includes an audio cassette, which elaborates on teaching points, and The Good Study Guide, which is considered a key part of the course and discusses study skills.

The pedagogical aim of the one-year course is to "help you become more effective in your work as a teacher of adults by enhancing your skills, your theoretical understanding of the field you are working in, and your practical teaching abilities" (ABET Practitioner Training Course Brochure). Admission requirements are a standard ten or its equivalent. This places the course at level five of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The CS/Unisa text consists of 179 A4 pages divided into eight chapters averaging 22 pages each. The course is expected to take learners one year to complete. Thus, for example, if a student covered a chapter a month, took a month's holiday and revised for three months, she would need to complete at least five pages a week. Students "may also be expected to undertake approximately 40 hours of practical teaching in an approved organisation" (Course Brochure), which is equivalent to just over one week teaching full-time. Assessment comprises a year mark for assignments, practical teaching, and a final examination. Students are expected to study independently but learner support is available in some areas.

The above information comes from the preliminary pages of the text and the course brochure. Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain as much information about the Unisa process as I was about Aseca. Near the end of the research process I was able to interview a locally based tutor who provided information on assignment and examination topics and said that most of the students were not yet practising as adult educators and trainers, but were doing the course to gain entry to the field.

The Aseca text studied is titled "Where We Live". It is the first text in a course for adult learners called "Integrated Social Studies". It is hereafter referred to as the "Integrated Social Studies/Aseca text" or "ISS/Aseca text".

The following information is taken from the ISS/Aseca text, the Integrated Social Studies Course Guide, and an interview with one of the academic co-ordinators of the course.

Applicants for the course, which operates at level four of the NQF, or at the traditional standard eight level, are required to have a standard six certificate. In the absence of this certificate, applicants are given an access test, based primarily on proficiency in the language in which the courses are currently offered, which is English.

Aseca does offer an Integrated Social Studies course at level five, a level more comparable to the CS/Unisa text being studied. Unfortunately, however, this was not ready for publication when I began the research.

The pedagogical aims of the level four course are to help learners to "think about what you learn and what you read, explore how different people see things in different ways, analyse arguments in short texts, build arguments by putting forward your opinion and supporting it with the necessary facts" (Integrated Social Studies Course Guide).

The course consists of three modules of two units each. These six units are: 1) Where we live, 2) The individual in society, 3) Understanding political processes, 4) You and your environment, 5) Understanding the economy and 6) Ethics and values.

Each unit is in the form of one text averaging 108 A4 pages, consisting of 12 chapters ("lessons") of about nine pages each. Each lesson was planned to take about two hours. Thus, if learners studied for six hours, covering about 27 pages a week and completing one unit (24 hours of study) every month, then the course could be completed in about six months.

Aseca initially envisaged that study support would be provided by tutors at Aseca community learning centres. However, financial difficulties prevented this and Aseca is now forming partnerships with other institutions for the provision of such support. The Aseca Course Guide for Integrated Social Studies provides guidance on different ways in which a tutor can give support, encourages learners to form study groups and advises them on how to draw up a study plan and make the best use of spare time.

If a learner's assignments and an examination are favourably assessed, the learner gains a certificate. The Independent Examinations Board (IEB) holds exams twice a year and acts as an external moderator. Learners may choose to write exams either in July or November.

To sum up, both texts are aimed at inducting learners into a popularised form of social science. The target group is mainly learners who previously have been excluded from educational opportunities at their levels. The differences are that the ISS/Aseca text is part of a general education course and is at a slightly lower level than the CS/Unisa text, which is part of a course for further educational work for adult basic education and training practitioners.

Choosing a sample of text for analysis

It was not possible to analyse in depth and detail all aspects of both texts. However, it seemed important to select similar portions or elements in each case to avoid an unfair comparison of how each constructs learner's ways of learning and identities.

At first I attempted a random selection, simply opening up the Unisa text to find Chapter Five on "ABET and Women", which was a particular area of interest. However, Chapter Five in the Aseca text dealt with maps. The pieces appeared too dissimilar to enable a fair comparison of learner identities.

My next strategy was to look for similar portions of content. My rationale was the interlinked nature of content and its form and thus the impact of content on text strategies. So, for example, I looked for a comparable piece on women in the ISS/Aseca text, but a section on gender appeared only in the following book of the Aseca series. I considered extending my study to include the first and second books in both series, since between them they covered more comparable content. However, aware of the time and space constraints of a mini-thesis, I restricted my focus to the first text of each institution's series, deciding to explore the similarities and differences in their construction and presentation. In short, I decided not to look for comparable sections of the texts but to select comparable, dominant features in the whole of each text. I did so by means of an analytic framework based on Halliday's systemic

functions of language, ensuring a focus on, and categorisation of, the comparable dominant features running through each text.

Successive phases of the inquiry

The process of moving from decisions about selecting portions of the texts to decisions about which of a variety of possible analytic concepts to apply to them, and back and forth, is termed "progressive focusing". This means progressively applying one's focus to the questions or issues that emerge as crucial to embracing the central dynamics of the case. It is the developing of "dialogue between data and concepts" says Millar (1983:121).

Since a case study approach implies an absence of predefined method or procedure, this study involved a long period of progressive focusing during which I applied theoretical constructs critically to explore how they did or did not enable me to approach the texts from different angles, and so illuminate my reading of them. I also remained alert to the possibility of significant issues, which might not be touched by the analytic constructs applied, but which signalled the need for attention, for example, when the text jarred, alerting me to the requirement to rework my theoretical framework to accommodate newly surfaced questions.

The human observer analysing the text: justification and validation

An important principle of method for a case study is an accurate portrayal of the data (Millar, 1983). This means recording and representing the data and the range of perceptions held by key actors clearly and honestly.

However, any text, including this research report, involves selection, the suppression of certain voices in favour of others, the structuring of events and insights so that some are highlighted and others muted. Knowledge is always socially situated. Selection necessarily involves bias or distortion. Patterns of distortion are culturally produced and transmitted.

Thus, a drawback of the case study approach is that it supports only modest claims to reliability. Implicit in the approach is the notion that the perspective from which the researcher thinks and speaks will enter the study as a set of premises on which her or his interpretations rest. Thus a tension exists between an attempt at the objective representation of data and the subjective interpretation involved in this attempt. For this reason it is important to lay bare as far as possible the researcher's interpretive perspective.

In other words, researchers are required to acknowledge that they can be neither ethically neutral nor divested of the influence of the positions they hold in various social hierarchies. As Harding (1987:8) asserts, researchers are required to locate themselves "in the same critical plane as the overt subject matter". This acknowledgement of the shaping force of such factors as gender, culture, race and class recovers the research process for inspection in the outcome of research. The researcher appears to the reader "not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests," emphasises Harding (1987:9). In this way, we need to "avoid the 'objectivist' stance that attempts to make the researcher's cultural beliefs and practices invisible," while scrutinising the research object's beliefs and practices. Harding (1987) argues, in fact, that explicit acknowledgement of this 'subjective' element increases the objective value of the research, rendering more visible the beliefs and behaviours of the researcher which are part of the empirical evidence for or against the claims put forward in the results of research.

In seeking to go beyond a split between subjective and objective approaches to research, Reason (1988:12) coins the term "critical subjectivity". This is a "quality of awareness in which we do not suppress our primary subjective experience; nor do we allow ourselves to be overwhelmed and swept along by it; rather we raise it to consciousness and use it as part of the inquiry process".

I was reminded time and again during readings of the texts that while analysis is based on an intellectual response, it does not operate in isolation. It is bound up with emotional and bodily responses, for example, feelings and sensations of tiredness and irritation or anticipation and well-being. Although I had not initially asserted the body/mind continuum as an important concept in the theoretical framework, it spontaneously arose during my examining of the

texts. Therefore, in seeking to move beyond the current dominant trend of conceptually splitting off the mind from the emotions and body, I resolved to approach the texts in a state of alert calmness and to stay sharply aware of my responses - emotional, physical and intellectual - noting them down while I worked with the two texts.

It may be asked how my readings of the texts can form the basis for analysis. They can in the sense that the internal dialogues I engaged in with the texts form part of the process of construction of my subjectivity as a reader. Further, I have been able to scrutinise these subjective responses from a perspective informed by theoretical resources.

Educational practices are partly shaped by commonly agreed upon rules, which, according to Cherryholmes (1988), are taken as given, and which produce the discourses and practices specific to a time and place. These rules refer to expected behaviours of members of a social group, such as an educational grouping. Our subjectivities - how and what we think about ourselves and how we exist as humans in the world - are, from one sociological perspective, shaped by discourses, ideologies and power arrangements. From this perspective, educational practice is constantly recreated by the actions of educators, talking and behaving as they think educators should.

While texts do construct subject positions for their readers, and readers do respond subjectively, there are informed vantage points from which to examine these textual processes. As Ensor (1994) points out, it is possible for me to analyse the text strategies of these texts because I have recognised some of the rules which regulate them. At the same time, what I am able to recognise is affected by the beliefs I hold and which hold me in certain positions, both consciously and unconsciously, about ideology, ethics and power arrangements. As a white, middle-class woman who, for example, is aware of feminist frameworks, I operate with a "double consciousness" in that I am partly in and partly out of dominant discourses and practices. In addition, I am positioned partly within the belief systems and discourses of adult education and distance education, partly outside of them. I operate with the subjectivities of both text developer and reader, both teacher and learner.

As the research process unfolds, I am able to investigate the textual processes more deeply, by

shifting position between having my subjectivity constructed by the texts and constructing the texts in terms of my subjective responses. In shifting my position between subjective responses and how the texts elicit those responses, new angles on the textual processes increasingly present themselves. A dialogue between subjective responses and theoretical resources enables me to progressively focus on areas of the text strategies that seem "sticky" and relationships between them that hold potential insights.

Reinharz (in Belenky et al, 1986:123) describes her method of "experiential analysis" for studying Israeli families subject to intermittent rocket shelling. She relates that before she could examine the families, she had to attend to her own security needs and uncovered her previously unexamined responses to potential disaster. "I no longer considered these personal reactions internal noise that disturbed the research process. Rather, I looked to my reactions as an indicator of general patterns for coping with the continuous threat of potential destruction".

"Good faith" is thus at the heart of the case study, as Millar (1983:122) puts it. But why should a reader of a case study grant good faith? In this regard - and, indeed, in relation to any theoretical approach - the notion of construct validity arises. In Cherryholmes's (1988:111) account, the mainstream approach to construct validity assumes that the body of knowledge brought to the research "reveals what is going on in a way undistorted by ideology and power". The phenomenological approach assumes that "subjects participating in social practices ... understand firsthand what is going on". The critical theory approach "locates research meanings and operations in (the) contexts of social theory (and) society," states Cherryholmes (1988:115). The interpretive analytic approach shows that construct validity cannot be "disentangled from history, society, linguistic communities and power" (Cherryholmes, 1988:120). The deconstruction approach makes the methodological point that there are no foundational places to start or stop a search for meanings. Cherryholmes (1988:123) notes that the meanings of constructs are in flux, depending on, for example, one's methodology and point of view, whether phenomenological, critical or, in this case, interpretive.

The essential point, as Cherryholmes (1988:124) states, is that "construct validity is discursive". A "construct and its measurement are validated when discourse is persuasive",

when it is pragmatically convincing. And "what counts as persuasive varies from time to time and place to place," says Cherryholmes (1988:126).

Part of what gains good faith and counts as persuasive is a research ethic of accountability. In the case of this research, the raw data - the distance texts themselves - are public documents and thus available for scrutiny to whomsoever desires, necessitating a meticulous attention to accuracy. And in the representation of the study, an accountable researcher will expose her developing interpretations "to the scrutiny of contesting viewpoints" and "record the substance of any disagreements," says Millar (1983:122).

Ethics: social justice

If, as Millar (1983:123) asserts, the "central task of an educational case study is to problematise the taken-for-granted practices and rationales that sustain educational institutions," then the question of whether distance education fulfils its promise to the thousands of learners who subject themselves to it, takes on ethical importance from several perspectives. Distance education is targeting previously marginalised learners: black people, rural people, women, poor people. Learners being offered a second chance to learn, who then fail, may blame their own abilities rather than the unwieldy construction of course texts or the turgid academic discourse that often characterises them. Learners are required to pay for these courses, which must be worth the funds often handed over at great cost.

Also, given the widespread educational discourses and practices which privilege the experience of men, it is important to examine whether the promise of distance education holds up for women, who form the majority of learners for both the distance institutions under study. According to Harding (1987:12), researchers who do not actively and consciously work against the silencing and exploitation of women in everyday life "are unlikely to produce social science research about any subject that is undistorted by sexism and androcentrism".

Discussing feminist approaches to social inquiry, Harding (1987:2) notes that "method (techniques for gathering evidence) and methodology (theory and analysis of how research

should proceed) have been intertwined with each other and with epistemological issues" in both traditional and feminist discourses.

Feminist researchers have argued that "traditional theories have been applied in ways that make it difficult to understand women's participation in social life, or to understand men's activities as gendered" (Harding, 1987:3) rather than as representing "the human". They have therefore "produced feminist versions of traditional theories", but Harding (1987:3) questions whether even feminist applications of such theories can produce "complete and undistorted accounts of gender and of women's activities".

In Harding's (1987:3) account, feminists have argued that traditional epistemologies, whether intentionally or not, "systematically exclude the possibility that women could be ... agents of knowledge". They argue that "the voice of science is a masculine one; that history is written from only the point of view of men (of the dominant race and class); that the subject of a traditional sociological sentence is always assumed to be a man". Feminist researchers have advanced alternative theories of knowledge that validate women as knowers, for example, the research of Belenky et al (1986) which I employ to discuss "ways of knowing" extrapolated from women's experience.

Harding (1987) argues that traditional social science has asked questions about nature and social life which (white, western, middle-class) men want answered. A distinctive feature of feminist research is that it produces its problematics from the viewpoints of women's lives (not "the woman's life"), and these are women from different cultures, races and classes. It also uses women's "experiences as a significant indicator of the 'reality' against which hypotheses are tested," asserts Harding (1987:7). A second feature of this kind of inquiry is its goal of providing explanations of social phenomena that women themselves want and need. Questions about women that men have wanted answered have "often arisen from desires to pacify, control, exploit, or manipulate women" (Harding, 1987:8).

While each approach to a text contributes information and the insights of a particular perspective, each is partial, and should not be mistaken for - nor masquerade as - a complete or neutral account. Cherryholmes (1988) argues that, at base, construct validation is bound up

with such questions as: what justifies our theoretical constructs? What kinds of communities are we creating and how are we doing it?

Possible biases in the research process

At the beginning of the research process, I did not feel particularly attached to the outcome of the analysis, being aware that both texts held potential entry points and barriers for the target learners. While working with the two texts, however, I was struck by the different feelings they aroused.

When I worked with the CS/Unisa text, I often became tired, or my mind wandered. This happened at different times of the day and at different places in the text. I noticed that I began to feel less emotionally open to it and that my capacity to engage with it was reduced. My solution was a short piece of free writing which gave vent to my feelings and enabled the process of inquiry to flow again. Another source of possible bias was the difficulty I had in obtaining information about the CS/Unisa text from Unisa's ABET unit in Pretoria. I was told that the department was extremely busy as it was their "pilot year" and it was unlikely I would gain access to the author, or any further information. A call to the local Cape Town Unisa office redirected me back to the Pretoria office.

When I worked with the ISS/Aseca text, on the other hand, I often felt welcomed and excited. The text maintained a warm, emotional connection with me and I remained open to it. The Aseca staff, situated in Cape Town, were more accessible both logistically and geographically, and they were willing to participate in two interviews and to verbally answer my written questions.

Deeper into the research process, however, I started questioning in what ways my own "voices" resonated with those of the ISS/Aseca text, and failed to resonate with the CS/Unisa text. I wondered how much my response was due to my preferred learning styles and social identities. I metaphorically took a step back, reasserting my commitment to exploring the text strategies in their many facets.

I opted to proceed without further background information to the CS/Unisa text as there was more than enough material for analysis in the texts as they stood. I decided that the construction and presentation of each could speak for itself.

The procedure

The procedure used to apply the concepts outlined in Chapter Two is Fairclough's (1992) three-phase framework for a critical language study approach to texts. Fairclough (1992:7) describes critical language study (CLS) as an orientation which highlights how language conventions and practices are "invested with power relations and ideological processes which people are often unaware of".

CLS aims to show how society and "language use", or what Fairclough terms discourse, shape each other. It also aims to contribute to emancipatory discourses and practices.

In Fairclough's (1992: 10-12) account, every discursal or textual instance has three dimensions. It is "a spoken or written language text"; it is "an interaction between people" which involves "processes of producing and interpreting the text"; and it is part of an element of "social action". "How texts are produced and interpreted, depends upon the social action in which they are embedded." The nature of the text - its formal and stylistic properties - constitutes traces of its production and cues for its interpretation.

Critical analysis of a text thus also has three dimensions or phases: first, a description of a text; second, an interpretation of the interaction process embodied in the text; third, explanation of how the interaction process relates to the social action.

Accordingly, my critical analysis of the two distance texts will begin with a description phase, This will outline and compare the contexts of production as well as the three aspects of the rhetorical form of each text: ideational, textual and interpersonal (Halliday, 1978; and Halliday and Hasan, 1989).

The interpretation phase of my analysis adapts Fairclough's (1992) notion of conventions in order to analyse the interaction between the producers and readers of the text. I focus in particular on metadiscourse, at the interpersonal level of the text, which carries the pedagogic intent, and its relation to the content. I will interpret the way the text, as teacher, interacts with the reader, as learner, and will discuss the range of learning modes and social identities which are engaged in each text.

In the explanation phase, the aim is to place the interaction between the producers and readers of the text within the matrix of discursive social action. This phase will offer insights into the way the interaction process of each text is produced by and reproduces different social discourses, and these discourses will be examined in relation to transition processes in South Africa.

Chapter Four

Opening up the two texts

He is a dull observer whose experience has not taught him the reality and force of magic, as well as of chemistry. The coldest prescian cannot go abroad without encountering inexplicable influences. One man fastens an eye on him, and the graves of the memory render up their dead; the secrets that make him wretched either to keep or to betray, must be yielded; - another, and he cannot speak, and the bones of his body seem to lose their cartilages; the entrance of a friend adds grace, boldness, and eloquence to him; and there are persons, he cannot choose but remember, who gave a transcendent expansion to his thought, and kindled another life in his bosom (R W Emerson, undated: 284-5).

In this chapter I will explore some of the "inexplicable influences" in texts which lend grace, boldness and eloquence to some learners, which give transcendent expansion to the thoughts of others, or which render them unable to speak.

In Chapter Two I demonstrated the possibility of analysing distance education texts from the two different perspectives of the producer and the reader.

From the producer's perspective of the production of a text, there are two analytic concepts which may be used to explore these "inexplicable influences". On the one hand, there is the institutional and social context within which a text is produced and operates. This context, which may be referred to as a text's "context of production", will be examined for each text.

On the other hand, there is the text's internal set of rules for meaning making, drawn from Halliday's (1978, Halliday and Hasan, 1989) three prime functions of language: the textual, ideational and interpersonal functions. The internal rules may be termed a text's "rules of production" and I will explore how they operate in each text. I will examine the textual

function which expresses the inherent capacity of language to structure meaning; the ideational function, which expresses the knowledge concepts in the text; and the interpersonal function, which expresses the relations between the authors and the projected readers of the text.

From the reader's perspective of learning from the text, I employ a further two analytic concepts. The first concept is that of ways of learning and knowing which the text expects the reader to employ. I will refer to these ways of knowing and learning as the "learning typologies" or the "learning identities" which are projected by the text. The second concept used is that of the "learners' social identities". By this I mean the text's assumptions about who it is addressing in terms of learners' gender, cultural, race, ethnic, class, linguistic, geographical and rural/urban membership.

In Chapter Three I outlined a procedure for applying these ideas to the two selected texts. This three-phase framework is drawn from Fairclough's (1992) critical language study (CLS) approach. Fairclough's approach begins with a description of the text, moves into an interpretation of the interaction between the producers and consumers of the text and ends with an explanation of how the relationship between producers and readers is reproduced by and reproduces the larger social action in which it is embedded.

In the following two chapters I will use Fairclough's framework to apply the four analytic concepts outlined above to two selected distance education texts which deal with social studies. In the first phase of the analysis, I will describe the two texts, giving examples. In describing the texts I will first outline the overall characteristics of each text; second, I will focus on the institutional and social contexts within which each text is produced; and third, focus on the features of each text in terms of its internal rules for making meaning.

In the second phase, I will interpret how the producers and readers of each text interact. I will give a reading of how the interpersonal, ideational and textual functions produce particular teacher and learner identities which interact.

In the third phase of the analysis, I will offer a broader social explanation of why the two texts

have been constructed and presented as they have. I will offer insights into the way the interaction process of each text is produced by and reproduces different social discourses. These discourses will be examined in relation to transition processes in South Africa.

Phase One. Describing the texts, their contexts and internal rules

The description involves several aspects: firstly, the text's overall appearance, in order to, metaphorically, "place the text in the hands of the reader". Secondly, it covers the text's social and institutional context, in other words, its context of production. Thirdly, it focuses on the text's internal rules of production at the levels of the ideational, textual and interpersonal functions of making meaning.

Overall appearance of the CS/Unisa text

The stated intention of the CS/Unisa text is to teach adult basic education and training (ABET) practitioners about the various social contexts in which they might work (p ix). It is the first of four modules in the course and is titled Practitioner training course for Adult Basic Education and Training. Module 1: Contextual Studies. In the "Introduction to the Module" (p ix) it is referred to as a "study guide" and the student is told that it forms part of a study package together with an audio cassette and The Good Study Guide, which is a study skills text produced by the Open University in Britain.

The text presents a series of chapters called "units" depicting a variety of rural and urban social contexts in which the ABET practitioner may work. It gives accounts of these contexts, who lives there and how they live. "Contextual studies are intended to enable you to understand how various kinds of communities, and the different constituencies in the communities (like the youth, women or workers), can influence what, how and where you teach," the authors state in the Introduction to the Module (p.ix). The text also presents the role of ABET in developing communities and what "you" as an ABET worker can do, briefly touching, as well, on how and why "you" do it.

In these contexts, the purpose of the work of ABET practitioners is primarily community

development. The purpose of the text is to teach the learner about the social contexts in which this community development is likely to be undertaken.

On flicking quickly through the pages, it is clear that the "look" of the book has departed from the dry, institutional appearance of the Unisa text of the past with its small typewriter print, uniform page formats, impersonal tone and authoritarian stance. As an educational text it has something of a contemporary handbook look about it, with a more jazzy, user-friendly approach that refers to its African location through various design elements.

The cover is bright red, with black and white headings, and has a stylised graphic of people's faces with white lines on a black background. It is A4 size and is strongly bound with a "square" spine. Inside, there are black-and-white photographs, graphics, and diagrams. There are also reproductions of embroidered African motifs of people and community scenes, which have white outlines on dense grey-black backgrounds. While black ink is used for the body of the text, red ink is used for section headings, case studies, key teaching points in the margins, box lines, and key words in the glossaries.

The type size of the main body of the text is an average 12 point, with smaller type used for case studies, study skills and activities. The line spacing is narrower than that of the ISS/Aseca text, giving it a denser appearance.

The text is printed on white paper, similar to standard 80 gram photocopying paper. It was designed, typeset, printed and published by Unisa.

Overall appearance of the ISS/Aseca text

The stated intention of the ISS/Aseca text, which is titled Integrated Social Studies: Where We Live, is to teach adult learners a social studies course at secondary level 4. The text is the first of six units which are paired to form three modules for this course. It aims "to teach and revise the main learning, reading and writing skills which will help you to work through this course and to become an effective distance learner" (p i). Another important skill the course offers is to recognise that what writers say is not the only truth but "simply their point of view" (p i).

The main focus is thus on teaching processes: thinking skills and language skills relevant to social studies. This is in contrast to the main focus of the CS/Unisa text which is to teach content.

This ISS/Aseca text presents a series of integrated lessons, which draw on history, environmental studies, development studies, politics, sociology, language and thinking skills. Early in the text, the learners are told that the lessons also rely on their own life experiences and their motivation to ask questions about society (p ii). Integrated studies "makes education more relevant to life", the authors state in the "Introduction to the Unit" (p ii).

The purpose of this educational work is the development of the individual's capacity to gain and work with knowledge about her own and other people's contexts. The purpose of the text is to teach the learner methods for doing this which are pertinent to the field of social studies.

The ISS/Aseca text has a grape-brown and white cover with a picture of a hand-drawn map, which includes a few people, rural and urban dwellings, industries, roads and cars. Inside, placed throughout the A4-size text, are black fine-line drawings of people on white backgrounds, as well as hand-drawn diagrams and photographs. Like the CS/Unisa text, it is also bound with a strong "square" back.

The text is printed on paper which has not been bleached white, having the somewhat "biscuit" colour of newsprint and is slightly thinner than the CS/Unisa text paper.

The type size of the main body is an average 12 point. The type face and size used for the activity and comment sections is exactly the same as the main body of text. Unlike the CS/Unisa text, the type size remains the same size for the case studies, although a different type face is used.

The institutional and social contexts

Educational texts are embedded in wider institutional and social contexts with their own educational frameworks, discourses and tacit rules. While both texts operate in the same national social context, their institutional contexts differ in many respects.

Both texts offer distance education to new, diverse, adult learners in the wider social context of a post-apartheid South Africa. Both were produced during the construction of a national culture for a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic society. Thus both texts attempt to reconcile notions of national unity with circumstances of social and cultural diversity. In both cases, the educational text is employed as an instrument for the promotion of a new national ethos and identity. Both texts embody interpretations of the values and culture of the new democratic nation-state being formed and the "new South African" who inhabits it (Cross, 1994).

Both texts address learners who wish to acquire an authorised, certified knowledge of social or contextual studies. In doing so, both attempt to construct similar sorts of imaginary learners to whom they project their courses. Both consciously attempt to cater for learners from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds.

However, the texts emerge from different kinds of educational institutions, with divergent political histories.

Unisa

Unisa is a distance education university with a solidly established infrastructure and a large staff body, which numbered 3 312 permanent, full-time and part-time members in 1994 (Saide, 1995:5). It is currently the largest university in South Africa with 122 586 registered students in 1993 (about 38% of all South African university enrolments) (Saide, 1995:4).

However, although enrolment figures are high, completion rates are "extremely low", particularly in the first year of enrolment (Saide, 1995: 63-4). Throughput figures for undergraduate degrees indicate that, of students enrolled in 1984 and 1985, percentages of

between 5% and 20% of different racial groups of students had typically graduated by 1992 (Saide, 1995: 6-8). The throughput figures for the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree, a postgraduate degree, provided an exception to this, with between 20% and almost 60% of students graduating.

Unisa has a long, prominent history of distance education provision at a tertiary level. It was established as a federation of colleges in 1916 and became a full-fledged correspondence university in 1964 (Saide, 1995:3). Its mission today is to offer "university education by means of distance teaching to all meeting the entrance requirements. On the basis of the principles of equal opportunity and academic excellence it engages in teaching, research and community service, thus providing southern African society with suitably qualified people, knowledge and expertise to meet the needs and aspirations of all communities" (Unisa, Samevatting van Uitkomstes van Strategiese Beplanningsberaad, 1994:4, quoted in Saide, 1995:4).

However, critics argue that Unisa has lacked broad political legitimacy due to its historical links with successive white minority governments (Gultig, 1992). Unisa's official educational theory, Fundamental Pedagogics, is regarded by liberals as an attempt to create a philosophical justification for the legally entrenched, racist "Christian national education" system promoted for decades by apartheid governments (Gultig, 1992). This educational framework promotes information transfer as central to the teaching/learning process and in their distance education for teachers, does not focus on teacher practice. Unisa does not "assess classroom practice or offer any form of support for study or change in teaching methodology" said Gultig (1992:9), but "contracts" out their teaching practice and assessment to schools.

Fundamental Pedagogics, was criticised as a "narrow, rigid and authoritarian pseudo-scientific philosophy", by Gultig (1992:2). He noted that it is "the single most powerful and pervasive educational theory in South Africa". It underpins the education supplied by "virtually all black and Afrikaans teacher training colleges, the two distance universities (Unisa and Vista), and all black universities", although some have attempted to shake off this legacy. Fundamental Pedagogics defines the nature of schooling in South Africa and "many see it as the single most

important cause of the current education crisis" (Gultig, 1992:2).

Unisa study materials have been given poor reviews. In 1993, a Unisa-commissioned evaluation of its first-year courses concluded that materials fail to meet good international standards for instructional quality and, according to Saide (1995:62), recent changes still fall far short. "Leaving aside a few recent productions, the typical result is uninviting, dull and impersonal" and "students are commonly directed step by step to the one correct answer". "Little if any scope is provided for students to interact with the ideas they are meeting or with the mind of the lecturer who has prepared the study guide. Students are considered to be subservient and the text ensures that they will be" (Saide, 1995:61-62).

The foregoing describes the milieu arising from the historical context within which the Unisa producers of the CS/Unisa text operate. However, individual lecturers and departments in this institution have not subscribed to Fundamental Pedagogics in a monolithic fashion. Also, in the current context, the university itself has stated that it is committed to change. In the production of the CS/Unisa text itself there has been considerable effort to engage other educational perspectives. This included a national team of external consultants and a co-author from the internationally respected Open University in Britain whose book on study methods is a required companion reader for the student of this course. There have also been attempts to broaden the development process of the text to gain political credibility.

The CS/Unisa text's acknowledgement of its development and production team shows two authors, two co-contributors and an editor, two internal Unisa advisors and two readers, an in-house cover designer and typesetter, and several artist-embroiderers. There are also seven external consultants from several institutions, an 11-member national ABET consortium secretariat and two pilot study co-ordinators.

Aseca

Aseca is a small, recently founded off-shoot of the longer-established NGO, the South African Committee for Higher Education (Sached). Aseca operates with a core group of some 20 full-time staff. It was established in 1991, building on the Sached Trust's work in the Turret Correspondence Programme and subsequent experience in adult and distance education.

Sached has a long tradition of vigorous anti-apartheid struggle, employing an oppositional curriculum based on a mixture of African socialist and Marxist approaches. For Sached, the struggle against apartheid was seen as more than gaining citizenship for all. It was seen as important to challenge economic exploitation and inequality based on social categories such as race, class and gender. In the 1970s and 1980s Sached's educational work supported mass-based organisations and occurred mainly in response to crises and specific needs, such as campaigns and once-off workshops tailored to particular groups such as trade unions. In the late 1980s, with national changes afoot and diminishing funding available for NGOs, oppositional groups moved away from resistance towards reconstruction. Sached began to establish self-sustaining programmes that would meet the needs of mass-based organisations, but could generate income. (Shefer, 1997, personal communication)

The educational philosophy of Sached in the early 1990s incorporated popular education tenets. It was based on the belief that education was a potential vehicle for the transformation of society, and that it was important to make critical education available by providing the skills and raising the consciousness of the learner about power relationships in society (Shefer, 1997, personal communication).

Aseca has a stated commitment to distance education provision for adult learners who have not completed secondary education and wish to do so. The target audience is generally poor, with extensive family, work and social commitments, and includes a large number of younger adults with no dependants (Framework for the Development of a Curriculum for Adult Secondary Education through Distance Education, undated: 1). The audience is taken for granted as mainly black. In 1995 there were 800 learners registered but staff estimated that Aseca has a potential audience of 5 million people (Alexander, 1995, personal communication).

The producers of Aseca texts have an explicit commitment to providing a new curriculum and learning experience relevant to the daily lives of the broad majority of South Africans. However, producers of texts who themselves have been schooled in the regimented apartheid years may not necessarily always attain these aims. Also white middle-class people, who still tend to constitute the majority of text developers in this country, may construct texts in ways

that do not engage the needs, interests and ways of learning required by their target audience of mainly black women, who are not middle-class.

A central educational philosophy underpinning the curriculum is that of an integrated approach. According to Aseca, integrated courses provide a context for learners to apply the skills of defining, examining and synthesising abstract issues in a practical way, both as a learning event and in real life (Curriculum Outcomes brochure). Courses attempt to integrate content and skills, interconnected disciplines, individual lives and social contexts, practical experience and different forms of knowledge. In integrating education and training, Aseca argues that a basis is set for vocational training, further learning and lifelong learning (Aseca Progress Report, January-June 1994).

The integrated approach is similar to the constructivist approach which appears in debates about the significance of everyday knowledge for school curricula and was discussed in Chapter Two. This approach rests on such notions as "reflection, inquiry and creative action," (Bond, 1996:13).

Critics of the integrated approach claim that it is aimed at the "less able" who are seen as unable to engage with knowledge in its "pure form". They say that failure to expose learners to the discourses of the disciplines can further disadvantage already disadvantaged learners. Critics argue that pretending that no boundary exists between everyday and specialised knowledges endangers those who cross it unwittingly.

The Aseca team deliberately sought political credibility by discussing the programme on a national scale with political groupings, academic institutions, the trade union sector and the adult literacy sector. An audience survey involving a learner sample of more than 2 000 people was commissioned. A further survey was undertaken, in conjunction with the Independent Examinations Board, of the "stakeholder body" including employers, tertiary institutions and training boards (Curriculum Outcomes brochure).

There has been little evaluation of the Aseca print materials so far. The ISS/Aseca text's development and production team consisted of two writers, an editor, two internal academic

co-ordinators, two external reviewers, an artwork specialist and a commercial design company.

Key issues

Aseca is consciously attempting an innovative programme of integrated education for adults in South Africa which, if critics are correct, could potentially effect an unwitting reversal of its liberatory aims. The Unisa producers of the CS/Unisa text, whose work has emerged from a milieu of Fundamental Pedagogics, also include elements of a constructivist approach. They, too, recontextualise real life situations into the curriculum for disadvantaged students. The work of the Unisa authors potentially straddles both an old-style and an innovative approach to education.

At the same time, both the Aseca and the Unisa authors are also influenced by a competence-led approach to learning, which has gained currency in South Africa with the establishing of a national qualifications framework. A competence-based approach is concerned with training and the application of skills and knowledge to practice, thus focusing on the outcomes of competent practice. Critics of this approach argue that it "involves the imposition of positivism and scientific management in which professional roles are reduced to tangible, measurable phenomena" (Elliot, 1991, in Bond, 1996:9).

There are thus potential opportunities and dangers for the learner in both the Unisa and Aseca course approaches and these require "teasing out" ..

Now that I have described each text's context of production, I will turn to their internal rules of production. The ways in which texts construct and present meaning, will be explored from the three distinct points of view of Halliday's (1978, Halliday and Hasan, 1989) macro-functions of language.

The CS/Unisa text: the internal rules by which texts make meaning

I will begin with an overview of the structure and themes of the CS text, which occur at the level of the textual function. This will provide a wider context for describing the text's concepts and topics which can be seen at the ideational level. Finally I will describe the interaction between the author and the reader which occurs at the interpersonal level. I will then follow the same procedure for describing the ISS/Aseca text.

From time to time there will appear to be overlaps in the description, as the three functions of text operate simultaneously in real life. The greatest overlap is between the themes of the textual function and the concepts of the ideational function.

The textual level

At the textual level, I will concentrate on the structure, themes and design of the text.

Global textual structure

The CS/Unisa text chapters give accounts of various rural and urban social contexts in which the ABET practitioner may work and refer to the role of ABET as important. The accounts are presented by means of descriptions and explanations by the authors, case studies, and a few excerpts from other texts. In the prospective teaching contexts, the purpose for ABET work is understood primarily as community development.

There are eight chapters, termed "units", each about 20 pages long. Each chapter, except the last, focuses on a specific geographical and social context, or a sector such as "health", or a constituency of a community such as "women". This is evident in the chapter headings, which are given below:

Unit 1: ABET within a community

Unit 2: Communities in the new South Africa

Unit 3: ABET in the cities, townships and rural areas

Unit 4: ABET and health

Unit 5: ABET for women

Unit 6: A picture of South African youth

Unit 7: ABET and working life

Unit 8: ABET at the heart of a new South Africa.

The theme of community development and the role of ABET in development is central to the text's construction, which is seen in the summaries of chapters which follow.

"Unit 1: ABET within a community" presents a case study of an ABET class in a rural community. It deals with a lack of resources, possible resistances to ABET projects, the importance of showing respect to a community and the features of close-knit communities. The chapter emphasises that education can both disrupt community values and power structures, and contribute to community development.

"Unit 2: Communities in the new South Africa" examines the features of communities in a city, the role of ABET in helping to develop South African communities, as well as potential resources and obstacles for ABET work. It asserts that ABET can offer skills to help people rebuild damaged communities.

"Unit 3: ABET in the cities, townships and rural areas" presents a case study of a community which has features of both urban and rural contexts, various patterns of migration, and ways in which ABET can empower people and sustain development.

"Unit 4: ABET and health" deals with many communities' limited access to health services, as well as malnutrition, infant mortality and women as main sources of primary health care. A direct link is made between levels of education and health. The role of ABET is promoted as increasing community levels of both.

"Unit 5: ABET for women" describes the situation of women with migrant husbands, who assume the role of head of the household. It outlines women's insecurities about customary marriage, some problems of working in the informal sector without many business skills, and the more general issue of women's subordination to men. ABET is understood as providing a means of empowering women, who are seen as an important part of a community.

"Unit 6: A picture of South African youth" examines common stereotypes about South African youth as a "lost" generation, asserting that there are different degrees of marginalisation. However, it acknowledges that many young people have missed out on education and cannot find jobs. Youth are seen as important constituencies of their communities and the wider society. Re-engaging youth in education programmes tailored to the needs of specific groups is seen as a challenge for ABET practitioners.

"Unit 7: ABET and working life" focuses on work situations, literacy and industry-based training. It outlines the roles of some of the stakeholders in industrial training and discusses how ABET can help with issues such as unemployment, sexual harassment and dealing with life in urban communities.

"Unit 8: ABET at the heart of a new South Africa" reviews the national challenge of reconstruction and development, asserting that ABET has "a very important role to play" (p 164) and that South Africa requires a policy to ensure ABET delivery to the approximately 12 million people who have had little or no education.

The representation of this series of social scenarios is framed within an argument premised on a political alignment with the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of the early 1990s. The text begins in Unit 1 with a case study about an ABET class in a rural village, explicitly pointing to the lack of resources available to many communities in South Africa. For example:

Xhugxwala has very few resources and its people are poor. There is no electricity and no access to clean drinking water. (More than 12 million people in South Africa do not have access to clean drinking water.) (p 2).

In the last chapter an "interview" is constructed with a member of the government's ABET Policy Task Team endorsing wide delivery of ABET and mobilising support for the planning and implementing of a national system of ABET. The policy team member says:

In the monumental task of planning, advocating and producing the system of ABET,

the valuable work done to date must be extended firmly into the domain of adult education and training (p 175).

The chapters are organised in this way around the idea that ABET is vital for the reconstruction and development of a "new", democratic South Africa. The sequencing of the text takes the form of a topic-by-topic presentation of different communities, sectors and constituencies, each of which focuses on "the need for ABET" and the problems of delivery. A dominant feature of the text is that it explains conditions in these contexts and then presents ABET as a development initiative. A recurring characteristic is that the text gives these accounts, asks the learner to answer questions about them, and then gives the authors' answers. As the authors explicitly state in the last chapter:

So far in this module, we have looked at the need for ABET among various target groups or constituencies and in various areas. What information do you have so far? We shall answer this question by summing up the information contained in each of the previous units (p 160).

Structure of chapters

Each chapter has an overt structure where the design gives cues for how to read the text. The text reflects the way the content and specific elements of the teaching process may be separated out in distance education texts. It is structured with a main body of content interspersed with boxes of text. The main body is divided into four levels: chapters, sections, topics and sub-topics.

The boxes of text consist of three kinds: "Key Questions", "Study skills" and "Activity". Since they are related to the process of teaching the content I will term the boxes "pedagogic elements". The pedagogic elements comprise roughly two fifths of the text, focusing primarily on helping the reader to understand and remember the content given in the text. For example, a Study Skills box titled "Note-taking" states:

You are part of the way through a fairly long section of this unit. Will you be able to remember what it has been about? Should you be taking notes as you study? (p 75).

Glossaries and references are placed at the end of each chapter.

Implicit pedagogic structure

Each chapter also has a more implicit pedagogic structure, which embodies the underlying approach to the teaching/learning process. The basic pedagogic sequence of a chapter is as follows. The text briefly introduces a topic and gives "Key Questions" to guide the unfolding of the information for that chapter. Each chapter then has one or more cycles of the following learning events. The text describes or explains a situation, usually in the form of a case study. The reader is asked to do an activity, usually in the form of answering questions about the situation. The authors then give their answers to the questions. Advice on study skills is given intermittently and is, in the main, linked to remembering the text-based information and the process of studying it. Instances of "Study Skills" box titles include: "What to remember" (p 63), "Setting targets" (p 70), "Highlighting or underlining" (p 144).

This basic sequence of "telling-asking-telling" emphasises the giving and remembering of text-based information thus embodying what I term a "didactic structure". Most of the text follows this didactic structure. Examples include the bulk of Chapter One, where the reader is given a case study, then an activity which asks comprehension-type questions about the case study, followed by the authors' detailed content-based answers to each question. Similarly organised cycles of "description or explanation - questions - answers" are evident in other chapters, for example, Units Two (p 37-40), Three (p 50-52) and Four (p 71-75).

Activities are sometimes based on answering questions about photographs rather than case studies, for example, at the beginning of Unit Five. Again, as is the case with the questions on case studies, the authors' detailed answers tend to comprise large parts of the main body of content which is being taught.

However, at certain points in the text, another kind of structure is evident which provokes a recall of the reader's own previous experience, or stimulates an imaginative one, which the reader can combine with text-based information. This embodies a more "experiential" structure and approach to learning.

The more clearly experiential parts begin with the activities at an earlier point and give them more often. Here, activities take a form that is intended to elicit responses and gain information from the student's own experience. These sections occur, most notably, in the first part of Unit Two and in Unit Six. The text briefly responds to the reader, who is assumed to have done the activity, by commenting on the process of doing it or on the possibility of having given a variety of answers (Unit 2, p 26-27 or Unit 6, p 114). An instance is "Whatever your score, we hope you now feel better informed" (p 128).

In the case of the more experiential parts, the text's answers to the questions are meant to provide "surprising" angles or pull together the many possible answers the student might have given into a higher-level concept. I will give examples of this and discuss it more fully when dealing with the interpersonal level of the text which focuses on the interactions between the teacher and learner.

A few chapter sequences combine elements of both the didactic and experiential approaches. This can best be illustrated with an example. "Unit 4: ABET and Health" tends towards an experiential approach, on the one hand, as it begins with two activities before setting the key questions for the chapter, and includes several activities throughout. On the other hand, it also has didactic elements, since several of the activities involve comprehension-type questions on the case studies followed by detailed answers, which, despite disclaimers to the contrary, appear to be coded as the "right answers".

Although the chapters operate with gradations of didactic and experiential approaches, the bulk of the text has a more didactic form.

Scaffolding

Previous information given in the text and the learner's own prior knowledge are not identified and built upon in an apparently consistent and upwardly graded manner in the main structure of the text. However, in tracking the study skills boxes it is possible to see a movement from affirming the reader's knowledge, to giving advice on taking notes and reading charts, to discussing the need to develop an argument for an essay. In the first chapter a box titled "Studying actively" (p 5) affirms the reader's experience and knowledge, while another asserts

the need for "Questioning the text" (p 11). From there towards the end of the text, the bulk of the study skills boxes deal with taking notes. The reader is advised to keep notes and to file them. A few of the boxes deal with other issues, such as organising one's studies, and reading charts and tables. Less often the boxes advise the reader to think critically, for instance, "Disagreeing with the author" (p 96), and give advice on participating in study groups. In the last chapter a box deals briefly with "The criteria of good essay writing" (p 165) and the reader is referred to The Good Study Guide for further information.

Design

Aspects of design and layout which are linked to structure, such as boxed-off elements, have been discussed. Further aspects of design require a brief description as they contribute to the way meaning is made and exchanged. For example, the case studies are not only boxed off, but also the size of the type used for them is smaller. Type size is an aspect of design usually signalling the relative importance of pieces of text. Other aspects of design, such as sequencing, typeface and white space all combine to express how the text "hangs together", and also relate to how the text "feels", for example, dense or spacious.

Here I will give a brief, technical description of basic design elements. The length of the page frame appears to be 241mm, which is shorter than that of the ISS/Aseca text. However, the text is often not stretched down to fit the frame, which means that blank spaces are left at the bottoms of the pages. The page format allows for about 47 lines of text per page, which is the same as that of the ISS/Aseca text. The spacing between lines measures 3mm, which is narrower than that of the ISS/Aseca text.

The page format offers wide margins. These are sometimes left blank; sometimes they display key teaching points in red ink; and at other times they are used for study skills boxes and to increase space for graphics which stretch horizontally across the page.

The main body type size is an average 12 point with a fairly narrow spacing between lines. The type size of the pedagogic elements is smaller, and the typefaces are different. Graphics consist of African motifs on dense grey-black backgrounds. Slightly more photographs are used than in the ISS/Aseca text, but the quality of the reproduction is not as clear. (See

Appendix A for sample copies.)

Chapters are more than double the length of the ISS/Aseca chapters. Sections, paragraphs, sentences and words also tend to be longer than the ISS/Aseca text. Paragraphs vary from a few lines to about 22 lines in length, and several paragraphs tend to follow one another with two-line spaces between them.

The combined effect of the various design elements is an overall appearance of greater density than is the case with the ISS/Aseca text. Long blocks of text, dark backgrounds for the graphics, blank spaces left at the bottom of pages rather than spread throughout the page frame, narrow line spacing and sections with smaller type sizes all contribute to this dense effect.

Internal cohesion

The fact that two distinct pedagogic structures exist, with various degrees of a blend appearing in different parts of the text, has not been explicitly referred to or discussed in the text. It appears that the two different structures may be the result of the different approaches of the two authors. This point will be discussed more fully in terms of the two voices operating at the interpersonal level.

The ideational level

At the level of the ideational function of the text, that is, the selection of concepts, I will focus on representations of communities and community development, on the one hand, and, on the other, I will describe the teacher and the learner, including her social and learning identities.

Communities

Communities are an explicit, central focus of the CS/Unisa text. The communities represented are conceptualised as removed from the reader. They are understood as communities in which the reader's current or prospective students live, rather than those in which the reader grew up or now lives. Communities are conceptualised in terms of rural/urban divisions, and in terms of component constituencies, such as "women", "youth" and "workers".

Rural communities are characterised in two major ways. This is exemplified in Unit One, where they are seen as poor and lacking resources and services. At the same time, they are seen as "close-knit", bound together by traditions, closeness between people, mutual support and obligations, power structures and boundaries. Education is said to be a potential force for both challenging social power structures and developing a community.

Urban communities are seen as regulated by imperatives such as "market forces", or in other words, "earning and spending money", and the laws of the state (Unit Two). Communities in the city are characterised as loose-knit and part-time, revolving around work, neighbourhoods and organisations such as sports clubs or political groups. It is said that while city residents may suffer from loneliness and vulnerability, they may also have access to wider opportunities and more freedom than those from close-knit communities (p 34).

Rural/urban differences are dealt with in Unit Three in which rural living is presented largely as having a "lack of" the services provided in the cities. For example, the concept of "services" is used to determine whether an area is urban or rural. The text states that urban areas can be identified "by looking at the level of the services that are provided" (p 49). Examples of services are given as "electricity, tarred roads, health services, education services, businesses and industries" (p 48). In the activity which follows (p 49) the learner is instructed to look at photographs of, firstly, a city centre and, secondly, a rural village and is asked to decide whether they depict urban or rural areas. The learner is then asked: "What services does the one area have that are not available in the area shown in the other picture?" The authors give their answers which focus on the idea that "rural areas lack many services" and most rural people are involved in subsistence farming. In this way, rural living is construed as "subsistence living" and urban lifestyles are valorised over them.

Rural/urban differences are referred to intermittently throughout the text. For example, a community called Fernie Diepdale

came into existence during the 1960s as a resettlement camp for people who were removed as part of the apartheid policy from so-called 'black spots' (farming areas inhabited by Africans scattered among farms owned by whites) in the region. Soon

people who had previously worked as labourers on farms in the neighbourhoods started to settle in Fernie Diepdale (p 51).

In fact, it is important to note that this is erroneous as "black spots" were farming areas owned by Africans scattered among farms owned by whites. In any event, Fernie Diepdale is used to depict a settlement with features of both rural and urban living, which, although not termed one, appears much like a shack settlement.

The communities under study are black, as evidenced by the names of members, for example, Thakasile Mazibuko (p 37) and Mrs Mashamba (p 72), as well as by accompanying photographs. The communities are situated in rural, urban and mixed urban-rural contexts. The lives of women are given an overtly higher profile than men.

Gendered power imbalances are specifically referred to. However, this concept is discussed in a way that omits important links in the argument. There are various instances of this in "Unit 5: ABET for Women" in which the question of who benefits from gender inequalities is not raised. In a section on "the controversial issue of polygamy", the text states that rural women called for a ban on polygamy in 1994. The text then continues with a depiction of the resistance of men to this:

But many men do not want to change a practice which they believe is justifiable. As one man argues, 'Women should know that as Zulus we pay eleven cattle for a wife. That is why the husband's brother should inherit the wife' (p 95).

The topic then ends. The text does not make the link between the point that men "believe it is justifiable", and the point that it is a practice from which they clearly benefit.

Community development

The concept of community development underpins the rationale for the course and the text. ABET is understood as a vital vehicle for community development and is clearly linked throughout the text to the RDP, which is referred to, for example, on pages 40, 47, 57, 70, 85 and 90.

Community development is conceptualised in two different ways in the text. In Unit 1, ABET learners in a class identify and make plans to deal with community problems with the help of their teacher, on their own initiative and from the grassroots up. In Unit Three there is a great deal of emphasis on the lack of government services, such as tarred roads, electricity and running water, which are depicted as necessary for rural areas. However, links are not made in the text between these two different approaches to, and levels of, development.

Development is overtly discussed (Unit 3, p 61-62) from the point of view that a community needs to participate in any development project and that ABET is required in order for this to happen. However, active participation is not generally modelled in the text and readers are projected as adult educators who mainly disseminate information in their prospective communities. For example, near the end of "Unit 4: ABET and health", the text discusses AIDS then states: "Your task as an adult educator is to make this kind of information available to your learners" (p 82).

Teachers

The teachers that operate in the text, and the readers who are the prospective ABET teachers and trainers, are seldom depicted or overtly talked about. A rare instance of a teacher being represented is in the first case study of the text, where Mrs Radebe, a black, middle-aged woman, is referred to as kind and respectful. The teachers who operate in this text have two distinct voices and approaches. One takes a more didactic approach and the other a more dialogic approach to teaching.

The reader's social and political identity

The target reader of this text is envisaged primarily as an ABET practitioner who will teach and help to liberate adults in a variety of communities. For example,

you as an ABET practitioner, will be helping to lift the burden of oppression from your fellow citizens ... You ... will be working within a community and you will have to rely on the organisations and resources of that community to help you carry out your plans. So understanding how to work with a community is an essential aspect of your training (p 1).

However, while the text addresses "you as an ABET practitioner", it primarily focuses on and represents the adult learners whom the ABET workers will teach. Thus the main focus of the text is the representation of the readers' prospective students in their various contexts and the role of ABET in the social upliftment of the communities. Readers are not assumed to be able to identify themselves with their prospective students or know much about their communities.

The reader is seen primarily as an ABET worker requiring information about a variety of social contexts, each with its own particular set of resources and obstacles for potential ABET work. The reader is not understood primarily as operating in a social matrix of interpersonal relationships him or herself, but rather as an ABET worker aligned to the wider social project of the RDP. Thus the reader is not conceptualised as identifying with a community or any larger organisation of people, who would support her work, but is expected to identify with the new democratic government.

There are a few accounts of ABET workers operating in communities who presumably model how ABET workers should be, for example, Mrs Radebe, who is kind and respectful, and who has not lived in the community where she works for long. Mrs Radebe is one of the rare instances in which an ABET teacher is depicted as having social and political agency.

However, there are no explicit references to whether the envisaged reader is black, white, female, male, or from any particular geographical or linguistic community. The community membership of readers is left blank. If target readers are supposed to identify with the communities and teachers represented in the text, then they would be primarily black, and mainly women.

Learning identity of the reader

Since communities are envisaged as "out there", separate from the reader and studied from a distance, they are not understood as necessarily part of the reader's own life experience. The necessary implication is that the reader does not know much about the communities the text teaches her about. Thus the reader's learning identity is inevitably and consistently "one who knows less about the subject than the text".

The interpersonal level

While the ideational level is related to the concepts included in the course content, the interpersonal level is related to the way the content is taught. It is most directly to do with the way the author as teacher addresses and interacts with the reader as learner. It is therefore to do with the text's style of teaching. The term Crismore (1989) uses for this function in texts is "metadiscourse". At the ideational level, the teacher and learning identity of the reader are represented as concepts, while at the interpersonal level they emerge in the way the teacher interacts with and expects the learner to learn.

Since this study is concerned with the learning/teaching process in distance education texts, I will focus on the teachers' voices which have been constructed by the authors. From this, in the next, interpretive phase of the analysis, I will be able to suggest how these teacher's voices expect to engage with the learners, as well as the ways of learning and knowing that the teachers expect and make possible for them. I will do this by examining, for example, the way the teachers ask questions and then answer them, or respond to the learner's supposed answers.

In the CS/Unisa text, there are two distinct teachers' voices which speak to the reader, using the pronoun "we". They address the reader directly as "you" most often at the ends of chapters when they are discussing the role of ABET and adult educators. The two voices can be heard at opposing ends of a continuum, with the more didactic, impersonal, indirect and abstract voice at the one pole, and the more dialogic, personal, direct and concrete voice at the other hand. I will take examples of the voices from activities, as this is where the teacher is required to interact directly with the learner, giving her instructions to perform a task. The following extract from Unit One (p 10 - 11) is a typical activity guided by the main teaching voice.

Community values: Activity 2

Some teachers complain that people in the poorer communities often seem to have little enthusiasm for attending classes. Why do you think this might be? Write down a few of your thoughts.

Now see how your thoughts compare with ours.

When there is very little chance for people to improve their incomes (or their general situation) however skilled and businesslike they become, a shared feeling of hopelessness easily develops. People see no point in putting time, resources and effort into programmes of personal improvement. It is not just this person or that person who is poor and feels defeated. The whole community has a culture of low expectations. They are used to doing without many things (including doing without very much formal education). This is how the community has learnt to understand life; what is good and bad; what is to be expected. This is the world which seems natural to those who have always lived in it.

A community such as Xhugxwala may not welcome efforts from outsiders to 'improve' their circumstances. The community has a way of life, going back over generations, in which formal education and shop-bought possessions have played little part. So it would not be surprising if the community as a whole regarded education and manufactured goods as peripheral, or unimportant. In fact they might be defiantly proud of their lack of dependence on reading and writing. Communities which are defined by others as 'deprived' may not agree with this definition. They may see it as condescending - suggesting that there is something inferior about the way they and their ancestors have lived. Bringing literacy to a community which is proud of its non-literate traditions and culture is potentially an insult (p10-11).

This voice, which speaks in the bulk of the text, does so in what I term a didactic or pedantic way. It issues a higher proportion of statements than it does suggestions, questions or instructions. The statements are based on the case study of a "typical" community and how it functions, which the reader is required to take on good faith. When this voice does give instructions for activities, it follows the activity immediately with detailed content-based answers to the questions just posed to the student.

In activities this voice often poses questions which test comprehension of information that has been given in a case study. For example, in another activity in Unit One (p 5-6), this teacher

asks the reader to:

Read the questions below. Then read the description of Mrs Radebe's class again, looking for answers to the questions. As you work, jot down your answers under the headings you wrote down earlier.

1. Why did the learners stay away from Mrs Radebe's second lesson?

After the rest of the questions have been asked, this teacher then addresses the reader directly, with a disclaimer which asserts that the text's answers are not necessarily the correct ones:

There are no right and wrong answers to most of the questions in this module. Your own answers are as important to you as our answers. However, to give you something to compare your answers with, here are some of our thoughts.

This is immediately followed by the teacher's answers. Here is an example from part of the first answer, which continues for eight further lines.

1. The women said they did not attend the second class because they could not see any point, as there were no jobs to train for. In any case they had plenty of other work and worries to keep them busy ...

In a further activity in Unit One (p 15) the voice instructs the reader to:

Pause now to think about two communities you know - one which is close-knit and one which is not so close-knit. Write down their names. Then, as you read these subsections, jot down whether what we say here is true to your knowledge of the two communities.

This example shows that the didactic teacher's voice also draws on the learner's past experience at times, blending in an experiential approach. However, this section is surrounded by more didactic text, and the learner may be tempted to try to fit her own experience to the

answers given in the text rather than find ways to modify the text.

This teacher takes a rational, problem-solving approach, focusing more often on the learner's thinking and remembering functions, rather than, for example, the learner's capacity to imagine, intuit or feel.

Thus, to sum up, the more didactic voice speaks in longer words, sentences and paragraphs than the other voice and, in terms of turn-taking conventions, takes longer turns, making space available a great deal less often for the reader's responses. The guided dialogue between the teacher and the learner therefore becomes a monologue for much of the time this teacher's voice speaks. There are fewer questions posed and fewer instructions given to the student to get actively involved. When instructions for activities are given, they tend to pose questions about information given in the text. The teacher follows this with detailed, specific answers to each question.

The main teacher's voice operates in contrast to the secondary voice, which is constructed as conversational and friendly, drawing the reader into a learning mode of mutual inquiry.

The secondary voice operates far less than the didactic voice throughout the text, appearing most notably in the first two-thirds of "Unit Two: Communities in the new South Africa" and most of "Unit Six: A picture of South African youth".

The following extract gives an example of this voice from Unit Two, which begins with a short introduction and three concise key questions. These are followed by an introduction to "Communities and city life" and then an activity (p 26-28).

Activity 1.

Imagine you live in the Pretoria suburbs. You have come to the city centre, to do some shopping.

1. There are crowds of people around you. How many of them do you expect to know?

2. *You want to buy your mother a present, because she is coming out of hospital today. You are wondering what to buy. Would you ask some people in the street for advice?*
3. *You find that you have forgotten to bring your money with you. Do you ask someone in the crowd to lend you some?"*
4. *If one of the people in the crowd had a sick child at home, would you feel that you should offer support?*
5. *You think you might like a complete change of image - a new haircut and a different style of clothes. Would you ask some of the people in the street whether they think it is a good idea, before you go ahead?*
6. *Do you feel a sense of belonging among the crowd of people around you?*
7. *Do you share a common culture with them?*

Write down your answers to these questions before reading our answers below.

Here are our answers.

1. *In a city shopping street you might occasionally meet someone you know. But generally you would not expect to know any of the people around you. In a city centre you are one person among a crowd of strangers.*
2. *Nobody in the crowd knows anything about you and your mother. So they would have no idea of what might be the 'right' present for the kind of family you come from. If you did ask someone, they might make a quick suggestion. But they would avoid getting into a discussion about details of your family life. In the city, your family is your own private affair.*
3. *People in a city crowd owe each other nothing. Nobody will feel any obligation to support you in your difficulty. Forgetting your money is your own problem. No stranger is likely to lend you money. Anyone you ask will simply assume that you are trying to trick them.*

This voice gives a series of short scenarios accompanied by questions, which are designed to assist the reader in imagining him or herself in the situation and which ask for the reader's personal responses to each question. The teacher uses simple, concrete, everyday situations, to elicit the reader's own experiences and understandings of city life. In this way the teacher sets up a dialogic interaction to which the reader can bring his or her own ideas and experiences. In some cases the answers from people would probably be very similar, for example, the answer to question 1. In others, several answers are possible. The teacher's voice does not operate as a monotone, but varies its degrees of, for example, seriousness, irony and humour.

This teacher's voice sets a context, outlines an imaginary event, then asks the reader a series of questions designed to bring out several aspects of the event and issues relating to them. The earlier questions seek information from the student about his or her perceptions, while the later questions seek analysis, for example, about the sharing of a common culture in a city.

This teacher ends off the seven questions with an injunction to "Write down your answers to these questions before reading our answers below", following this with a pause of a line space and then "Here are our answers".

As seen in the excerpt above, the teacher's answers include a variety of degrees of probability: "You might", "occasionally", "generally".

The teacher's answers also provide information for those people who may be unfamiliar with city centres. But the information is more to do with the relationships between people than with the impersonal elements of a cityscape such as size of buildings, traffic or services, as in other sections where the didactic voice speaks more often.

The teacher's answer to question 7 (p 28) offers links and abstractions, focusing on the cultural relations between people rather than on impersonal aspects:

7. People in cities share a common culture to some extent. For example, there are city clothes, city life styles, and city ways of talking. However, it is a very varied culture. It

has different styles for business people, manual workers, streetwise youth and so on, as well as a mixture of ethnic influences ...

A little later in the unit (p 29) is an example of how this teacher follows dialogic turn-taking conventions, which both allow the learner space to respond and then also respond to the learner. The teacher asks the student:

From what you know of city life, why do you think people tend to behave in a predictable way on the street? What do you think binds them into a fairly orderly gathering of people?

The teacher then responds to the student as though she/he has given an answer:

There are many ways you could have answered these questions.

Since the teacher cannot give direct feedback to the content of the student's answer, he/she first comments on the process of the student thinking about the question, acknowledging that there are many ways to understand things. The teacher's voice continues:

We are going to pick out two answers which you might find a bit surprising. Think about them carefully and see whether you agree.

The reader is specifically asked to see whether she/he agrees and then the teacher's answers are given and carefully explained. The teacher's answers - market forces and the laws of the state - which are surprising at first glance, reveal themselves as powerful explanatory concepts which pull together at a higher level many of the answers the reader might have given.

In this way the teacher and learner can be seen as involved in a conversation which goes back and forth, with the author-teacher responding to what the reader-learner says, given the limitations of fixed print.

In summary, the dialogic teacher's voice, speaks concisely, in shorter words, sentences and

paragraphs than the didactic teacher does. This voice takes a different form, for example, in the way it asks questions and responds to the learner's assumed answers. In the examples given, it can be seen that the dialogic voice offers verbal pictures of situations and asks for responses based on the reader's own perceptions. It comments on the reader's process of giving a response or on the many possible responses the reader may have given.

As noted earlier, the didactic teacher tends to focus on case study scenarios "out there" which may or may not relate to the reader's own experience, asking and answering questions about them in a way that creates little space for the reader's participation. On the other hand, the dialogic teacher sets up a scenario in which the reader is required to participate. While the dialogic teacher also asks and answers questions, the reader's role as a giver of information and ideas is deliberately evoked and commented upon, and is acknowledged as an important part of the development of the course that occurs as the reader reads. Although the didactic teacher explicitly asks the reader to give her answers, the way these sections of the text are constructed block the reader's participation in the development of the course. In contrast, the dialogic teacher opens, "listens" to and responds to the learner, thus involving her in the construction of the course.

The ISS/Aseca text: the internal rules by which texts make meaning

This text will be dealt with in the same way the CS/Unisa text has been. I will describe the predominant and recurrent characteristics of the textual, ideational and interpersonal functions, giving examples.

The textual level

Here I will describe the way the text is structured and sequenced, its predominant themes and recurring aspects of its design.

Global textual structure

The ISS/Aseca text presents a series of chapters focusing on scenarios involving various people as they are oriented in time, space and society. These scenarios are presented in three

main ways. Firstly, there are case studies about a family and its individual members, plus a selection of other characters, which are discussed. Secondly, published extracts by people about their own situations are presented and contextualised. Thirdly, the reader is drawn into acting as a participating character in the text by being required to give her own accounts of how she is situated in time, space and society, in terms of both previous and possible situations. In giving or eliciting these accounts, the text explicitly attempts to teach the reader thinking skills and language skills. The purpose of the accounts of various people is for the readers to gain greater understanding about their own and others' contexts and communities.

The first and last chapters discuss the reader's relationship with the discipline of social studies and with learning. They provide a frame for the other chapters, each of which focuses on individuals and their orientations in terms of time, space and society or community.

There are 12 chapters, referred to as "lessons", each averaging nine pages and titled as follows:

- Lesson 1: Social Studies and you
- Lesson 2: Where you are in time
- Lesson 3: Our living, changing world
- Lesson 4: Where do I live?
- Lesson 5: How do I use a map?
- Lesson 6: More on maps
- Lesson 7: Rural living
- Lesson 8: Urban living
- Lesson 9: How apartheid affected where people live
- Lesson 10: Developing your community
- Lesson 11: Community needs, community voices
- Lesson 12: Thinking about learning.

The theme of the individual who is situated in space, time and society, and is gaining greater understanding of this through the development of thinking and language skills, forms the pivot on which the text is structured. The following summaries of lessons provide a closer

look at the way this theme has been constructed and sequenced.

"Lesson 1: Social Studies and you" introduces the Manyosi family and the concept of case studies. It teaches learners how to find out the meaning of difficult words. It shows learners how to read a mind map, using one of the Manyosi family to show how aspects of Social Studies, such as economics, politics and society affect their lives. It describes Social Studies, asserting its value as well as that of the skills and content of the course itself, such as the "thinking skills" of developing arguments, forming concepts and theories and collecting information.

"Lesson 2: Where you are in time" uses the personal history of a main character, Nofikile, to teach the reader to make a time-line of his or her own history and to discover more about that history from books. It tells the reader how to preview a text and then guides her in previewing a text on rural women fetching wood.

"Lesson 3: Our living, changing world" directs learners to the broader, ecological complexity of the world, by means of an account of how a loaf of bread came into being. It advises on how to identify the main idea in a paragraph and presents an account of a women's co-operative tin workshop in which the women draw on their culture, waste materials and daily village life as subject matter for their crafts. It details the process of "reading with understanding", and gives a short text on ecological interconnections for the reader to practise on.

"Lesson 4: Where do I live?" teaches the reader about the viewpoint of a map, an aerial view, what a map is, different kinds of maps and symbols on maps. Activities include identifying different kinds of maps, and exploring various aspects of maps drawn by the characters Nofikile and Zuma. It concludes with an activity requiring readers to draw maps of their neighbourhoods.

"Lesson 5: How do I use a map?" instructs the learner about giving and receiving directions using a map, and the concepts of scale and co-ordinates in map-reading. Activities include identifying directions to help the character Mandla get out of a maze, giving directions to

Zuma by looking at a map, working out the scale of a map and using co-ordinates to find specific places.

"Lesson 6: More on maps" gives information about latitude and longitude. One activity instructs the reader that she or he is a rural adviser visiting several places in Africa and must fill in the destinations in a partly completed table with the headings: co-ordinates, country and capital, next to a map of Africa. These answers are given at the back of the book. The chapter also covers ideological bias in maps arising from the use of different projections as well as the way certain information may be left out.

"Lesson 7: Rural living" includes an extract by a rural woman on her daily life and an illustration of the character Nosizwe's homestead followed by questions such as "Who owns the land?" and "How did they learn to farm?" It examines two excerpts from historical texts on rural settlements and details what critical reading is. It gives instructions to critically read a passage by Hendrik Verwoed, followed by authorial comment contextualising the process of doing the activity. The skill of taking notes is discussed and a text on the taxation of rural people is used to show how three different people have made notes from it.

"Lesson 8: Urban living" discusses why people move from rural to urban areas and guides the learner in making a diagrammatic summary from three excerpts, of the push and pull factors of migration. An illustration of a city is used to guide the learner to identify the different ways that people live in urban areas, such as high density flats, spacious suburbs and shack settlements. This is followed by an excerpt about life there by a shack dweller. The text tells readers they will have a chance to think about where they live and why, explains how to write a paragraph, and gives a series of instructions for the reader to write a paragraph about where she lives and why there.

"Lesson 9: How apartheid affected where people live" examines extracts about apartheid and where people live, which are interspersed with historical context from the authors and an activity. An extract is presented on the lives of people at the temporary resettlement camp of Thornhill, and the learner is guided in how to tell the difference between fact and opinion while reading texts. It teaches how to interview and asks learners to practise this by

interviewing someone in their community about how the Group Areas Act affected where they live.

"Lesson 10: Developing your community" presents an excerpt on Lephina Tshabalala's urban vegetable garden, and examines two different points of view about the developing of communities. The learner is required to practise arranging paragraphs about community development in logical order. An extract is given about how a rural community made its own water supply. The learner is required to write several paragraphs about community development.

"Lesson 11: Community needs, community voices" gives an extract about Mamelodi's maize growers, who use town council land which is being sold to developers. It requires the learner to write comments from various points of view, such as resident, property developer and town councillor, who are presented as illustrations with empty bubble captions for the learner to fill in. It shows and instructs the learner how to write a formal letter, then asks the learner to select from a list of topics and write a letter to the authorities about an aspect of improving his or her situation. It ends with comment on the power communities have in speaking out and voicing their needs.

"Lesson 12: Thinking about learning" reflects on the range of skills the learner has studied and also on what new knowledge has been gained. It asks students to prepare for the module assignment by finding information about their families and communities and reflecting on what helps or hinders them as learners. It revises the learners' previewing skills and prepares for reading the next text of the course.

The chapters are prefaced by an "Introduction to the Unit", which explains the unit and how it works.

The sequencing of the text thus takes the form of a series of "lessons" about ways to work with knowledge about the lives of different people. A predominant feature is that the learner is drawn as an active participant into the content and process of the lesson. Another recurring feature is that each lesson has an integrated approach, reflecting the title of the course,

"Integrated Social Studies". Each lesson integrates content and process, in other words, learning about phenomena and learning the skills to identify, gain and work with knowledge about phenomena. Each integrates identification of the learner's prior knowledge with gaining new knowledge. Each integrates several disciplines. As the authors explicitly state (p 100), the chapters draw on and integrate oral history, environmental studies, development studies, politics, sociology and geography.

Structure of chapters

Each chapter has an overt structure which is divided into the main body and what I again will refer to as "pedagogic elements", which consist of "Activity" and "Comment" from the authors.

The main body of content is divided into sections and sub-sections. The sections primarily offer methodologies for working with information and secondarily information itself. For example, sections of "Lesson 7: Rural living", include "3. Rural settlements - some history" (p 58), "4. Critical reading" (p 59) and "5. Taking notes" (p 60-63). The section on taking notes teaches the learner three different ways to make notes from an excerpt which gives information on tax laws that forced rural men to go and work on the mines. There are few sub-section headings, although, in some instances, sub-sections provide further explanatory detail of the method or topic. For example, under the section heading "3. Bias in maps" (p 48) there are three sub-headings, including "What has been left out?" (p 51). Each chapter has between two and eight activities and a matching number of comments from the author.

The pedagogic elements comprise roughly half of the text. These elements explicitly engage the learner in an active learning process. This is effected by requiring the learner to undertake an activity which forms part of the course content, for example, drawing a map. This is then elaborated on in the "Comment" on the activity from the author.

Implicit pedagogic structure

In combination, the main body and the pedagogic elements form a pedagogic structure at a deeper textual level. Each chapter comprises several cycles of learning events. In each cycle a

topic or method is introduced, the learner is instructed to undertake an activity on it, and thirdly the process or result of the activity is commented upon.

For example, "Lesson 9: How apartheid affected where people live" has three such cycles. The first cycle of information-activity-comment deals with "Apartheid and where people live" followed by an Activity and a Comment. The second such cycle weaves together a case study of a resettlement camp, "Thornhill - living in a wasteland", and a methodological procedure for telling the difference between "Fact and opinion", followed by an Activity and Comment. The third cycle deals with "How to interview someone", followed by an Activity and a Comment.

Scaffolding

A further aspect of the structure of this text is that there is a deliberate scaffolding, or incremental development of information and skills, in the text as a whole. The text builds on skills and information learned earlier in the text, by referring to them and requiring the reader to use them when learning a later set of skills. For example: a section on "How to preview a text" (p 13-16), which includes an explanation, activity and comment, together with a subsequent section on "How to identify the main idea in a paragraph" (p 18-21), which includes an explanation, activity and comment, then leads the reader into "How to read with understanding" (p 21-23), also including an explanation, activity and comment. In addition, the text uses the reader's experience and knowledge as a scaffold by requiring her to evoke it and then to allow it to engage with the new information from the text. The reader is advised to answer questions in a notebook or in a file kept for the course (Introduction, p i).

Design

Aspects of design and layout which relate to the way the text makes meaning at a textual level include the following.

Chapters are less than half the length of CS/Unisa text chapters. Blocks of text average about 12 lines in length, shorter than those of the CS/Unisa text. The margins are 1cm wider and are used for a variety of quotes, tips, hints, glossaries, and graphics. As is the case with the CS/Unisa text, margins are sometimes left blank. The spacing between lines is an important

design element in terms of both the physical act of the eye reading and the psychological effect. In the case of this text, the line spacing is 3,5mm, which is 0,5mm wider than that of the CS/Unisa text, making it easier on the eye and lending it a more spacious appearance.

The page frame is about 248mm, with the text often stretched down to fit the frame, leaving more white space available inside the page frame than is the case with the CS/Unisa text. Like the CS/Unisa text, the page format also allows for about 47 lines per page. The type size of the pedagogic elements is the same as that of the main body of the text, signalling that they are considered equally important. Graphics are interspersed throughout the text slightly more often than is the case with the CS/Unisa text. They are mostly hand-drawn with fine black lines on white backgrounds. There are a few photographs, which have a clearer reproduction quality than the CS/Unisa text photographs. (See Appendix B for sample copies.)

In comparison with the CS/Unisa text, this text has a more spacious design and layout. Unlike the CS/Unisa text, it also gives the same weight to the pedagogic elements as it does to the main body, thus making space for and signalling the importance of the reader's learning process and interaction with the text.

Internal cohesion

The authors of this text appear to be more self-conscious about its structure, stating it more explicitly than is the case with the CS/Unisa text. The themes and macro-structure of the text are stated as follows in "Lesson 1: Social Studies and you". We:

study society by looking at it in a variety of contexts: -politics, economics, the environment, society's past history and its future, and the way in which society thinks about itself... a number of important ... themes that cut across the different contexts ... are: society, development and underdevelopment, environmental sustainability, rights, ethics and values, and democracy (p 5).

Another example is in the introduction, where the authors say that the text is intended to introduce students to "integrated social studies" and multi-faceted thought processes (Introduction, p i-iii).

The ideational level

The representations of the following concepts, which feature in both texts, will be discussed here: communities, community development, teacher, and the learner's social and learning identities.

Communities

A variety of communities are depicted through three main devices: case studies; injunctions to the reader to undertake an activity as an individual or as a member of her own community; and extracts from published texts. The reader's community is given much the same proportion of space as that given to the combination of communities in case studies and excerpts from published accounts. This is different to the CS/Unisa text in which the reader's own community is not referred to.

The main case study portrays the "Manyosi" family. It is not clear whether this is an existing family, or a compilation by the authors. Nofikile, one of the two main "characters" of the text, is represented as having roots in both rural and urban communities. She and her husband Zuma live with their children and Nofikile's mother, Nosizwe, in the township of KwaMashu. Nofikile grew up in a rural village in the Transkei, which she and her mother recall in stories told, or in activities devised for the reader. For example, an extract titled "Nofikile's history" begins:

The taste of hot, sweet mielies straight from the coals! Mmm. That was my childhood, in a village called Kotana nestled in the Transkei hills. My granny tells how the 1913 Land Act forced the family to leave their home in King William's Town. That's when they settled in Kotana (p 10).

The other main character threaded through the text is "you", the learner. The learner is assumed to be part of his or her own family and community and is required to perform certain activities as such. For example, the learner is required to draw a time-line of her personal history, and a map of her neighbourhood. The authors say:

A good way of checking how well you have done in question (b) is to show your map

to a neighbour. Ask them if they recognise their house. Ask them if your map would get them to the taxi stop (p 33).

Learners are explicitly represented as members of various kinds of historical and geographical communities. For example:

But there are other factors that shape your history that you may not know about. Perhaps the taxes of the apartheid government forced your grandfather to go to the city to earn money (p 12).

Learners are also seen as local, present members of national, continental and international communities. For example, text accompanying a map of the world notes that:

This projection puts Europe at the centre of the world. Do you think this might make people think that Europe is more important than Africa? (p 51)

Both these examples illustrate the way the text overtly represents the learner as being aware of, or learning about, the historical, economic and political arrangements that interconnect with wider social systems of power.

At certain times learners are required to imagine themselves as members of a different, or larger, community. For example, an activity (p 47) on learning about maps says:

You are a rural adviser and you want to provide people in KwaMashu with running water. You are going to visit several places in Africa to find people to help you to plan for this.

In the next example, the text gives emphasis to the notion of rural people as members of a global community of rural dwellers.

All rural people have one central thing in common - they live and work in a close relationship with the environment (p 56).

The following example is from an extract which emphasises the ecological interconnections between all people:

There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the unfurling of leaves in the Spring, or the rustle of insect's wings ... Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth (p 22).

Learners are also presented as local, human members of the global community of different species. For example, in "Lesson Three: Our living, changing world", the origins and interconnections of a loaf of bread with the rain, soil, farmers, and bakers, are traced.

In addition to the "characters" and "you" the learner, other people appear in the text through extracts from published accounts by South Africans of their own or other people's daily lives. These accounts focus mainly on black people's lives, more often than not women, and cover different kinds of rural and urban situations.

Such extracts sometimes serve as the basis for an activity, such as critical reading or previewing a text. For instance, an extract about a group of rural women is used to show the reader how to preview a text (p 14-16). In this extract, while the arduousness of the daily three-hour journey to fetch wood for fuel is not minimised, the women are represented as important, resilient and co-operative members of a community. For example:

Along the way the women share their food... Village gossip, rumours and tongue-in-cheek conversation help to pass the time...Panting from the tortuous climb, the women heave a sigh of relief on reaching the top...Then with renewed strength they take turns in swinging the axe (p 16).

Life in rural areas is deliberately represented as multi-faceted, as having both hardships and benefits. The push factors which cause people to leave rural areas and the pull factors that draw them to cities are discussed. When "interviewed" about why she left Kotana, Nofikile says it was hard to grow enough food on their small piece of land and they went hungry many times. She says she went to KwaMashu so her children could get a better education and have

easier lives. But she misses the

special feelings of my childhood - the splash of cold running water on my sweaty face, the taste of warm new milk, freshly milked from the family goat (p 66).

Similarly, this text shows urban living as spanning a range between rich and poor, between "spacious" suburbs and overcrowded shack settlements (p 69). The conditions facing the many people living in "fast growing shack settlements near every big city in South Africa" (p 68) are described by a shack dweller. These conditions include the lack of infrastructure and services, the cramped wooden shacks and danger of fire. The residents "contest poverty" by selling meat, fruit, vegetables and dagga. They also conduct "stokvels" and "shebeens". But their "main obstacle" is the "violence". (p 69)

Both case studies and extracts feature the lives of black people, and mainly those of women. However, the learner's real life experiences and knowledge of a community, which are included as part of the course content, may be from the perspective of whichever cultural, linguistic, social or gender group to which she may belong, whereas the community of the reader of the CS/Unisa text is not referred to.

Community development

Development is portrayed as an improvement in the quality of people's lives. This is discussed as being possible to initiate at the levels of both self-help and government policy. For example, the text guides learners to think their way into reasons for growing numbers of shack settlements and how the problems residents face could be solved at the levels of both self-help and government intervention (p 70, p 91-96).

The responsibility for development of communities is explicitly problematised by means of two characters with opposing views in the chapter titled "Developing your community". One character says the government is responsible since apartheid caused the problems. The other notes that while apartheid may have caused problems, if people themselves don't make an effort nothing will change. Authorial comment contextualises the argument, noting that both viewpoints are valid since some things are too big for a community to change, while there are

many ways communities can improve their living conditions (p 85).

Learners are told they will "learn how people can find their own solutions to problems in their communities" since "communities that take charge of their own development, are communities that are happy and fulfilled" (p 83).

Teachers

Teachers are not depicted or "talked about"; rather the persona of the teacher simply operates in the text, engaging with the learner throughout. The learner is thus shown, rather than told about, the teacher.

The teacher in the text operates as a guide, accompanying the learner on a learning journey. Many of the methods or procedures for thinking about and gaining knowledge are taught by the teacher. However, the knowledge-content comes from three main sources: the teacher, excerpts from other texts and the learner's own experience. The teacher steers the learner into and out of her reading of the content of social studies, as well as giving instructions on the procedures to undertake in doing this. The interaction between the teacher and the learners will be discussed further in the section on the interpersonal function of the text.

The reader's social and political identity

Readers of this text are understood primarily to be adults with a wealth of their own experience and knowledge. This is actively reinforced throughout the text. For example:

You know a lot of things about your history. You know what you can remember and what you have experienced. You also know the things that people, like your mother and father, grandparents or friends have told you. (p 12)

The identity of the learner is projected as being an individual member of interconnecting matrices of communities, as discussed above under the heading "communities". These range from families and local communities to international, political and economic communities, as well as a global, ecological community. The reader's persona is projected as having social and political agency.

Case studies and extracts from other sources feature black families and communities, both rural and urban, focusing more on the experiences of women than men. Readers are assumed to be able to identify at least in some ways with these characters and accounts.

The reader of the text is probably assumed to be black, since Aseca is specifically targeting black learners. However, there are also a few depictions of, or references to, members of other "racial groups". For example, the illustrations which accompany the section "How to interview someone" (p 79) show a young white woman interviewing an old black woman. In the "Comment" on the activity, the teacher acknowledges that "perhaps you interviewed someone who spoke about how it felt to be forced to live in a 'coloured' or 'black' or 'white' area (p 81)". In this way, readers from different cultural and racial groups are actively included in the text.

Learning identity of the reader

Learners are represented, and talked about, as active agents of their own learning who require the skills to work with knowledge more than they need to absorb the knowledge itself. In the last chapter, "Thinking about learning", the text tells the learner:

You do not need to memorise this information in these units ... we believe that real education is about learning new skills and being able to use these skills in other studies and your daily life (p 100).

The learning identity of the learner is explicitly referred to in this way:

One of the things that we have learnt about adult learners is that they improve their learning skills if they think about themselves as learners ... they become stronger learners as they start to recognise their strengths and weaknesses and take steps to help themselves. Try this activity with another learner if possible. (p 103).

The learner is thus required to operate actively in the process of learning as it unfolds with the text. The learner is taught "thinking skills" which include ways to identify her own prior knowledge as well as new procedures to gain and work with new knowledge. She is also

required to conduct activities with these procedures in her own community in order to learn more about both the procedures and her community. At the same time, she learns new content about other communities. The ways in which the learner is required to operate in the text are discussed further in the interpersonal section.

The interpersonal level

In this text, the teacher uses the pronoun "I" when speaking to the learner, for example, "I will tell you why I say so", and directly addresses "you" the learner throughout each chapter. In the construction of this text, the metadiscourse is a central thread, holding the text together and comprising a substantial proportion of it. It takes the form of an ongoing, guided, pedagogic conversation that is projected as taking place between the voice of a teacher and the learner, in the learner's mind while he or she works with the text. The teacher's voice consistently interacts with the learner, who becomes one of the central characters, whose stories and ideas form an active part of the content of the text that is created.

Each section of a chapter comprises a cycle of events in which the teacher's voice first guides "you" the reader into information about a topic or a methodological procedure, secondly instructs you to undertake an activity, and thirdly comments on the process or result of your having done the activity. For the sake of clarity, I will examine the teacher's interaction with the learner by explicitly following this structural cycle.

Main body: content

Here the teacher's voice introduces the reader to a topic or method, contextualising it in terms of both the text and the larger social context.

These content sections begin by referring back to a previous relevant section, then link it to the work to follow. For example:

In the previous lesson, you learnt how to find a place on a diagram using co-ordinates. We can also use co-ordinates to find a place on a map. Look at the map of the world on the next page. You see lines drawn across and down it to form a grid (p 45).

The teacher contextualises the work and explains its purpose. Sometimes the teacher offers alternative ways to go about it. For example in a section on "Taking notes" the teacher says:

When you collect information or read texts, it's useful to make short notes about the things you want to remember. Your notes really say what a text is about in a way that is clear, simple and easy to understand.

In this extract from 'Write your own history', Leslie Witz shows you three ways of making notes.

There are many different ways of making notes. You must decide on what method you like best. (p 60-61)

Forthcoming attractions are regularly given at both the ends and beginnings of sections. For example, Lesson 8, section 3 on "Different kinds of urban lives" ends with the teacher saying: "Now it's your turn to think about where you live" (p 70). The next section "Exploring where you live", begins:

You've learnt about the experiences of South Africans who live in rural and urban areas. You've also explored some of the reasons why people live where they do in South Africa. Now you'll have a chance to think about where you live and why you live there. You'll also learn the skill of writing paragraphs. (p 71).

Activity

When the teacher instructs the learner to do an activity, its aim is given, for example, "the purpose of this activity is for you to identify the difference between fact and opinion" (p 78). The relevance of the skill is also usually specified, for example: "This is an important skill to help you read critically" (p 78). The timing for the activity is often given, for example, "Take 20 minutes to do this activity" (p 22).

Instructions for the activity are short - four or five lines long. For example:

In this activity, you'll look at a text about rural lives. This text will give you extra information about what Nofikile's life was like in rural Kotana. You'll use this text to

learn the skill of previewing (p 14).

The text follows with picture, caption, title, blurb and sub-headings marked. The reader is then asked to look carefully at these and, without reading the body of the text, write a few sentences in her own words explaining what the text is about.

Comment

In the teacher's "Comment" which follows instructions for an activity, an overarching appraisal on what the activity was about is usually given. In addition, the teacher gives a wide variety of responses, emphasising different aspects of learning, seen in the examples below. However, all maintain a friendly tone and speak as if directly to the learner, who is assumed to have just done the activity, giving her own ideas, insights and experiences. This example comments on the reader having done the activity, congratulates her and recaps the main ideas.

You've just made a very clear, easy-to-read summary of the reasons why people move from rural areas to urban areas. Well done! The main reason people leave rural areas is because they can no longer survive there. Perhaps they don't earn enough money to live on, the land is not fertile enough or drought destroys their crops (p 68).

This next example emphasises a learner's capacity to identify her own feelings and opinions in the face of another's text.

I chose this quote by Verwoed on purpose, because I'm sure you had strong feelings about it. Can you see why it's not just enough to understand what Verwoed says? You need to be critical of his comments and work out what your own feelings and opinions are. (p 60).

In the following example, the teacher reaffirms the purpose of the activity and the learners' capacity to use their own knowledge and imagination. The voice also reassures the learner who experienced difficulties and redirects her to the questions which are considered important (p 57):

I asked these questions to help you think about what life in a rural homestead is like. I hope the picture of Nosizwe's household gave you some ideas about rural living. Of course, you also needed to use your own knowledge and imagination to answer the questions. Don't worry if you found some of the questions hard to answer. Just remember that all these questions are important for the lives of people in rural areas.

In this next "Comment", which follows a strongly argued extract about the negative effects of apartheid, the teacher affirms the characteristics of a well-argued summary, and its use as a model for the learners to practise with. The "Comment" continues with a brief, broad description of the summary, using simpler language (p 75).

The writer gives a good summary of the effects that apartheid had on South Africa. That's why I wanted you to study her words closely and rewrite her ideas in your own words.

While in many cases specific answers are not given in the comment, sometimes the learner is required to know a specific answer or understand why it is so. In these cases the correct answers are given. For example:

Map B is more helpful. Why? Because it tells us that there are certain areas where there are many people, but also other areas with few people (p 52).

Sometimes the teacher speculates about what the learner did, reaffirming a variety of possible results:

Perhaps you interviewed someone who had been evicted from one area and resettled in another. Or perhaps you interviewed someone who spoke about how it felt to be forced to live in a "coloured" or "black" or "white" area (p 81).

At other times, the reader is asked to get a friend or neighbour to check their work for particular features.

Sometimes the teacher acknowledges that she cannot read the learner's work there and then,

but recaps what the learner was intended to learn from the activity. For example:

I'm sorry I can't read your description of where you live and your explanation of why you live there. If you followed the guidelines for writing good paragraphs, I'm sure your paragraphs are fine. What's important is that each paragraph has a central or main idea with extra information backing up the main idea (p 72).

In this way, the teacher takes turns with the learner, as if engaged in a dialogue, with the learner required to use her turn to continue with her own learning process, which is then responded to in a variety of ways.

The metadiscourse is intended to provide intellectual support. It does this by explaining what various "thinking skills" are, what they may be used for and how to go about using them. It also shows ways for the reader to arrive at solutions or answers, by showing step by step the teacher's own thinking processes or procedures accepted by the various disciplines from which the text has drawn. For example (p 21):

The answer that best summarises what Paragraph 1 is about is 1. I'll tell you why I say so.

The metadiscourse is also intended to provide the reader with emotional support by means of a teacher's voice which is warm, cheerful and reassuring in tone and inspiring in intent. However, some readers may find this voice's tone patronising. At different places this teacher offers explicit statements of welcome, reassurance and congratulations. Some chapters begin with a welcome, such as "Welcome to the fourth lesson" (p 25). Many chapters end on a congratulatory note with a summary about what and how much the learner has achieved. An instance of this is:

You've come to the end of Lesson 10. Let's summarise what this lesson was about ... you examined two different points of view. You also learnt how to link paragraphs and you practised writing your own paragraphs. You also explored some of the creative ways that communities take control of their own lives and find their own solutions to problems.

In addition, the metadiscourse encourages the learner to actively take part in the ongoing pedagogic conversation through turn-taking conventions. These include the following: speaking directly to the learner as if she has just completed the activity, summarising or commenting on the process of doing it or on the possible answers given; asking questions which are required to be answered from the learner's own experience and knowledge; phrasing as a question something which could be phrased as a statement, for example, "Can you see why it's not just enough to understand what Verwoed says?" (p 60).

The metadiscourse of this text is authoritative in explaining procedures or methods and giving instructions for activities, but is inquiring when discussing excerpts or the content that is elicited in the interaction between the text and reader.

Chapter Five

Exploring learning styles, identities and discourses

In the first phase of the analysis, in Chapter Four, I described the two texts, their social and institutional contexts and their internal rules for making meaning at the textual, ideational and interpersonal levels. In this final chapter, in the second phase of the analysis I will interpret the interaction between the text producers and readers, examining the learning styles, and the learner and social identities which are made available to the readers in each text. In the third phase of the analysis, I will assess the way each text constitutes or helps to reconstitute different dimensions of the social action. I will do this by specifying the discourses that sustain the range of identities interpreted, as well as the import of particular ways of using and combining the discourses.

Phase Two: Interpreting learning styles and identities

In order to interpret the learning styles and identities that text producers make available to readers I will discuss the way that the text strategies relate to the readers of each text. This will allow me to examine the teaching personas in the text and the ways in which they position the learner, surfacing the learning styles and identities with which readers are expected to operate.

Text strategies and learning styles

I will relate text strategies to the four learning styles I am using to evaluate the discriminations that texts carry, as discussed at the end of Chapter Two. The learning styles the text expects the reader to employ are seen most clearly at the interpersonal and textual levels, in other words, the ways in which the teacher's persona interacts with the reader's and the ways in which concepts are structured.

The CS/Unisa text

The didactic sections are more abstract than concrete, more object-oriented than people-oriented, for example, focusing on cityscapes and government services to a greater degree than the relations between people in urban living. The didactic text is more reflective than active, for example, requiring the learner to read the text and take notes from it rather than actively gathering information from a variety of sources, including the text.

The "telling-asking-telling" sequences in the didactic sections as well as the long turns the teacher takes, reveal that it favours learners who rely on the text, or the teacher, as the authority which provides the knowledge-content they are deemed to require. The didactic teacher mostly asks comprehension-style questions and then gives authoritative answers.

The didactic sections would cater for the abstract, reflective approach of assimilators and their preference for conforming to directions when learning. The didactic text would resonate with assimilators' enjoyment in reading about concepts and theories. It would suit the assimilator's interest in inductive reasoning: working from details to general principles, but only if the text's premises and reasoning appeared logical to them. However, it would be likely to obstruct their need to create their own theoretical models as the text does not generally provide clear procedures for them to work from the specifics to the more general. These learners would enjoy the teacher's provision of expert interpretations and having their work judged by the external criteria of the field. The mix of case studies, theory readings and thinking alone would appeal to them.

The style of learning expected in much of the text tallies with the convergent learner's preference for rational deduction and the clarity of a single correct answer. However, their preference for deducing solutions would be satisfied only if they agreed with the premises upon which representations of communities were based. The text seldom provides scope for the convergent learner's other major requirement, which is the practical application of what they are learning to their "real" world and "real" problem-solving. Since abstractions tend to become real for them only when they are able to apply skills and subject matter to a physical context, the text would probably remain fairly "unreal" for them. This may be modified once they were able to engage in their practical teaching. Convergents would appreciate the text's

blend of case studies, theory and thinking alone, but they would require a greater sense from the text of participating in projects, discussions and getting non-authoritarian feedback.

The didactic approach would resonate much less with divergers, who use their imaginations, can see a situation from many angles and prefer an open-ended approach to solutions or answers. The bulk of the theory in the didactic sections would not cater for a diverger's interest in people, their emotions and intentions, although this interest would be met to some extent by the case studies about people's lives. The didactic text would suit a diverger's need to reflect on things and to take time to prepare and review her learning activities. Divergers would appreciate the expert views of the teacher but would require more of a sense of working as part of a team with the teacher and other students.

The didactic text would not suit accommodators, who enjoy active involvement in their learning, and who dislike authoritarian teachers. This kind of text would not resonate with an accommodator's requirement for space to include her own experience in the subject matter being learnt and who prefers to determine her own criteria of relevance with the help of a teacher-as-coach. It would not feel comfortable for the accommodator, who needs personalised feedback and the sense of participating with others in projects or discussions.

The smaller, dialogic sections of the CS/Unisa text resonate with a wider variety of learning styles, and more aspects of each learning style. The dialogic interaction would appeal to those aspects of convergent learners, which appreciates the practical application of skills and ideas. Convergent learners would also feel comfortable when there is a single correct answer, which happens in some cases. The dialogic portions would also draw on divergers' strong imaginative capacities, their ability to see a situation from many perspectives and their interest in people's emotional lives. These sections would also suit accommodators who like to get actively involved in the subject matter and who prefer working with peers than authority figures. The dialogic interactions would also favour those aspects of assimilators who enjoy generalising and constructing theoretical models as well as activities requiring them to follow clear procedures.

Thus the didactic sections of the CS/Unisa text, which form the bulk of the text, are less

learning-style differentiated, and cater to fewer requirements of each learning style, than its dialogic sections.

The ISS/Aseca text

The ISS/Aseca text's recurring learning sequence of "explaining a method, concept or situation; giving instructions for an activity; commenting on the activity", relies on the learner participating in and completing the activity. This sequence, together with the dialogic teacher who asks graded questions, stimulates an integration of prior and new knowledge, and responds directly to the learner with various comments, resonates with a wider variety of learning styles.

The ISS/Aseca text resonates fairly evenly across all four of the categories of learning styles. It includes concrete and people-oriented approaches as well as abstract principles and object-oriented approaches. It differentiates evenly between both active and reflective ways of learning. This text includes approaches that suit accommodators, who need to be actively involved in new experiences, are prepared to take risks and appreciate the lack of an authority figure. It suits divergers, who are imaginative, can view a situation from many perspectives, are interested in people, their intentions and emotions. Divergers would also appreciate learning from observing and responding to the lecturer as a person, rather than as a "transcendental" authority. The text makes space for convergers, who like to apply ideas practically, prefer discussion which relates subject matter to the "real" world and do best when they can deduce a single correct answer. It also allows for assimilators who are able to generalise, create theoretical models and prefer activities which require them to follow specific procedures.

Conclusion

The CS/Unisa text resonates with fewer learning styles as well as fewer aspects of the four learning styles. The ISS/Aseca text which is more differentiated in terms of learning styles thus enables access for a wider variety of learning styles.

In this next section I will examine how the learning styles asserted by the text relate to wider social constructs of gender and culture.

Interpreting ways of learning in terms of gender and culture

Feminist scholars (Belenky et al, 1986; Harding, 1987; Hayes, 1989); have asserted that education should proceed from the points of view of women, as well as from men. It should thus include the development of personal, and interpersonal values as well as contextual and relational thinking, nurturance, and an understanding of interdependence. In terms of the gendering of learner identities, the ISS/Aseca text, unlike the bulk of the CS/Unisa text, actively includes the two learning styles termed accommodators and divergers. These learning styles relate to Gardner's (1985) "personal intelligences", which have traditionally been attributed to women and which women have been socialised to favour. These learning modes employ intuition and imagination as ways of gaining knowledge and they give credence to personal and interpersonal values. For example, the learner's subjective insights and values are given space in the ISS/Aseca text, and the teacher's persona engages in a warm, nurturing way with the reader. Some readers, however, may find the nurturing manner patronising or irritating. The smaller, dialogic sections of the CS/Unisa text also make space for personal and interpersonal values, but these tend to be overshadowed by the dominant, didactic sections.

In terms of contextual thinking, the reader of the CS/Unisa text is required to situate the content she is learning mainly within the terms of the previous content of the text itself. In reading the minor, dialogic parts, she is able to situate what she is learning in a variety of contexts, such as her own social context or imaginative scenarios. The reader of the ISS/Aseca text is required to situate the content and methodology she is learning into several different contexts. These include her own social context, the context of case studies in the book, and that of the teacher's voice which arbitrates different discourses and perspectives, for example, the two conflicting views on development. In this way the reader is encouraged to engage in contextual thinking from a variety of perspectives. In this sense, the ISS/Aseca text is more "open", in Graddol's (1993) terms, or meant to be read at different levels of complexity, in comparison with the CS/Unisa text which is more "closed", attempting to control the learner's learning stage by stage. In terms of relational thinking, the ISS/Aseca text actively encourages the apprehension of intersecting relations between people, phenomena and processes, to a far greater degree than occurs with the CS/Unisa text, except in its dialogic sections. This can be seen in the way that a direct relationship between the text's teacher and the learner is overtly

cultivated, its characters and its reader are actively situated within intersecting matrices of relationships and the interdependence of, for example, people and their environment, is shown.

The ISS/Aseca text thus encourages ways of learning that include personal and interpersonal values, contextual and relational ways of thinking to a greater degree than does the CS/Unisa text. It could reasonably be assumed therefore that the ISS/Aseca text construction allows for ways of learning that have been affiliated with women to a greater extent than does the CS/Unisa text.

The text strategies of each text allow for different degrees of cultural inclusivity in terms of the range of learner identities made available. In requiring the reader to place her own social and cultural context at the heart of much of the material being learned, the ISS/Aseca text employs a powerful text device that tends automatically to allow for as many cultural identities as there are learners. The majority of the CS/Unisa text requires its students to take its word as the authority on a variety of social and cultural contexts from which learners are seen as removed. It may be that the social and cultural contexts thus presented are, however, known first hand to many of the text's black learners, who may not easily identify with these representations. The CS/Unisa text producers thus may be presenting the social studies material from a culturally exclusive vantage point.

Crismore (1989) has criticised social studies pedagogy for favouring a "realistic" view of knowledge and a sense of certainty over a sense of inquiry, creativity and tentativeness. Given that the "certain" and "realistic" view of social knowledge has emerged from the experiences and beliefs about society of dominant cultural groups, it seems important to examine whether the text strategies of each text do polarise these approaches, favouring certainty over inquiry and creativity. The CS/Unisa text tends to assert particular accounts of social reality. While at the ideational level, the reader on occasion is told to read critically, this is made difficult, since in terms of the textual and interpersonal levels of the text (the way the concepts are structured and the way the teacher interacts with the learner), neither the diverger's lateral thinking nor the accommodator's trust in her own subjective experience is encouraged. Also, while the assimilator learning style is predominant, one of an assimilator's requirements is to be given

clear directions or procedures for constructing her own general principles, or theoretical models from the specifics of case studies, theory readings and examples, but these are not provided. In this way, the “transcendental” certainty of the CS/Unisa text voices tends to override the reader’s potential for inquiry, creativity and tentativeness. In the ISS/Aseca text there is less polarisation of certainty and tentativeness, “realism” and subjective or imaginative ways of understanding the world, as these are all built into the text fairly evenly.

The above point relates to the issue of which cultural perspective has authority and how authority is conferred from teacher to learner during the learning process. By making explicit the usually implicit ground rules (Mercer and Edwards, 1987) that govern what sort of answer, argument or behaviour is appropriate, the ISS/Aseca text makes clear the procedures considered legitimate for gaining, working with and validating knowledge in the field of social studies. In this way, the ISS/Aseca text overtly inducts learners into the school-based and academic discourses and practices of mainstream, Western education. This education has its own “body of cultural knowledge” and “ways of communicating and legitimizing knowledge” (Mercer, 1993:31), which during apartheid were taught to white or middle class children to a far greater extent than to black or working class children.

The CS/Unisa text is pitched at a higher educational level and has a more difficult language level than the ISS/Aseca text. The CS/Unisa text tends to take the more abstract, reflective approach favoured in higher education. It may be said that the CS/Unisa text thus inducts the learner, via an assimilator learning style, into school-based and academic ways of learning to a greater degree than the ISS/Aseca text by modelling what is commonly expected in post-Standard Ten courses. However, it could also be argued that the CS/Unisa text encourages rote-learning rather than creative and critical thinking.

The text strategies the ISS/Aseca text employs appear to allow for a greater degree of culturally inclusive ways of learning. Cultural diversity is used as a resource, giving credence to inquiry and creativity while making explicit the ground rules by which home-based and cultural knowledge is transferred into school-based discourses and practices.

These varying degrees of gender and culture inclusivity in terms of ways of learning inform

the identities made available for readers of a text. Now I will turn to the question of the learner identities and social identities which each text constructs for readers.

Learner identities in the texts

The CS/Unisa text

The learner identity asserted by the producers of the CS/Unisa text is constructed by their addressing her in her capacity as a "student of the Unisa ABET course", a persona who requires information from the text about a variety of social contexts. This "student" identity takes two different forms: one in the didactic sections and another in the dialogic sections.

In the main, didactic sections of the text, the student is positioned as largely subservient to the authority of the text. She is expected to absorb knowledge from the text and largely give it back. Her own experience and knowledge is seldom considered for inclusion in the course content, although at random moments, she is assumed to be able to generalise principles from her own experience and that of characters in case studies. Although she is taught how to "talk about" the particular social contexts described by the text, she is not taught how to identify, gain or work with information about the contexts. She is thus not taught to "perform" in the discipline of social studies (Gee, 1990). And it appears that, in talking about these social contexts, she may not deviate to any great degree from the substance of the content.

In the didactic sections, the learner's subjectivity is overtly positioned as feminine and black in terms of the ideational content. However, the text construction tends to deny the contextual, relational, people-oriented ways of learning that have been affiliated with women. It also tends to deny ways of learning that encourage culturally diverse perspectives, by ignoring the accommodator's style of learning and seldom making space for the reader's own experience and by largely ignoring the diverger's approach which would allow for alternative understandings of the communities represented. It is possible that this conflict between the overt subjectivity of the reader asserted by the text and the more covert learner identity may make it difficult for the reader to align herself with either.

In the minor, dialogic sections, the text attempts to position the "student" as able to participate in the construction of the course content under the guidance of the text. Here, she is expected to think about, and undertake inner imaginary experiences, for example, using visual imagery, to elaborate the text's content. She is guided in constructing an internal dialogue which features her own, as well as new, knowledge and experience, to make the learning experience a rich dialogic one. She is guided to surface her own perceptions, insights and feelings and to use them while internalising new information.

In these dialogic sections the learner identity appears more gender and culturally inclusive than the didactic sections.

The ISS/Aseca text

The ISS/Aseca text producers address the reader in her capacity as "student of the ISS course". This "student" is constructed as an "adult learner" who is understood to have a wealth of experience and knowledge and to require methods of working with knowledge pertinent to social studies. The identity of the "adult learner" is projected as able to participate in the construction of the course content. This identity is constructed by guiding her to draw on both prior and new knowledge, and by engaging her in an ongoing dialogue in which she is expected to integrate her own perceptions, feelings, memories, insights and reflections with the methods and knowledge concepts she learns from the text.

The ISS/Aseca text, in contrast to the CS/Unisa text, emphasises the teaching of skills and methods, giving it a methodology-oriented bias. The learner is constructed as learning intellectual, physical and social skills, for example, learning how to read critically, draw different types of maps and interview people. The learner is understood as needing to both "acquire" and "learn" these methods, in order to both "perform" within the discipline of social studies and "talk about" it (Gee, 1990). The text thus models and discusses the methods and discourses of integrated social studies.

However, the text operates with the embedded assumption that the learner will be able to resonate with the intellectual and social constructs with which the text developers operate. While the authors are highly educated, middle-class people, the text is targeted at largely poor

learners attempting to advance their schooling. The question may be asked: can learners access the sophisticated terms in which the authors explain what they are doing, for example: "multifaceted", "previewing"? The text attempts to enable the learner to access these concepts by carefully spelling out their meanings, using simple, everyday examples and by scaffolding the material. However, it remains possible that ISS/Aseca learners feel patronised by the tone and manner of the teacher's voice and this, for some students, may undermine the text's message that the student is a competent adult learner.

In the main, the ISS/Aseca text's learner identity is informed by a range of learning modes, which are inclusive of different genders and cultures. The reader is able to actively position the learner identity as a member of either gender or any culture.

Therefore, the ISS/Aseca text includes and resonates with a wider range of learner identities, than does the CS/Unisa text.

Social identities in the texts

The CS/Unisa text

A social identity is constructed for the reader by the text producers addressing her in her capacity as "an ABET practitioner ... helping to lift the burden of oppression from your fellow citizens ... [and] helping to rebuild and strengthen the communities they live in" (p 1).

The text offers the student a political identity by asserting that she will do the work of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and therefore is valuable. The student in turn is expected to envisage herself in the role of a trained development activist.

The text thus constructs an identity for the reader as a social and political "activist-in-development", which is projected as important for the reconstruction and development process of South Africa. The CS/Unisa text is organised around the central idea that ABET is vital to this process. On the face of it, this assumption does not seem unlikely, but the text does not attempt to problematise it. Fingeret's (1983) research showed, for example, that

mainstream representations of "illiterate people" ignore the innovative methods and networks of communal support they use to live meaningful and successful lives without the "literacy" construed as vital for their "development".

Linked to this assumption about the social importance of ABET is a second, implied assumption: the ABET crucial for reconstruction and development is that version offered by the Unisa ABET course. However, the text does not question what kinds of educational, development and activist processes are most likely to "reconstruct and develop" communities and the wider, new society, and thus does not debate the validity of the version that it offers.

The activist is constructed as one who, by the end of the course, will know what is required for the development of a community. The component of resistance to a dominant social practice, which is part of an "activist" identity, in the case of this text seems to be directed towards dynamics of particular communities which may prevent the "activist's" development work.

The reader's own family and community setting is not directly considered, and she is not expected to identify herself with them, nor even with her own thoughts and feelings to any great extent.

Thus the "activist" identity is projected into a programme of political action, which holds a reduced range of possible identities. In addition, the subjectivity of "activist" is interpellated within a fairly narrowly construed development process by the producers of the text.

Since both the "student" and "activist" identities are understood to require information, the text predominantly teaches knowledge-concepts rather than methods to gain and work with knowledge. Although the structure of the text is issue-based rather than interdisciplinary (Rowntree, 1985), it fails to give the student a mix of conceptual and methodological tools for resolving the issue, focusing almost exclusively on knowledge concepts about a variety of communities. Thus it fulfils only half of what an issue-based text should, withholding the procedures the student requires in order to resolve the issue posed: obstacles to the provision of ABET.

The "activist" identity is thus further narrowed by a "student" identity whose prior knowledge and experience have been reframed as largely outside the knowledge necessary for passing the course, and whose capacity for using methods to work with knowledge is largely ignored.

The "new South Africa" through the eyes of the CS/Unisa text's "activist-in-development" is an under-developed country, requiring a cohort of Unisa-trained development activists to deliver adult basic education and training on a vast scale to a variety of black communities. These activists are not from the communities in which they will do the work, but will learn about them from the textual authority of the CS/Unisa text.

ISS/Aseca text

The ISS/Aseca text speaks to the reader in her personal, social and political capacity of "you", a person who is becoming more self-aware and socially aware by means of the thinking skills of social studies. The reader's own identity is given a firm grounding in the text as she is expected to identify with being herself in her own community, as well as with the other characters in the text.

The approach of the ISS/Aseca text is interdisciplinary rather than issue-based, dissolving the boundaries between traditional subjects such as history and geography. It is organised around a three-fold assumption, which operates consistently in each chapter: the reader is oriented in space and time; social studies offers a way to understand how the reader, and others, are also oriented in terms of society; and gaining thinking skills is useful for the reader.

The reader is expected to envisage herself as a citizen in a democratic country, enabled by the course to discern and act on whatever she thinks suitable both for her own development and for building her community. The text thus constructs an identity of "democratic citizen" of the new democracy of South Africa, and the learner's own identity is placed at the heart of this persona.

The figure of the "democratic citizen" is constructed as embedded in matrices of everyday relationships, for example, family, friends and neighbours. She is positioned as a local member of various kinds of historical and geographical communities and as being aware of,

or learning about, the historical, economic and political arrangements that influence and are influenced by wider social systems of power. In addition, she is required to imagine herself as part of a global community through various text devices, such as drawing maps. The "citizen" is not projected as being in a separate category from the people represented in the text, and is thus assumed to be able to identify with its various "characters".

The accounts of the main character, Nofikile, tend to embody a sense of self-esteem and an optimistic orientation to life, while acknowledging its tensions, contradictions and ambivalences. These accounts enable entry into the text of such human elements as emotions and sensations, which span social divisions such as class and culture.

Further, the text operates with an integrated structure, attempting to enable the "adult learner" as "democratic citizen" to cross the barriers set up between her everyday knowledges and school-based knowledges.

While it is important to tease out how the distance education social science discourse is structured to enable the learner to work systematically between familiar and formal discourses, this question cannot be answered in the absence of research in the field.

The assumption informing the ISS/Aseca text appears to be that affirmation of the agency of the learner identities constructed, in concert with induction into discipline-relevant skills and concepts which can be practised within the learner's own context, are sufficient for passage from the everyday to more esoteric domains.

The adult learner is seen as able to participate actively in constructing the course, while the democratic citizen is projected as able to discern for herself how she will participate in the construction of relations with family, neighbours and community members, and thus in the development of civil society. The two ISS/Aseca text identities amplify each other.

The "new South Africa" is seen through the eyes of the "democratic citizen" as a country where citizens are embedded in matrices of meaningful relationships, which extend outward from family and neighbours to fellow citizens and global interconnections. This newly

democratic country is a place of fresh hope and there is time to enjoy life, while becoming more self-empowered and socially-aware.

Conclusion

The subjectivities of "activist-in-development" and "student" constructed by the CS/Unisa text both hold a narrower range of possible identities than the "democratic citizen" and the "adult learner" constructed by the ISS/Aseca text. In addition, the CS/Unisa text subjectivities are positioned as subservient to some higher authority - the CS/Unisa text and the RDP. The identities constructed by the ISS/Aseca text are positioned in less hierarchical relations with both the ISS/Aseca text and fellow citizens. However, although the ISS/Aseca text has a greater range of identities, the degree to which a reader would be able to access its conceptual and methodological constructs is unclear and requires further research.

The construction of specific learner and social identities is part of a discourse, a way of saying/writing-being-believing and knowing (Gee, 1990). The texts would still not resonate with learners if they felt uneasy with its discourses. I therefore turn now to the question of the discourses and practices sustaining these identities in South Africa in the mid-1990s.

Phase Three: Assessing discourses

The explanation phase is concerned with assessing the way the interaction process of each text is produced by and reproduces different social discourses, as well as the import of particular ways of using and combining these discourses.

Learning from a distance text is bound to particular discourses with tacit theories about what is the "right" way to be and think and who should have which of the goods of society. As Gee (1990: xviii) notes:

"There is no such thing as "reading" or "writing", only reading or writing something (a text of a certain type) in a certain way with certain values".

Learning from a text inevitably includes the learning of the skills, attitudes, values, ways of knowing and being of its dominant social discourses and practices, with their ideological and political investments, which may be at odds with and compromise those of the readers. The identities of "student" and "activist-in-development" in the CS/Unisa text, and "adult learner" and "democratic citizen" in the ISS/Aseca text, are sustained by educational, political and global discourses used by each text.

The CS/Unisa text

The "student" identity of the CS/Unisa text is sustained mainly by the educational discourse exemplified by the didactic teacher, who positions the adult reader largely as subservient to the authority of the text. The CS/Unisa text's dominant educational discourse is thus based on the perceived wisdom of academics. It views knowledge as an objective reality which can be quantified and categorised in neat disciplinary areas, termed the curriculum, and focuses on a rational problem-solving approach, which, in Bond's (1996) terms is evidence of a technocratic discourse. The CS/Unisa text's educational discourse thus owes some of its features to a technocratic discourse. It owes other features to a competence-based discourse, which is the modern version of the technocratic discourse, and which sees professional education, training and practice as rooted in the technical rational sphere. It assumes that humans are rational, equally free individuals. However, the CS/Unisa text uses only certain aspects of a competence-based discourse. The competence-led approach is typically concerned with what people can do, rather than what they know. However, the discourse of the CS/Unisa text seems more concerned with enabling students to know, and to be able to "talk about", rather than enabling them to be able to "perform" in the discipline. This text thus uses only part of a competence-led discourse, largely ignoring its basis of "occupational standards of performance" (Bond, 1996:13).

To a much lesser extent, the didactic teacher uses a constructivist discourse by drawing on case studies and excerpts from texts, in an attempt to use depictions of "real life" for learning. However, these "real life" scenarios are situated within the dominant technocratic/competence-led discourse by the didactic teacher who frames and interprets them, putting the student outside the main picture.

The CS "student" identity is also sustained, albeit to a much lesser degree, by the less dominant dialogic teacher's constructivist discourse, which views education as unique to the individual. In this case, knowledge is not seen as unassailable, but rather as needing to be reframed and internalised for the learner's own aims (Bond, 1996). Moreover, learners are understood to have their own experience and knowledge available for inclusion in the course that is created between the text and the reader.

The CS/Unisa text thus foregrounds a combined technocratic/competence-led discourse and backgrounds a constructivist discourse. However, these two different discourses appear randomly and are not explicitly referred to and linked at a higher level of organisation of the text. In other words, the authors have not made the text self-conscious about its two different voices and discourses, and the text on the whole gives contradictory messages at different abstract levels (Bateson, 1987) across the discourses, leaving the reader unsure at times which injunctions to take more seriously. The clash of discourses impacts negatively on the way the text "hangs together", although injunctions from the dominant technocratic/competence-led discourse would tend to hold sway. It may have been useful to include a guide's voice in the metadiscourse, explicitly pointing to the different discourses or perspectives, which then could have become a resource regarding the variety of approaches to education students encounter.

The CS/Unisa text's "activist" identity is sustained by a dominant development/reconstruction discourse, couched in terms of the modernisation discourses of industrial society and human capital theory. The text takes a stance of authority on what constitutes development. However, the kind of development the text legitimates is discussed mainly in terms of the need for authorised structures to improve services and technological solutions to infrastructural problems. It is discussed less often in terms of what the learner and others can actively do to stimulate human development.

The "activist" identity is supported to a much lesser extent by a backgrounded democratic participation discourse, which is part of the ethos of the CS/Unisa text's secondary, dialogic voice. The unsurfaced contradiction between this voice and the dominant didactic voice remarked on previously is similarly problematic in this realm of colliding discourses.

While the CS/Unisa text's major, development/reconstruction discourse includes a gender-aware discourse, it focuses on women's daily practical interests, rather than their longer-term strategic interests. A strategic interest would include the question: do women in the situation have the same opportunity as men for making decisions that affect their own lives and those of their family members? While overtly addressing gender relations in communities, the CS/Unisa text uses a version of a liberal feminist discourse that attempts to stimulate change from within the system which oppresses women. Thus the text gives the last word on the subject to the men who want polygamous marriages and, at the same time, omits to ask who benefits from the culturally constructed system of polygamous marriages (p 95).

In other words, the CS/Unisa text uses this feminist discourse in a way which can be seen to normalise the sexist practice that the affected women themselves have clearly rejected. It is a discourse that omits to address the basic conflict of interests between women and men that is involved in challenging sexist practices. This trend is still noticeable throughout "Unit 5: ABET for Women", which deliberately addresses the situation of women. In a variety of ways, the discourse naturalises women's inferior status while overtly problematising it. The text does not make explicit the fact that where social structures oppress women, they usually benefit men.

Thus, while the CS/Unisa text presents itself as championing women, it systematically undercuts its own overt argument for equalising gender relations. This happens even in Unit 5, where it situates a liberal feminist discourse within the rest of the text's pedagogic discourse, which as we have seen previously in terms of learner identities largely denies ways of learning that have been associated with women and their points of view. In addition, since both the "activist" and "student" identities are constructed as requiring to be told what they will need to know, the gendered experience and knowledge of learners cannot be embraced by the text.

The CS/Unisa text assumes that the values embedded in the CS version of development will be largely conflict-free, good and empowering for both the readers as future ABET practitioners and for their future learners in turn. While, at a point, the CS/Unisa text states that education "alters people's values", it does not discuss the internal or interpersonal conflicts that this implies for learners.

Given that the CS/Unisa text teaches an audience which probably comprises mainly black learners about a variety of black communities, and given that the text is produced by a department in a historically white university previously entrenched in the apartheid system, it could be argued that the reader is bound to face crises of identity if she takes on the discourses and practices of the text itself. At the same time, it could also be argued that since the apartheid-driven Bantu Education system used a technocratic discourse, in Bond's (1996) terms, this would be familiar for many black learners. However, if distance systems are to take seriously the requirement to engage with previously marginalised learners, then this dominant combination of technocratic and competence-based discourses, which sidelines the reader's own identity, experience and knowledge, will not suffice as a major teaching strategy.

In terms of a global/Western perspective, the CS/Unisa text mainly uses and is used by a modernist discourse, which sees humans as rational and equally free. This discourse involves notions of development as "progress", linked to human capital theory. It views canonical knowledge as a "body of truth" largely beyond contestation. Learning is hierarchical in nature and the student is rarely provided with the means to gain, construct and assess knowledge from her own perspective. The assumptions and stances of the teacher or author are seldom presented for scrutiny. The reader's learning styles and identities do not include a great degree of diversity and fewer voices, ways of thinking and perspectives are made possible. The world-views of the dominant sectors of society thus tend to hold sway in the text. In these ways, a rationalist, authoritarian discourse with masculinist undertones predominates in the CS/Unisa text.

The ISS/Aseca text

The ISS/Aseca text teacher operates with a constructivist discourse, acknowledging the learner's perspectives while teaching her procedures to work with knowledge, thereby making possible a co-creation of knowledge with the learner. This discourse valorises the individual by speaking to, listening to and responding to her in an ongoing elaboration of the text's content. The constructivist discourse views learning as occurring through the processes of "invention, reflection and reframing" (Bond, 1996:13). Book knowledge is valid and influences action. However, knowledge can also emerge from experience and the reader's

home-based community is acknowledged as an important source of experience and knowledge.

The ISS/Aseca text, like the CS/Unisa text, assumes that the values embedded in its version of being an "adult learner" and a democratic citizen" will be largely conflict-free, good and empowering for the reader. It says to the reader: do this course and become a more self-aware and socially aware person, like us. However, this inevitably involves trying out new identities and unfamiliar discourses, which hold potential for personal and interpersonal conflicts. The ISS/Aseca text attempts to minimise this by recontextualising the two major sites for distance education, text and home, into each other. In other words, the content of the reader's experience of her home-based site is drawn into the text during her elaboration of text content, and the text content is drawn into the home, by calling on family, friends and neighbours for a variety of activities. The dominant constructivist discourse, which views learning as "reflection, inquiry and creative action" (Bond, 1996: 13), also recontextualises other people's "real life" scenarios as a platform from which the reader may learn methods and concepts. However, such a text may operate with more subtle layers of cultural embeddedness in dominant sectors of society than texts that overtly tell the reader what she must know, and this issue requires further research.

The ISS/Aseca text uses a subordinate educational discourse which is competence-led. It uses those aspects which emphasise the learner "acquiring" and "learning" skills to enable her to "perform in" and "talk about" the discipline of social studies (Gee, 1990). While attempting to enable the learner to perform in the discipline, the text avoids specifying technician outcomes which is often a feature of competence-led education, rather teaching the learner to perform particular activities, such as to preview a text, conduct an interview or write an official letter.

The political discourse most evident is one of "democratic participation" in a non-racist, non-sexist South Africa that has rejoined the international community. The "democratic participation" discourse is informed by feminist and internationalist perspectives and asserts the value of the individual who is understood to operate as a member of a variety of interconnecting community and social groups. Thus, the text may have a variety of additional,

unspecified outcomes in the individual's life and in terms of community education and development.

The ISS/Aseca text uses a subordinate political discourse of reconstruction and development. In contrast to the CS/Unisa text, this version sees development as both an individual and community process, where human agency is vital, and in which conflicting views may be expressed in order to reach a higher level of understanding that may include both views.

The global/Western discourse used by the ISS/Aseca text is post-modernist which makes possible a multiplicity of voices, perspectives and identities. Diversity is embraced as potential for creativity. Knowledge is understood as situated, contextual and relational, being viewed as a process more than a product and open to contestation. Teaching/learning relationships are less hierarchical than those of the modernist discourse. The writer or teacher explicates her stance, speaking from a specified location more than as an impersonal "transcendental" authority. Humans and their environments are seen to be dynamically interconnected.

Conclusion

Both texts offer interpretations of the values and culture of the new democratic nation being formed and the "new South African" who inhabits it.

The CS/Unisa text offers a narrower discursive perspective than the ISS/Aseca text, saying: you are an activist in a non-racist, non-sexist, democratic South Africa, in the way that we, the producers of the text, say you should be. This text offers a narrower range of learning styles, learner and social identities and thus a reduced point of access to the reader. It uses discourses situated partly in the "old" and, to a lesser extent, in the "new" South Africa. It would tend to be accessible to people able to identify themselves both as students examining black communities, using a technocratic discourse combined with aspects of a competence-led discourse, and as activists attached to a political programme of social upliftment, using

predominantly a rationalist and technicist reconstruction and development discourse. It would also tend to attract people who prefer a modernist to a post-modernist discourse.

The ISS/Aseca text offers a broader discursive perspective to the reader. It says: you, like us, are a citizen in a non-racist, non-sexist, democratic South Africa. It offers a wide range of learning styles, learner and social identities to the reader, and thus more open access. The ISS/Aseca text uses discourses that are situated in a "new" South Africa located in a post-modern world. It would tend to be accessible to people able to identify themselves as adult learners, using a predominantly constructivist discourse, and as democratic citizens, using a democratic participation discourse aligned to the values of a "new South Africa" as understood by the producers of the text.

Findings and their relevance

This thesis began by asking how distance education texts reach and teach an increasingly diverse audience in the "new South Africa". Both the CS/Unisa and the ISS/Aseca texts are key new distance texts which, while not attempting to do the same educational work at the same level, do attempt to find "new South Africans" and construct meaningful identities for them as learners and members of social groups. In order to analyse how the texts do this, I constructed a conceptual "toolkit" from the literature of distance education, the analysis of texts, learning style theories, and feminist and intercultural research on ways of learning. These conceptual tools make it possible to analyse the texts from two perspectives: first, that of the producers of the texts and second, that of the readers. I demonstrated how the "toolkit" can be applied to the texts in a three-phase framework. This I did by describing each text, interpreting the learning styles, learner and social identities it constructs and assessing the discourses which sustain these identities in the context of a newly democratic South Africa.

This study demonstrates that there are no neutral or value-free choices in the construction and presentation of a distance education text. Each choice is bound up with the construction of particular ways of learning, social identities, and discourses, which inevitably include some learners and exclude others. As shown in the interpretation and explanation of the analysis,

some text strategies will lead to wider points of access for readers, while others will lead to narrower access points.

This study shows that the neglected, textual teaching voice which operates as part of the metadiscourse (Crismore, 1989), is a key to the construction of inclusive, flexible texts for diverse audiences.

Producers of distance texts construct textual voices which interact with learners. South African distance texts have tended to address readers in an impersonal, remote and authoritarian manner. This is partly due to the belief that doing so will reach a wider range of learners. However, the above study shows that an impersonal teaching style is only one of several possible modes of interacting with learners and will tend to inspire only those learners whose learning styles and learner identities respond well to it. The challenge in creating distance education texts for a "new South Africa" is in finding new ways to interact with learners. The identity of the teacher's voice and the quality of listening with which it receives the learner's responses is important for the accessibility of the text. For it is this voice which mediates the content of the course for the reader, positioning the reader in certain ways and thus contributing to the construction of the range of learner and social identities which make available a wider or narrower point of access.

Formal education demands from the learner the ability to work with abstract logical problems and hypothetical states of affairs. This expertise is "communicated, demonstrated and assessed in ways that depend on shared rules of interpretation", or as Mercer and Edwards (1987:358) also term them, "ground-rules for mutual understanding that largely remain implicit". The ground-rules in the pedagogic interaction define which kinds of answers are appropriate, what sorts of written answers are expected, what sorts of experience, behaviours and speech are required. The metadiscourse is required to explain these ground-rules as far as possible.

However, the metadiscourse is also required to construct a respectful, supportive relationship with the learner, in which the reader's knowledge and experience is drawn into the course content. This is particularly important in a country emerging from repressive practices which silenced large sections of the population. The issue of accessible distance texts benefits from

an experiential theory of learning, which is "associated with the move away from perceptions of knowledge as objectively determined, neutral and culture free" (Thorpe et al, 1993: 7-8).

This study finds, therefore, that the metadiscourse is important in creating an inspiring relationship with the learner. It can be used to discuss the text's goals with the learner and to explicate the ground-rules for the interaction, while validating the learner's agency and knowledge. The metadiscourse can be used to point to a variety of ways of learning and to arbitrate a variety of sometimes conflicting discourses.

This study suggests that text strategies which affirm the agency of the learner, in concert with induction into discipline-relevant skills and concepts which are practised in a home-based setting, may enable the learner to cross from the everyday domain to more esoteric domains of social studies. However, this is contested and further research focused on that question is required in the field.

The case study approach to the analysis of teaching texts in their social contexts is a multi-dimensional, multi-layered process, involving its own selection and emphasis by the author. It makes possible a rich and detailed investigation of the possibilities and limitations of each text, but because of the few texts studied, this study is limited in terms of generalisability. Since it relies on the relatively sophisticated reading of a researcher with expertise in the field, it also raises questions about its reliability as a guide to the kinds of identity constructions which typical students of these texts might make. Therefore, ethnographic research on how learners themselves perceive the identities constructed in current distance education texts is recommended. At the same time, it is also important to assess to what extent the text strategies chosen enable learners to access the sophisticated intellectual and theoretical constructs operating in distance texts. Research on the pass rates of students in each course would be a step toward assessing this.

There are three main implications of this study for professional practice. First, the findings of this study are particularly important for first year distance courses, where students are finding out how to learn independently. Second, the study suggests that managers and officials who make decisions about the development of distance texts need to be aware of the complexity of

the process, allocating to it sufficient funds and other resources, as well as time. Third, there is a dire shortage of highly skilled distance education text developers with the capacity to produce texts and evaluators to review texts for a diverse audience in the new South Africa. Therefore, an implication of the study is that training courses, which explicate the multi-dimensional and multi-layered process of producing distance texts for a variety of learners, are required to address this.

Bibliography

- Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education (ACACE) (1983)
Distance Learning and Adult Students. A Review of recent developments in the public education sector. Leicester, England: ACACE.
- Apple, M. W. and Christian-Smith, L. K. (eds) (1991)
The Politics of the Textbook. New York: Routledge.
- Arrien, A. (1993)
The Four-fold Way: Walking the Paths of the Warrior, Teacher, Healer and Visionary. San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Bates, Tony. (1983)
Trends in the use of audio-visual media in distance education systems. In Sewart, D., Keegan, D. and Holmberg, B. (eds) Distance Education: International Perspectives. Kent: Croom Helm Ltd and Manuka, Australia: Croom Helm Australia.
- Bateson, Gregory. (1987)
Steps To An Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology. Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc.
- Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R. and Tarule, J.M. (1986)
Women's Ways of Knowing. USA: Basic Books, Inc.
- Bernstein, Basil. (1975)
Class, Codes and Control. Vol. 3. Towards a Theory of Educational Transmissions. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Bernstein, Basil. (1981)
On the classification and framing of educational knowledge. In Young, Michael. F. D. (ed) Knowledge and Control: New directions for the sociology of education. London: Collier-Macmillan Publishers.
- Bernstein, Basil. (1993)
The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse. Vol. 4. Class, Codes and Control. London: Routledge.
- Bond, Christopher. (1996)
Using Experiential Learning as an Agent of Culture Change in UK Higher Education. Paper presented at ICEL 1996 conference on Reconstruction and Development: Experiential Learning in a Global Context, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Bondi, Liz. (1991)
Towards a Non-Essentialist Feminist Pedagogy. Gender and Education. Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 87-90.

- Bonham, L.A. (1989)
 Using Learning Style Information, Too. New Directions for Continuing Education: Effective Teaching Styles. No. 43. San Francisco, Oxford: Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers.
- Breier, M., Watters, K., Gibson, G., Taetsane, M. and Sait, L. (1995)
 Working Around the Written Word: Literacy Strategies among Unschooled Workers. Paper prepared for the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education's International Conference on Adult Education and Training, 7-10 November 1995, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Brookes, A-L. (1992)
Feminist Pedagogy: An Autobiographical Approach. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing.
- Brown, G and Yule G. (1991)
Discourse Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burge, E. J. and Frewin, C. C. (1989)
 Self-Directed Learning in Distance Learning. In Titmus, Colin J. (ed) Lifelong Education for Adults: An International Handbook. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Cashdan, A. and Lee, V. (eds) (1971)
Learning Styles. Portsmouth: The Open University Press.
- Charnley, A. H., Osborn, M. and Withnall, A. (1981)
A Review of Existing Research in Adult and Continuing Education. Vol. 4. Open Learning and Distance Education. Leicester: National Institute of Adult Education (England and Wales).
- Cherryholmes, Cleo. H. (1988)
Power and Criticism. Poststructural investigations in education. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Clark, Jonathan. (1993)
An Ethnographic investigation into the development and trialing of more accessible text materials for second language teaching and learning in Physical Science. A dissertation for the degree of Master of Education, University of Cape Town.
- Coulthard, Malcolm. (1987)
 Evaluative text analysis. In Steele, R. and Threadgold, T. (eds) Language Topics. Essays in honour of Michael Halliday, Vol. 2. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Craig, A.P. (1989)
 The conflict between the familiar and unfamiliar. In South African Journal of Higher Education. Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 166-171.

- Craig, A. P. and Bradbury, J. L. (1994)
A Guide to Learning. Kenwyn: Juta and Co Ltd.
- Crismore, Avon. (1989)
Rhetorical Form, Selection and Use of Textbooks. In De Castell, S., Luke, A., and Luke, C. (eds) (1989) Language, Authority and Criticism: Readings on the School Textbook. London: The Falmer Press.
- Crismore, Avon. (1985)
Metadiscourse in Social Studies Texts. Technical Report No. 366. Centre for the Study of Reading, Illinois University, Urbana. Cambridge, Mass.: Bolt, Beranek and Newman, Inc.
- Cross, M. (1994)
Education for a national culture in South Africa: problems and solutions. In Flanagan, W., Hemson, C., Muller, J. and Taylor, N. (eds) Vintage Kenton. A Kenton Education Association Commemoration. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.
- Cunningham, I. (1987)
Openness and Learning to Learn. In Hodgson, V. E., Mann, S. J., and Snell, R. (1987) (eds) Beyond Distance Teaching - Towards Open Learning. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Daniel, J. (1992)
A World-wide Perspective on Open Learning. Paper presented at Saide Inaugural Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- De Castell, Suzanne., Luke, Allan., and Luke, Carmen. (eds) (1989) Language, Authority and Criticism: Readings on the School Textbook. London: The Falmer Press.
- Egan, Kieran. (1989)
The Shape of the Science Text: A Function of Stories. In De Castell, S, Luke, A, and Luke, C (eds) Language, Authority and Criticism. London: The Falmer Press.
- Ehrman, Madeleine. (1990)
Psychological Factors and Distance Education. The American Journal of Distance Education. Vol. 4. No. 1.
- Emerson, R. W. (undated)
Emerson's Essays and Representative Men. London: Collins' Clear-Type Press.
- Enkvist, Nils. E. (1987)
Text strategies: single, dual, multiple. In Steele, R. and Threadgold, T. (eds) Language Topics. Essays in honour of Michael Halliday, Vol. 2. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

- Ensor, Paula. (1994)
 Constructing "Good Practice": Issues of apprenticeship and alienation in an initial mathematics teacher education programme. Paper presented at Kenton Education Association Conference, Gordon's Bay, South Africa.
- Esland, G. (1981)
 Language and Social Reality. In Social Aspects of Language, Milton Keynes: The Open University Press.
- Fairclough, Norman. (ed) (1992)
Critical Language Awareness. Harlow, Essex: Longman Group UK Ltd.
- Faith, K. (1988)
Toward New Horizons for Women in Distance Education: International Perspectives. London: Routledge.
- Farrell, J. P. and Heyneman, S. P. (eds) (1989)
Textbooks in the Developing World: Economic and Educational Choices. Washington: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.
- Fincham, Navona. (1994)
 An account of the constructions that student teachers and first year teachers place on expert knowledge. A paper prepared towards a proposal for a masters degree in primary teacher education. School of Education, University of Cape Town, South Africa.
- Fingeret, Arlene. (1983)
 Social Network: A new perspective on independence and illiterate adults. Adult Education Quarterly. Vol. 33, No 3.
- Gardner, Howard. (1985)
Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.
- Gee, James. (1990)
Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses. Basingstoke, Hampshire: The Falmer Press.
- Graddol, David. (1993)
 Textual strategies for diverse audiences. In Bird, J., Hewitt, J., Hilton, J., Morrison, G., Powell, H., Slaven, G. and Webber, R. (eds) Dunford Seminar Report 1993. Language issues in distance education. Manchester: The British Council.
- Gultig, J. (1992)
 Educating teachers for a "new" South Africa: What role can distance education play? Paper presented at Saide Inaugural Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa.

- Halliday, M.A.K. (1975)
Learning how to mean: Explorations in the development of language. London: Edward Arnold Publishers.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1978)
Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning. London: Edward Arnold Publishers.
- Halliday, M.A.K. and Hasan, R. (1989)
Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective. Victoria: Deakin University.
- Harding, Sandra. (ed) (1987)
Feminism and Methodology. Social Science Issues. Indiana: Indiana University Press and Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Harley, G. S. (1992)
Distance Education in South Africa: Higher Education. Paper presented at the South African Institute for Distance Education (Saide) Inaugural conference, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Hayes, Elisabeth. (1989)
Insights from Women's Experiences for Teaching and Learning. New Directions for Continuing Education: Effective Teaching Styles. No 43, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers. p. 55-66.
- Heidt, E. U. (1978)
Instructional Media and the Individual Learner: A Classification and Systems Appraisal. London: Kogan Page.
- Hodgson, V. E. Mann, S. J. and Snell, R. S. (eds) (1987)
Beyond Distance Teaching Towards Open Learning. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Holmberg, B. (1983)
Guided didactic conversation in distance education. In Sewart, D., Keegan, D. and Holmberg, B. (eds) Distance Education: International Perspectives, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd.
- Honey, Peter. and Mumford, Alan. (1992)
The Manual of Learning Styles. Ardingly House, Maidenhead, Berkshire: Peter Honey.
- Houston, Jean. (1982)
The Possible Human: A course in enhancing your physical, mental and creative abilities. Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, Inc.

International Extension College (1979)

Writing for Distance Education: A manual for writers of distance teaching texts and independent study materials. Cambridge: International Extension College.

Kaye, A. R. (1989)

Distance Learning. In Titmus, Colin J. (ed) Lifelong Education for Adults: An International Handbook. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Kember, David. (1991)

Writing Study Guides. Bristol: Technical and Educational Services Ltd.

Kolb, David. A. (1984)

Experiential Learning: Experience as The Source of Learning and Development. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Kolb, David. (1993)

The process of experiential learning. In Thorpe, M., Edwards, R. and Hanson, A. (eds) The Culture and Processes of Adult Learning. London: Routledge in association with The Open University.

Kornfield, Jack. (1994)

A Path with Heart: A Guide through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life. London: Rider, an imprint of Ebury Press.

Ladner, J. A. (1987)

Introduction to Tomorrow's Tomorrow: The Black Woman. In Harding, S (ed) Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues. Indiana: Indiana University Press and Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Langhan, D. P. (1993)

The Textbook as a Source of Difficulty in Teaching and Learning. A final report of the Threshold Project, Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council Publishers and Marik Publishing.

Lee, V. (1981)

Linguistic and Social Determinism. In Social Aspects of Language, Milton Keynes: The Open University Press.

Lemmer, E. M., Bergh, A-M., van der Linde, N., van Niekerk, P. and van Wyk, N. (1995)

Distance Learners and their Experience of Text. Report of a research project conducted under the auspices of the Faculty of Education and the Institute for Educational Research of the University of South Africa. Pretoria: Institute for Educational Research, University of South Africa.

Light, P. and Butterworth, G. (eds) (1993)

Context and Cognition: Ways of Learning and Knowing. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

- Luke, A. (1989)
 Open and Closed Texts: The Ideological/Semantic Analysis of Textbook Narratives. Journal of Pragmatics Vol. 13 Part 1, North-Holland: Elsevier Science Publishers B. V., p. 53-80.
- Luke, Carmen., de Castell, Suzanne. and Luke, Allan. (1989)
 Beyond Criticism: The Authority of the School Textbook. In de Castell, S., Luke, A. and Luke, C. Language, Authority and Criticism. London: The Falmer Press.
- Luke, C. and Gore, J. (1992)
 Women in the Academy: Strategy, Struggle, Survival. In Luke, C. and Gore, J. (eds) Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy. New York: Routledge.
- Mercer, Neil. (1993)
 Culture, context and the construction of knowledge in the classroom. In Light, P. and Butterworth, G. (eds) Context and Cognition: Ways of Learning and Knowing. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Mercer, Neil and Edwards, Derek. (1987)
 Ground-rules for mutual understanding: A social psychological approach to classroom knowledge. In Mayor, B. M. and Pugh, A. K. (eds) Language, Communication and Education. London: Croom Helm in association with the Open University Press.
- Millar, C. J. (1983)
 Educational Case Studies: An Introduction to a Research Perspective. In Steinberg, M.B. and Philcox, S.E. (eds) Research Methods for Higher Degrees. Cape Town: Faculty of Education, University of Cape Town.
- Moelwyn-Hughes, J. T. (c 1990)
Learning Styles of Some South African University Students. Johannesburg: Academic Staff Development Centre, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Moore, Michael. G. (1985)
 Adult learning at a distance. Paper presented at Conference on Effective Teaching at a Distance, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA.
- Moore, Michael. G. (1986)
 Learners and Learning at a Distance. Keynote address presented at Distance II Conference: Improving Teaching at a Distance. August 7. Madison, Wisconsin, USA.
- Muller, Johan and Taylor, Nick. (1995)
Schooling and Everyday Life: Knowledges Sacred and Profane. Unpublished paper. Faculty of Education Staff Seminar, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa.

- Myss, Caroline. (1996)
Anatomy of the Spirit: The Seven Stages of Power and Healing. Toronto: Bantam Books.
- National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) Language Research Group (1992)
Language. Cape Town: Oxford University Press/NECC.
- Ngengebule, T., Glennie, J. and Perold, H. (1992)
 Distance Education: How can it contribute to adult education for a democratic South Africa? Paper presented at Saide Inaugural Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Northedge, Andy. (1995)
 Developing and Sequencing Concepts in Course Materials. Seminar presented at Roggebaai College, Roggebaai, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Peat, F. David. (1996)
Blackfoot Physics. A Journey into the Native American Universe. London: Fourth Estate Limited.
- Reason, Peter. (1988)
Human Inquiry in Action: Developments in New Paradigm Research. London: SAGE Publications.
- Rosen, H. (1981)
 The Development of Social Views of Language. In Social Aspects of Language. Milton Keynes: The Open University Press.
- Rowntree, Derek (1985)
Developing Courses for Students. London: Harper and Row Ltd.
- Rudestam, K.E. and Newton, R.R. (1992)
Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process. London: SAGE Publications.
- Saide (South African Institute for Distance Education) on behalf of the African National Congress (1995)
Open Learning and Distance Education in South Africa: Report of an International Commission, January - April, 1994. Manzini, Swaziland: Macmillan Boleswa Publishers (Pty) Ltd.
- Sewart, D., Keegan, D. and Holmberg, B. (eds) (1983)
Distance Education: International Perspectives. Kent: Croom Helm Ltd and Manuka, Australia: Croom Helm Australia.
- Smith, Frank. (1983)
Essays into Literacy: Selected Papers and Some Afterthoughts. Portsmouth: Heinemann Educational Books.

- Snell, Robin. (1987)
 The Challenge of Painful and Unpleasant Emotions. In Hodgson, V. E., Mann, S. J. and Snell, R. S. (eds) Beyond Distance Teaching Towards Open Learning. Milton Keynes: Open University Press
- Steinberg, M.B. and Philcox, S.E. (eds) (1983)
Research Methods for Higher Degrees. Cape Town: Faculty of Education, University of Cape Town.
- Swift, Don. (1992a)
 Distance Education and Open Learning. Paper prepared for the Saide Inaugural Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Swift, Don. (1992b)
 Closing Address presented at Saide Inaugural Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- The New London Group.(1996)
 A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures. Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 66, No. 1, p. 60-92.
- Thesen, Lucia. K. (1994)
Voices in Discourse: Re-thinking shared meaning in academic writing. A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Town, South Africa.
- Thompson, Jane. (1983)
Learning Liberation: Women's Response to Men's Education. London: Croom Helm.
- Thompson, William Irwin. (ed) (1987)
Gaia: A Way of Knowing. Political Implications of the New Biology. Hudson, New York: Lindisfarne Press.
- Thompson, William Irwin. (ed) (1991)
Gaia 2: Emergence. The New Science of Becoming. Hudson, New York: Lindisfarne Press.
- Thorpe, Mary. (1988)
Evaluating Open and Distance Learning. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited.
- Thorpe, M., Edwards, R. and Hanson, A. (eds) (1993)
Culture and Processes of Adult Learning, London: Routledge in association with The Open University.
- Titmus, Colin J. (1989)
 (ed) Lifelong Education for Adults: An International Handbook. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

- Tough, Allen. (1978)
Major Learning Efforts: Recent Research and Future Directions. Adult Education.
Vol. 28, No. 4.
- Toye, M. (1989)
Learning Styles. In Titmus, Colin, J (ed) Lifelong Education for Adults: An International Handbook. Oxford: Pergamon Press, p. 226-233.
- Van Dijk, Teun. A. (1985)
Handbook of Discourse Analysis Vol. 4: Discourse analysis in society. London:
Academic Press.
- Van Wyk, N., Bergh, A-M., Lemmer, E. M., van der Linde, N. and van Niekerk, P. (1995)
Giving Students Voice: Qualitative Research on Distance Learners and their
Experience of Text. Paper presented at Kenton Association Conference, Rhodes
University, Grahamstown, South Africa.
- Venezky, Richard. L. (1992)
Textbooks in School and Society. In Jackson, P. W. (ed) Handbook of Research on
Curriculum. A project of the American Educational Research Association. New
York: Macmillan Publishing Company, p. 436-461.
- Walker, M. (1994)
Introduction: Risking Cacophony. In Leibowitz, B. and Walker, M. (eds) AD
Dialogues 3: Voices, Development and Learning. Bellville: Academic Development
Centre, University of the Western Cape.
- Walkerdine, V. (1992)
Progressive pedagogy and political silence. In Luke, C. and Gore, J. (eds) Feminisms
and Critical Pedagogy. New York: Routledge.
- Weil, Susan. W. (1993)
Access: towards education or miseducation? Adults imagine the future. In Thorpe,
M., Edwards, R. and Hanson, A. (eds) Culture and Processes of Adult Learning.
London: Routledge in association with The Open University.
- Wood, Tahir. (ed) (1995)
Paradigms: Journal for Staff Research and Debate at Peninsula Technikon, 1.
Bellville: Paradigms Editorial Board in association with the Research Committee of
Peninsula Technikon, p. 47-61.

Newspaper Articles

Bosch, S-J. (1996)

Mass Higher Education Requires Massive Pooling of Resources in Workplace:
Employment Opportunities. Supplement to The Argus, June 5 1996, p.1.

Personal Communication

Alexander, L. (1995)

Matshanda, N. (1995, 1996)

McMillan, J. (1996)

Shefer, T. (1997)

UNIT 3

ABET in the cities, townships and rural areas



1. Where people live

Much of the Reconstruction and Development Programme deals with the problems of communities. As you saw in unit 2, the RDP makes various statements about the way in which ABET can improve the quality of life of people in various communities.

The areas where people live influence ABET in many ways.

In the previous two study units we focused on different kinds of communities in South Africa. In this unit we shall explore the difference between urban and rural communities in more detail.



For example, we all know that there are communities in rural areas, urban areas, squatter settlements, informal settlements and so on. But what do these words actually mean? This is what we shall be discussing in this study unit.

If someone asked you to explain the difference between a rural and an urban area, you would probably think: 'That is not a difficult thing to do.' For example, all of us know that a cattle farm in the far Northern Transvaal is in a rural area, and that the high-rise flats of Hillbrow in Johannesburg are in an urban area. In this unit, we want to find out more about these areas, and we shall be looking for answers to the following questions about the areas where people live:

KEY QUESTIONS

1. What do we mean when we use the words rural and urban?
2. Are there areas that are neither rural nor urban?
3. Why do people move from one area to another?
4. What are the problems of life in rural and urban areas?
5. What are the job opportunities in each of these areas?
6. What are the development possibilities?
7. What role can ABET play in helping to develop different types of area?

2. What do we mean by urban and rural areas?

Why do you, as an ABET practitioner, need to understand the distinction between urban and rural areas? The reason is that the area in which you work will influence what, how and where you will teach your students. When you read the case study in unit 1, you probably noticed that what happened in the rural ABET programme was strongly influenced by the needs of the Xhugxwala learners. Learning needs are often linked to the areas in which the learners live. So the many differences between urban areas and rural areas, mean that the learners who live in these areas have different needs.

We can usually identify an urban area by looking at the level of the services that are provided. Examples of these services are

- electricity
- tarred roads
- health services
- education services
- businesses and industries

STUDY SKILLS Studying pictures

In this section you will be looking closely at pictures and thinking about how they work as images. Pictures tell us stories. We usually 'read' these stories instantly, although we may not be conscious of doing so. 'Reading' pictures in a more conscious way is a very useful skill to develop, because you will 'read' more of the details of the story, and you will learn more. 'Reading' a picture involves, first of all, thinking of questions as you look, such as: 'What sort of place is this?' 'If this was a moving picture, like in a movie, what might happen next?' 'Where have I seen a picture like this before? What is the text trying to remind me of?' The next step is to write down notes of possible answers to these questions. The note-taking is what brings out the details of the story. When you write down an idea, you often find yourself thinking about other ideas as well. At this stage, it is important to write your notes very quickly, on any piece of paper, just to let your thoughts come out. You could even jot some notes here, in this book, next to the pictures. Later you can re-write the notes neatly and keep them in your file, with the rest of your notes. In this unit, we ask you some questions ourselves. Make sure you write down some notes. Then other ideas and questions will come to you. After that you will be able to analyse pictures for yourself.

ACTIVITY 1

Look at the following photographs and decide, for each of them, whether they show a rural or an urban area. What services does the one area have that are not available in the area shown in the other picture?





Here are our answers. The first picture shows that there are services such as tarred roads, electricity, shops, businesses and so on. These are not shown in the second picture. The first picture shows an urban area, and the second picture shows a rural area.

Rural areas
lack many services.

Most of the services in the list given before the study skills box are available in urban areas. In rural areas, on the other hand, these services are not all available, and the services that are provided are often inadequate. In addition, there are fewer people living in rural areas than in urban areas; so size of population is another difference between these areas. Often, most of the people who live in rural areas are involved in subsistence farming. This means that they farm in order to produce just enough for themselves and their families. (Subsistence farmers do not produce anything extra to sell. Because of this, they have no cash to pay for services. Where a whole community is based on subsistence farming, it has no way of trading to bring money into the area. So it has no money to pay for roads, electricity and other services.)

2.1 Are there areas that are neither rural nor urban?

In South Africa, however, it is not always easy to divide areas so clearly into the categories of urban or rural. Consider the following description of the Fernie Diepdale area in Kangwane.

CASE STUDY 1

Fernie Diepdale is a settlement of about 60 000 people in the Eastern Transvaal. It is situated in what was formerly known as the homeland of Kangwane. It came into existence during the 1960s as a

resettlement camp for people who were removed as part of the apartheid policy from so-called 'black spots' (farming areas inhabited by Africans scattered among farms owned by whites) in the region.

Soon people who had previously worked as labourers on farms in the neighbourhood started to settle in Fernie Diepdale. People settled there even though there were almost no local job opportunities. This was largely because they felt they had nowhere else to go. It was difficult to settle in the big towns such as Johannesburg, because of the government's influx control policies, and because housing there was very scarce and very expensive. They could not go back to the farms either, because a lot of the farm work on white-owned farms was done by machines, so the people were often not needed on these farms any more.

Fernie Diepdale now has a population that is larger than the population of many large towns, but it does not have a single tarred street, it has no electricity and no street lights. There is no post office, supermarket, hospital, magistrate's office or factory in Fernie Diepdale. Also, there are very few men. Most of the young men, and some of the younger women, are absent for most of the year. They generally work in the FWV area, and only return home over long weekends or at Christmas. There are a number of schools in Fernie Diepdale, though, and a clinic that is visited by a doctor once a week. Fernie Diepdale does not have a municipality, or a mayor. Instead, it falls under the jurisdiction of the local chief, who, for a small fee, allocates land to newcomers to Fernie Diepdale. Land is therefore not bought and sold in Fernie Diepdale, and people are very attached to their plots, because they say that they would not be able to get land that cheaply in any other place. Some of the residents of Fernie Diepdale own cattle which graze wherever they want to, and most people own some goats or chickens. Most people have fruit trees in their backyards, and a few people try to grow maize during the rainy season.¹

ACTIVITY 2

Take a sheet of notepaper, and make two columns. Head one column 'rural areas' and the other 'urban areas'. Now read the description of Fernie Diepdale again. As you read, make notes under the headings 'rural area' and 'urban area' of all the things

1 This case study is based on an unpublished research report on the Fernie Diepdale area, undertaken by D. Gelderblom in 1989.

about Fernie Diepdale that you think are characteristic of each of these areas.

After you have completed the notes, ask yourself whether you think Fernie Diepdale is an urban or a rural area.

It is sometimes difficult to classify areas as either urban or rural.

Although this is something we can argue about, it seems that Fernie Diepdale cannot be clearly classified as either 'urban' or 'rural'. It is in fact something in between the two. In terms of population, Fernie Diepdale should count as an urban area, since it is much bigger than many towns in South Africa. Normally, if a place has a population of anything between 500 and 10 000 people, it is regarded as 'urban'. Another thing that would make it problematic to classify Fernie Diepdale as 'rural' is the fact that although the people own goats, chickens and a few cows, they do not actually make a living from agriculture.

However, Fernie Diepdale does not have the level of services associated with an urban area, such as tarred roads or electricity, or the kinds of businesses and industries we find in urban areas. It does not have a local authority either, which disqualifies it (according to the criteria used in the South African census) from being regarded as urban.

In most cases it is not so difficult to decide whether an area is rural or urban. You will agree that examples like Johannesburg, or Welkom, or East London, are much easier to classify.

There are many places just like Fernie Diepdale scattered all over the former homelands of South Africa. In fact, a significant part of the population of our country lives in areas like Fernie Diepdale. The measures that were taken as part of the policy of apartheid, such as influx control and population relocation, are chiefly responsible for the existence of such areas. Now that the apartheid laws have been removed, there are other reasons for their continued existence, such as the fact that it is cheaper for poor people to live in these areas than in the urban areas. So we should not think that these places will simply disappear now that apartheid has disappeared.

ACTIVITY 3

If you were an ABET practitioner in one of the rural areas, how would this type of environment influence your teaching? To answer this question, think about how your learners would get

to your classes; what specific learning needs they might have, and what their particular problems may be. Write down your ideas on a piece of paper.

As ABET practitioners, we need to think about how the needs of our learners will be influenced by whether they live in an urban area or in a rural area. Look again at the case study in unit 1, and note how Mrs Radebe has to adapt her classes to the specific learning needs of her learners. In the rural areas, as we have seen, there is often no electricity, and no transport. If an ABET practitioner wants to hold classes at night, after the women have completed their daily tasks, what impact will these circumstances have on the classes?

But there is something else we must remember as well, and that is that not all learners remain in a particular area forever. People often move between the rural and the urban areas. We call this movement *migration*

3. The migration from rural to urban areas in the developing world

Now that we have discussed what we mean by the terms 'rural' and 'urban', it is important to give attention to the movement or migration of people from the one kind of area to the other. This process is a world-wide phenomenon, and it is at present taking place at an especially rapid pace in the developing world

In the developing world, people tend to migrate from rural to urban areas.

The fact that people move (or migrate) to the urban areas is not necessarily a problem in itself, because the conditions in the rural areas from which these people come are often much worse than conditions in the towns. Many people improve their situation by migrating to town since the rural economy is often unable to provide them with employment and/or the necessary services. But when very large numbers of people move to the towns, it is a great challenge for the urban authorities to provide them with employment and acceptable housing and services in the urban areas.

LESSON 2 Where you are in time

Contents

1. About this lesson
2. Yourself in time
3. Nofikile's history
4. How to make a time-line
5. Finding out more about your history
6. How to preview a text
7. Summary

1. About this lesson

In the previous lesson, you met the Manyosi family and found out what Social Studies is about. You'll use the skills and knowledge that you have learnt in this lesson.

Whether you are old or young, you have a past, a present and a future. You can call this your place in time. If you know about your own history and your place in time, you'll be able to understand yourself and your life better. This lesson will help you to locate yourself in time.

In this lesson you will:

- find out about Nofikile's family history;
- write about your own family history;
- make a time-line;
- discover ways to understand the past better;
- learn how to preview texts.

2. Yourself in time

The first human beings - so runs the legend among the BaTswana - came out of a hole in the earth, or perhaps a bed of reeds; accompanied by a one-sided agent of God (Modimo). The agent of God returned to the earth, leaving people and animals to multiply and fill the world.

Seidman, Judy, *In our own Image*, Gaborone: Foundation for Education with production, 1990, p71.

This is a legend or story explaining where human beings came from. This story shows one way that people used to try and understand their history. When you think of yourself, you have a history stretching far back in time, to when human beings

Glossary

locate:
to find out where something or someone is

legend:
an old story handed down from the past

agent:
someone who organises things for other people

You'll find out more about the creation stories in Level 5 Unit 8.

first walked on earth. Those early human beings were your ancestors or **forebears**. Of course, you won't be able to remember this history. You'll read about it in books or hear stories in your community.

But there is another kind of history that you do know and remember. That's the history of yourself, your parents, your grandparents and maybe even your great-grandparents. In other words, your family history. Knowing about your family history helps you to find out where you fit into time.

In the next section, you'll find out about Nofikile's place in time.

3. Nofikile's history



The taste of hot, sweet mealies straight from the coals! Mmm. That was my childhood, in a village called Kotana nestled in the Transkei hills. My granny tells how the 1913 Land Act forced the family to leave their home in King William's Town. That's when they settled in Kotana. My mother was born many years later, in 1935. So Kotana was always her home. My mother was just nineteen when she met and married my strong, handsome father. I was born on a hot summer night in December 1960. Soon afterwards my father got a job digging for gold in the Jo'burg mines. He died underground and the pain of his death still hurts our family. Although I love my home, I moved from Kotana when I married my husband Zuma. We live in KwaMashu now with our four beautiful children.

Nofikile's story is about her family and where they lived. You call this kind of story a family history. I'm sure you understand Nofikile better, now that you know something about her background.

This text is written in the form of a personal **narrative**. When you talk about yourself and your life, it's called a personal narrative. In other words, it is your own description or experience of things. A personal narrative is always written in the first person. This means that you use pronouns like 'I' and 'me'. A personal narrative is usually written in the past tense, because it is about things that have already happened. You'll read many other personal narratives because they are used throughout

Glossary

forebears:
ancestors

narrative:
a story

this Unit and other Units. They are an interesting, lively and personal way to share information.

You'll get a chance to write your own personal narrative in Activity 1.

ACTIVITY 1

In this activity, you'll think about your own family history. Take about 30 minutes to do this activity.

Write a personal narrative describing your family history. Your narrative should be about 100 words long.

COMMENT

Well done. You've completed your first activity for this lesson. You've written down your own family history. In this way, you have thought about your past and located yourself in time. You've also learnt the skill of writing a personal narrative. Now you're ready for the next section.

4. How to make a time-line

A time-line is a helpful way of arranging information about events that have happened at different times. Leslie Witz, the author of the book *Write Your Own History*, explains more about time-lines.

One of the first steps in understanding history is to get a clear picture of when events occurred. You need to make the order in which historical events happened clear. You can do this by looking at dates and times.

The easiest way to organise the information is to draw up a time sequence. We call this a chronological table or a time-line.

Adapted from Witz, Leslie *Write Your Own History*, Johannesburg: Sached/Ravan, 1988, p46-9.

Let's arrange the information about Nofikile's history into a time-line. You will notice that Nofikile's personal narrative does not contain the exact dates on which events happened.

Fortunately, there are many words and phrases in English which can give us clues about the order and sequence of events. People often use these phrases when they are talking. You'll

Glossary

chronological:
arranged in the order of time

sequence:
the order in which things happen.

Hint

Words that show the passing of time

before
after/afterwards
while
during this
period/time/year
at first
finally
on the following day
a week/month/year later
previously
following this
subsequently
soon/immediately
last year/month
since
next day/month/year

find a list of some of the most useful words and phrases in the margin on the previous page.

Date Events in Nofikile's Life

- 1913 Grandparents move to Kotana, Transkei
- 1935 Nofikile's mother is born
- 1954 Nofikile's mother and father marry
 - Nofikile's father goes to work on the mines
- 1960 Nofikile is born
 - Nofikile's father is killed in an accident
 - Nofikile and Zuma marry and move to KwaMashu

As you can see, there are no dates for some of the events in Nofikile's life. But there is enough information to put all the events in the correct chronological order.

In the next activity, you'll practise making your own time-line.

Hints

- 1. Get the information you need for your time-line from the personal narrative you wrote in Activity 1.
- 2. Use Nofikile's time-line to help you make your own.

ACTIVITY 2

The purpose of this activity is for you to practise making a time-line. This activity may take about 15 minutes.

Draw a time-line of your personal history. If you aren't sure how to begin, read the hints in the margin.

COMMENT

I can't comment on your time-line, because I don't know what information you put into it. The important thing is that you practised organising information in chronological order. If you had any problems, read over section 4 again. You can also ask the tutor at your learning centre for help.

Now, let's look at how you can find out more information about your own history.

5. Finding out more about your history

You know a lot of things about your history. You know what you can remember and what you have experienced. You also know the things that people, like your mother and father, grandparents or friends, have told you.

But there are other factors that shape your history that you may not know about. Perhaps the taxes of the apartheid government forced your grandfather to go to the city to earn money. Or perhaps the river flowing past your land dried up because a dam was built further upstream.

As you learnt in Lesson 1, politics, economics, the environment, society and history all affect your life. Information about these factors can give you the context or background for your family history. Let's look at an example. The following text gives you more information about the mines where Nofikile's father went to work.

The gold mines of the Witwatersrand and the country's other mines ran on the exploitation of cheap black labour over many years and the desire of the mining industry to maintain its supply of cheap labour was a driving force behind racial oppression.

Together with a lack of concern for the human rights of its workforce, the mining industry is notorious for the dangers inherent in mining. The dangers of fire, floods and rockfalls are well known and most communities in southern Africa have had men return from the mines maimed or not return at all.

New Ground No 14 Summer 1993/4 p34

This extra information explains that the mines were dangerous places to work in. It gives you a clearer picture about Nofikile's father and why he died on the gold mines. You can see that the extra information you find in books or through talking to others, helps you to understand your own and other people's history with more depth and meaning.

Now let's move on to the next section.

6. How to preview a text

In this section, you'll learn a new skill - previewing. When you preview a text, you work out what the text is about by finding clues from the title, blurb, pictures, captions and sub-headings. Previewing is an excellent skill for two main reasons. Firstly, previewing helps you to develop a framework about the text in your head. This framework helps you to understand the text itself. Secondly, previewing helps give you a context for words or ideas you don't understand.

Here's what the book *English for Everyday* has to say about previewing.

In a world in which we have to cope with a very large amount of information every day, previewing skills are very important. They help us to choose what we need or want to read more carefully.

Glossary

exploitation:
using people in a selfish way which harms them

notorious:
well known for doing something bad

inherent:
a normal or natural part of something

maimed:
injured so that a part of the body is useless

framework:
a basic plan or an outline

Glossary

distracted:
when your attention is taken away by something else

So, previewing means reading the title and the blurb, looking at the pictures and the captions, and asking questions before you read.

Did you know?

At least two billion people, or the majority of people in the Third World, rely on wood as fuel to cook their food. Fuel wood dominates daily life, as increasing amounts of time are spent in finding it and carrying it home.

The Gaia Atlas of Planet Management, London: Pan, 1985, p114.

Previewing an article also helps you make better notes about it if you need to. It gives you an overview of the whole article. You can see where the article begins, how it develops and where it ends. It is easier to work out what the main ideas of an article are after you have previewed it, because previewing helps you to avoid getting distracted by details.

Here's how to preview:

- Read the title of the article. You can guess what an article is about just by looking at the title.
- Read the blurb. Below the title of a newspaper or magazine article, there is usually a small paragraph in bold or dark letters. This is the blurb. It attracts our attention to the article. It also gives us information about the contents of the article.
- Look at the pictures and read the captions. A caption is what is written below a picture and gives you more information about the picture.
- Read the sub-headings if there are any. Sub-headings are headings at the beginning of every section in an article. They are like signposts which show us what information a writer has included in an article.

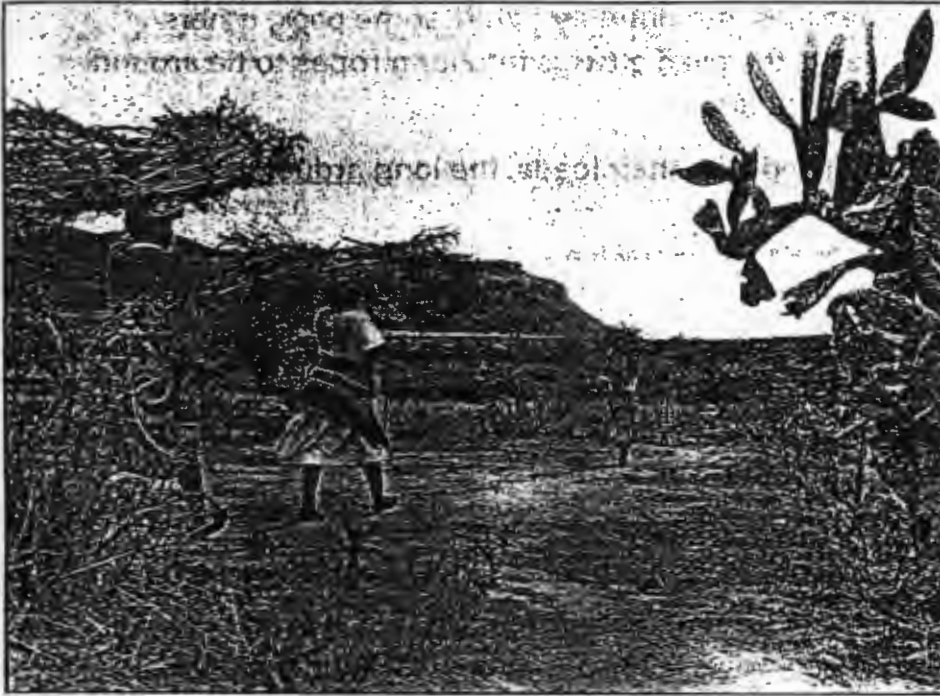
Potenza, Emilia, *English for Everyday: a course in reading, writing and using English*, Johannesburg: Sached/Maskew Miller Longman, 1993, p88.

You can practise previewing in the next activity.

ACTIVITY 3

In this activity, you'll look at a text about rural lives. This text will give you extra information about what Nofikile's life was like in rural Kotana. You'll use this text to learn the skill of previewing. This activity may take about 20 minutes.

The text is on the next page. Do NOT read it now. First answer the questions at the end of the text.



picture

Rural women carrying wood for fuel

caption

Burning energy

title

A typical day of fetching wood begins at the crack of dawn for the women of Palmietfontein in the Herschel district.

blurb

EARLY RISERS

sub-headings

Whoever wakes earliest goes to wake the other eight or so women in the group. Then, armed with the axe, wrapped in rugs, the three hour walk begins.

SHARING FOOD AND TALK

Along the way the women share their food, usually leftovers from the previous day's meals, to replenish energy lost on the way and for the work lying ahead.

Food is not the only thing shared. Village gossip, rumours and tongue-in-cheek conversations help to pass the time. Laughter and giggles punctuate the journey to the foot of the Isiqini mountain, on the border of Lesotho and Herschel.

TAKING A REST

Panting from the tortuous climb, the women heave a sigh of relief on reaching the top. They lie down on rugs for a short breather. Then with renewed strength they take turns in swinging the axe.

MAKING BUNDLES OF WOOD

After chopping all they can carry, the women pack the

Glossary

replenish:
to fill up again

tongue in cheek:
not really meaning what you say

punctuate:
happening at intervals

tortuous:
twisted, winding

heave:
breathe heavily