UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

TIME AND TEACHERS : AN EMPIRICAL AND CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF THE COMPETITION FOR THE AVAILABLE TIME IN THE CLASSROOM PRACTICE OF TEACHERS WORKING IN THE WESTERN CAPE, 1989-1990

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of time in the working lives of teachers in the Western Cape in the years 1989 and 1990.

The study is based upon interviews with twelve teachers, all of whom were currently teaching or who had been teaching in the recent past. The interviews explored the attitudes and practices of the teachers regarding their timetables, free periods, extra-murals, marking practices and lesson preparation, meetings, homework practices, tests and examinations, and professionalism, in so far as these were affected by considerations of time.

The study argues that conflict in schools is produced by the struggle for autonomy, particularly in the classroom practice of teachers, and that this struggle takes the form of competition for control of time.

In particular, the study suggests that there are rankings of power and priorities in schools and that these can be better understood by examining the relationships between time, conflict and autonomy.

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PREFACE

This study could not have been done without the truly stout-hearted help of friends and colleagues. To them all I gratefully say: thank-you.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

This study examines the role played by time in the daily working lives of teachers in schools. In particular, the study looks at the forces which compete for possession of that time.

The study argues that conflict occurs at positional points in the authority structure of the school, and that this conflict may be understood by seeing it as a struggle for teacher-autonomy. The struggle surfaces over many issues. One of these is time. It will be suggested, therefore, that time provides a window through which to see how the struggle for autonomy takes place in the working lives of teachers.

Time is such a pervasive, ever-present element in our lives that it can easily be taken for granted: one of the tasks of this study will be to take the familiar perception of time and to render it unfamiliar, so that the assumptions supporting the given perceptions might be uncovered and examined.

Furthermore, the working lives of teachers are embedded within the organization of the school, the wider community, and the political structures of the country. To understand the struggle for autonomy in the working lives of teachers, then, it is essential to locate the teachers within those contexts.

This chapter will introduce some basic concepts, and will begin the critical processes of uncovering assumptions and locating the teachers and their issues within their contexts.

2. Conflict

The evolution of this study began with an attempt to understand why conflict of one kind or another took place at a Cape Flats secondary school, at which the writer was teaching.

From personal experience at other schools, and because it was well-established in the literature, it was clear that conflict was not peculiar to this school, nor to this area. Indeed, it seemed that conflict of one kind or another was an essential characteristic of many schools, in many places, and that this had been documented and commented upon in a wide variety of studies (e.g., Ball, 1981; Bowles and

Gintis, 1976; Kohl, 1986; Lacey, 1970; Waller, 1965; Willis, 1977; Woods, 1979).

It appeared, even, that schools could be seen as 'sites of struggle', not only in the political sense of the term, but also in the social sense that schools were meeting places for hundreds of people who daily interacted, bringing with them their private interests and agendas. It seemed that whilst many of those interests and agendas were in harmony, many were not, and so schools became places of conflict where struggles took place, some ephemeral, some long-lasting and unresolved. The conflicts, then, appeared to be well-known to teachers and to be well-established in the cultures of schools.

A reading of the studies cited above, and others similar to them, gave some understanding of the struggles in the schools studied. Much depended upon the model used to portray the school or the society in which the school was placed: conflict could be explained along functionalist, Marxist, or other lines depending upon the favoured theoretical approach. It seemed, though, that explanations were restricted to either the macro or the micro view: that it was possible to explain conflict along gross lines of class or other divisions, or to explain it along the lines of organizational dynamics. Although such theoretical approaches could be helpful in appreciating the complex range of conflict types and their explanations, there was

something missing. The difficulty was that those studies looked at British and American schools and what they said necessarily had a limited application to South African schools. There was an additional element in local schools that was undescribed in the overseas literature. This was political conflict set within a fractured, hurting society emerging from decades of formalised racism.

The first problem, then, was this. There seemed to be at least two forms of conflict in our schools. The first was the 'ordinary' conflict that occurs in any organization. The second was political. However, the two forms didn't separate cleanly: there were times when the two forms seemed to be mixed or to change back and forth. Children who were 'naughty' in the classical way all children are naughty could turn into political activists within moments. And with the political demonstration over, their behaviour could return to some form of 'normality' in the classrooms.(1) It seemed that some other kind of explanatory model was needed which would take account of the ephemeral nature of conflict within local schools. This was not to deny the value of traditional conflict models, but to see if it were possible to discover fresh models or to refine the explanations by other means.

It was at this point that a possible solution to the problem presented itself. It seemed that an important aspect of school life had been overlooked or ignored by sociologists of education: this aspect was the social organization of

time.

3. Time

Delamont has stressed the importance of the physical setting of teaching and the temporal context of classrooms (i.e., space and time) by introducing both themes in her (1983) text, Interaction in the Classroom, and by including papers on both themes in her (1984) collection, Readings on Interaction in the Classroom. Although the two themes of space and time are linked, our concern for the moment is with time. Commenting editorially (1984: 39), she points out that the social organization of time is '... one of the most neglected constraints upon teaching ...' And in their paper in this same collection, Ball et al. (1984: 57) conclude an overview of school time by saying:

> Clearly we have gone only a little way here in illuminating the nature of school time. It is a feature of institutional and classroom experience which requires the attention of empirical study. So far, empirically, conceptually and theoretically time has been virtually ignored by sociologists of education as a phenomenal aspect of school. And yet it is a fundamental organizing principle of the everyday life world of schooling; it penetrates deeply into the organizational and curricular experience of the pupil and of the teacher and is a crucial factor in the shaping and ordering of the curriculum in action at every level.

> Also, as we have seen, time may constitute an important issue of conflict between teachers and pupils ...
>
> (emphasis added)

The concern of these writers with time derives from their interactionist position. If they have been read correctly, their concern is not so much with time as a factor in the psychology of learning (which has been well researched; see, for example, Smyth (1985)), but with time's heuristic potential to inform and disclose.

Intriguing questions began to appear: What would a study of time tell us of the ideological pressures bearing down on teachers and students? Would such a study lend substance to the correspondence theory by showing parallels between the school and factory? Were there different forms of time itself: student time, teacher time, classroom time, time as a moment, time as a season (that is, were there multiple meanings to the term _time_?). If it were true that time was literally involved in the workaday conflicts of teachers (for example over simultaneous access to resources), then could it also be true that time was metaphorically involved as well? That is, was it possible that teachers and students struggled metaphorically with one another _over time_? In other words, was there (beyond the literal) a metaphorical level at which teachers and students were competing with one another for something else? And if this were so, what were they competing for?

The struggles needed to be decoded. But how? What were they really fighting over? For a while the most satisfactory answer seemed to be that they were struggling to gain possession not so much of the literal value of time, as its symbolic value. It seemed that possession of time said something symbolically to the other actors. But, what was the message?

It was at this point, while puzzling over the relationship between time and conflict, that an answer suggested itself in conversation: autonomy. (2)

4. Autonomy

One of the characteristics of the State schooling system in South Africa is a continual requirement to render proof. Both students and teachers have to show proof that work has been done, and done competently and timeously: that homework, class assignments, tests and examinations have been written and assessed and that marks have been kept. Record books have to show that the syllabus is being taught methodically and in keeping with the teachers' guides. Class registers of attendance have to be kept, monies have to be collected and accounted for, and lists for this and lists for that have to be compiled and handed in to the office. This administration may take up much of classroom time (because it is usually only when teachers and students are together in class that accounting can be done). As the

accounting is invariably set to a deadline, conflict arises over how classroom time should be used: there is a tension between the need to count heads and the need to pursue the syllabus. The conflict arises precisely because the available classroom time is limited and because, as we shall see, classroom time may rank far down in the school's real scale of priorities. According to the teachers interviewed in this study, a school's rhetoric may well be saying that academic time is important, while an undermining of that academic time may be taking place through an official insistence that other matters be attended to first. This can lead not only to frustration amongst teachers, but to confusion about the real priorities of the school. This issue will be addressed more thoroughly in Chapter Four. In this conflict of priorities, what is really at issue is the extent to which the teacher has the autonomy (in this case, the _expertise authority_) to make decisions at variance with the _positional authority_ of the school hierarchy.

What, then, is meant by a teacher's autonomy?

We may approach autonomy itself by looking first at two other concepts: accountability and responsibility. Morrow (1989: 4) has sought to distinguish between the two in the following:

> One might say that one difference between 'accountable' and 'responsible' is that the former is, in a sense, stronger than the latter. 'Accountability' is more firmly rooted in the notions of justification and

> obligation. My being responsible for something does not place me under an obligation to justify what I do. By contrast, if I am accountable for something then I am obliged to provide a justification for what I do in relation to it. Sockett says that 'To say that an agent is accountable for his actions to another is not merely to say that he is <u>able</u> to deliver an ACCOUNT (sic), but to assert that he is <u>obliged</u> to do so.'
>
> I am not sure whether to 'deliver an account' is the same as to 'provide a justification'. The former might be simply to explain, as opposed to justify, what one has done. Indeed, there are etymological grounds for linking 'accountability' to the idea of 'delivering an account' but then, I think, one needs to go on to say that it is a particularly (sic) <u>kind</u> of account which one is obliged to deliver if one is accountable. Namely, that kind of account which shows why you considered it <u>right</u> to do what you did. And I think such an account is a justification.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

Now, this is a useful statement on the distinction between delivering any kind of account and delivering a particular kind of account. We might find both notions present in what the classroom teachers have to do on a daily basis: they have to count heads, draw up lists, and present these to the office for what might be called <u>bookkeeping</u> purposes. These actions may perhaps be included in Weber's notion of the

written characteristic of a bureaucracy, that written forms of evidence are kept (see Beetham, 1987). On the other hand, what the teacher does goes further than the idea of bookkeeping. For example, he has to show proof that he has marked a class's exercise books. Such a rendering of proof could be required by the head of department, the principal, the subject adviser, or the circuit inspector. Any of these officers has the authority to see not only that the marking has been done (the bookkeeping), but also that the teacher has discharged his pedagogical requirements (that he has marked according to the teachers' guides). It is with both requirements that we find the teacher having to give justification for what he has done. In other words, it is here that the teacher has to answer questions such as, 'Why aren't these books marked?', and, 'Why did you give this mark?'

At first, it might seem that the first question falls under the heading of bookkeeping, but it doesn't: the teacher is being asked to justify his use of time. For, unless the unmarked books are an oversight, they must be the result of the teacher's having made a decision not to mark the books. And that decision the teacher will have to justify. In other words, what appears on the surface to be a bookkeeping question, is really a question about how the teacher has decided to use his time. The teacher may then have to justify his use of time. And when this happens, it can be argued that we are dealing with autonomy.

Returning to Weber's identification of writing as one of the definitional characteristics of a bureaucracy, it could be argued that at the base of this characteristic is a lack of confidence. Indeed, one could say that the State displays a lack of confidence in the teacher: proof of this is that the State continues to inspect the teacher. No matter how competently the teacher was shown to be at the last inspection, there will always be future inspections, which in turn means that the State as a matter of practice continues to doubt the competence, and thus the credibility, of the teacher. Here then, is perhaps a key: the State doesn't operate from a position of trust in its official (that is, the teacher). It usually operates from a position of distrust (hence the bureaucratic need to show proof in writing, rather than relying on the teacher's word for it). The analogy in a court of law would be to regard the accused as guilty until proved innocent. In today's complex world, no one should doubt the need for some forms of written records. That is not at issue here. Rather, it is the State's attitude that the teacher is not competent to make a certain kind of decision. To see that the teacher makes the kinds of decisions the State is satisfied with, the State directs that certain tasks shall be done (the syllabus), how they shall be done (the teachers' guides), and when they shall be done (the timetable). In this way, they strip the teacher of the competence to make independent decisions on the basis of his or her expertise. In other words, acting through its supervisory officials, the State ensures that

the teacher's expertise authority is subject to inspection by the positional authority of its officials. If we are to expect conflict, then, we might predict that it will occur precisely there: around the positions of authority within the hierarchy.

Now, let us approach the notion of autonomy from another direction. Morrow (1989: 2) uses a simple sentence-frame,

K is accountable to L for M

as a way of showing how accountability and responsibility have a double object. That is, if an individual is accountable or responsible, then he is accountable and responsible to someone for something. This is an important statement for it makes it possible to see why teachers find themselves in some conflict situations. This can be seen if the last term in Morrow's sentence-frame is examined. If we accept for the moment that teachers (K) have to give account to those in authority above them (L) for what they have done (M), then we can see that there would be a conflict of purpose if there were disagreement about the nature or meaning of (M). In such a case, the teacher would have a different object or goal to that advocated by the authority. This is precisely where a great deal of conflict seems to originate, for it relates to the very nature and purpose of education and schooling, and is at the heart of curricular debate.

Morrow's sentence-frame contains an important clue to the

nature of autonomy: that accountability and responsibility cannot be exercised in isolation. The sentence-frame implies a relationship with others, even if they are not present. (Indeed, others may have an implied presence in the form of a recognised code of conduct that is adhered to in professional practice. There may also be a professional body capable of sanctioning deviant behaviour, such as the South African Medical Association, and that this would be recognised by practitioners of medicine.)

There is, however, an obverse to the requirement of accountability and responsibility: this is a recognition that the practitioner has the competence to make and execute decisions. After all, one cannot require accountability and responsibility from someone who lacks the ability to discharge the very duties one is scrutinizing. There must be possession of basic ability. Such an ability can be documented or certificated to show proof of training and competence. Thereafter, a certain distance is required on the part of the authority: the authority has to stand back, as it were, and allow the practitioner room to work in, to make and execute those decisions. It would seem, therefore, that having ability is a necessary condition for the requirement of accountability and responsibility. It is in this sense of recognising the ability that we come close to the nature of autonomy: that it is practised within relationships. It cannot be a right exercised in isolation.

There is a balance here, a tension between the rights of the practitioner and the rights of others.

Drawing these qualities together, then, we may say that autonomy is the possession of a recognised competence to make expert decisions within relationships with others.

Further on, after seeing what the interviewed teachers have to say, it will be possible to elaborate on conflict, time and autonomy. For the moment, though, we need to locate the teachers.

5. Context

For the purposes of this study, the term context means the surrounding milieux that envelop the teacher in his or her working life.

It may be helpful to follow Delamont's use of the term setting to begin with, and to develop the meaning of context by building on that. Delamont (1983: 30) sees setting as covering:

> ... all aspects of the temporal and institutional context in which any particular classroom is to be found. The usage, which follows Strauss et al. (1964), could be seen as equivalent to an 'ecological' approach to interaction (Eggleston, 1977). Thus it comprises temporal aspects of classroom interaction, the formal organization of the school, the social and educational

> context, and the physical surroundings in which they take place.

The approach Delamont advocates is interactionist: meaning is made within a setting and is influenced by the setting. In turn, those involved influence the setting as they make their meanings. She goes on to say (1983: 30):

> Classrooms can only be understood when it is accepted that they are situated in time. They are never static. Traditional educational research, both inside and outside classrooms, has neglected this crucial point ... This is partly because setting a situation in its historical context implies change, and social science is notoriously bad at handling social change.

This notion of transience, that settings change, is a most important one in the understanding of teachers and their time.

Let us see what this transience means in terms of classroom time. By <u>classroom time</u> is meant that time during which a teacher and a class are present for instructional purposes. The 'classroom' may be the school gymnasium, soccer field, swimming bath, library, hall, or finally what is known conventionally as a 'classroom': that rectangular room which is the basic architectural form in the familiar formal school. Classroom time is the foundational concept to school time, and most school events can be shown to have a bearing ultimately on classroom time, as we shall see.

School time, oddly, is both linear and cyclical: it has a beginning and an end, yet is repeatable. In this sense it resembles calendar time, with which it runs in parallel. The repeatable units of school time (terms, months, weeks, days, periods) make it cyclical. Teachers are assigned a number of the basic units as 'capital' to work with. In the course of the school year, the teacher must allocate those capital units in such a manner that the task (syllabus) is accomplished within the limits of the time (capital). Under ideal conditions, it might be supposed that the task and time would finish together. In this instrumentalist sense, the job would have been done. However, teachers don't operate under ideal conditions: they operate within the setting of the school, and within the larger contexts of the community and the political structures of the country. It is these enveloping milieux that intrude upon the balance between time and task. This contextual intrusion is what may be called the 'competition' for classroom time, and is the chief focus of this study.

To go back to Delamont, not only does the temporal context change, but so do other aspects. The student population changes. The staff composition changes, sometimes often in the course of the school year. The community climate changes, influenced by factors such as the closing down or opening up of factories. And the political climate changes, leading to shifting perceptions of what schooling and education should be about. A school is more than merely the

buildings and the trees: a school is essentially composed of people, and people are not static. Yet there is a curious duality here: structurally, in terms of rules and traditions and curricula, there may be the odd change, but there is a great permanence about a school. Such a perception exists also in the minds of former students, sometimes years after they have left a school. This is partly what school reunions are about: keeping alive something which they feel should not be allowed to die. It is this transience within a permanence that needs to be recognised in locating an inquiry into the social organization of time.

Kallaway (1984: 1) introducing his milestone collection of papers, Apartheid and Education, puts the case for location and an examination of the given, in the following:

> The schools crisis demands urgent and critical appraisal of the whole enterprise of education in South Africa. Such an investigation requires, first, that education and education policy-making be examined in their own right, within the specific terrains of public and academic debate of administrative policy initiatives, in order to uncover the assumptions which have informed 'common sense' or 'expert' knowledge on these subjects over time. Secondly, and in many ways more problematically, the investigation of educational issues has to be located within the broader context of political, social and economic change if we are to grasp the more general,

> structural significance of shifts in educational policy.
> (emphasis added)

The uncovering of assumptions (or what Burns (1967: 361) has called the '... essentially critical, assumption-testing nature of sociological investigation'), and the location of issues within their contexts are the two essential riders to this exercise of studying teachers and their time. The theoretical application of these riders will begin within the next chapter.

6. Summary

To summarise, it is suggested that three concepts related to the working lives of teachers -- conflict, time, and autonomy -- are interlinked. To understand how they are linked it will be necessary to uncover the assumptions held about them, and to locate those working lives within the contexts of the school, community, and the political structures of the country.

Notes

(1) It is important to note that much of the conflict occurs between teachers, and between teachers and those in authority above them. Teachers are often in sympathy with the goals of the political activism of students, but struggle with the attendant damage being done to their education. The dilemma of divided loyalties is at the root of much teacher conflict over what is happening to classroom time.

(2) This arose in conversation with my supervisor and I thank him for pointing me in the direction of autonomy.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

1. Introduction

At the beginning of this research project, several errors were made. This can best be understood by considering the observations made in the following passages by Glaser and Strauss (1967: 43):

> In concluding this chapter, we wish to emphasize one highly important aspect of generating theory that pervades this and other chapters of our book. Joint collection, coding, and analysis of data is the underlying operation. The generation of theory, coupled with the notion of theory as process, requires that all three operations be done together as much as possible. They should blur and intertwine continually, from the beginning of an investigation to its end. To be sure, in any investigation the tendency is to do all three simultaneously; but in many (if not most) studies of description and verification, there is typically such a definite focus on one operation at a time that the others are slighted or ignored. This definite separation of each operation hinders generation of theory. For example, if data are being coded and a

> fresh analytic idea emerges that jolts the operation, the idea may be disregarded because of pre-established rules or plain routine---thus stifling at that moment the generation of theory.

The first errors were to begin the interviewing with pre-conceived categories, based on my personal experience as a teacher, and then to concentrate on the task of interviewing until it was finished. Only once that was done did the analysis and generation of theory begin.

Glaser and Strauss add (1967: 32):

> Our strategy of comparative analysis for generating theory puts a high emphasis on <u>theory as process</u>; that is, theory as an ever-developing entity, not as a perfected product.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

Also, in the following passage, their commentary (1967: 35) shows further where the research design erred:

> Within these relations existing among social research, substantive theory and formal theory is a design for the cumulative nature of knowledge and theory. The design involves a progressive building up from facts, through substantive to grounded formal theory. (...) This design also suggests that many ethnographic studies and <u>multiple theories</u> are needed so that various substantive and formal areas of inquiry can continue to build up to

> more inclusive formal theories. Such a call for multiple theories is in contrast to the directly monopolistic implications of logico-deductive theories, whose formulators claim there is only one theory for an area, or perhaps even one sociological theory for all areas.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

It seems that the errors lay in approaching the problem of conflict, time and autonomy (a) with preconceived conceptual categories, (b) from a logico-deductive perspective, and (c) because the operation was not seen as a simultaneous process for the generation of theory, but rather as a set of successive operations.

Two theoretical perspectives were initially adopted: these were interactionism (about which, more in a moment), and structural analysis, as developed by Gibson (1984).

Structural analysis was seen as a catch-all solution to the macro-micro problem, one which would over-arch both macro and micro concerns. What was particularly attractive about this was that it sought to restore the notion of competence to the individual, in the face of the de-centering tendencies of structuration. However, after acceptance of the Glaser - Strauss argument, above, this 'monopolistic' approach was abandoned and a reflective search began for a position from which to start the analysis, assuming that it wasn't possible to go back to the interviewees and do the fieldwork all over again. Glaser and Strauss advocate

beginning with a substantive area, rather than at the formal level. Also, as the basic area of ignorance concerned the relatedness of time and conflict (if not also autonomy) in the working lives of Western Cape teachers, the immediate task was to find out from the teachers themselves what was happening, rather than assume some formal understanding and proceed deductively from that.

This view was strengthened by the assumption that the teachers were the mediators of education to the students: they not only mediated the curricula but also served to mediate the societal constraints in which the school was embedded.

If one began with the teachers, rather than with society, what analytical approaches, already developed within school-based research, were available? There was interactionism, with a well-developed set of basic concepts. Together with Gibson's structural analysis, this had been the other initial choice of formal theory. Should this established sociological tradition be set aside completely or was it possible to find some assumptions within interactionism that could be used as points of departure in looking at the basic interview data? On reflection, it seemed that two assumptions, at least, were worth using: these were that people defined situations and that they made meaning within those situations. In other words, there were perceptions and strategies. However, in using these would it not be a case of begging the question? Was it fair to

the analytical procedure to begin with such assumptions? Again on reflection, I decided it was fair. After all, the teachers had been asked about their perceptions of time and conflict, and about their strategies in managing their daily time, both at home and at school. They were already answering those assumptions. It wasn't possible to go back and begin again *de novo*. The data were already gathered. I would have to accept that conceptual categories had already been introduced structurally into the interviews and thus had affected the nature of the data. The ideal of theory as process would have to proceed on that 'contaminated' basis.

This decision meant that it was possible to begin building new hypotheses on the basis of those two assumptions, hypotheses that were not necessarily part of the interactionist tradition. In other words, it was possible to begin developing substantively towards a stage of formal theorising.

It was also possible to begin comparative analysis by examining what other observers had found using these concepts or ones similar to them.

The rest of this chapter, then, will introduce these two basic assumptions of perceptions and strategies, and will elaborate on them with evidence from the interviews and from the work of other observers.

The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the title of

this study.

2. Perceptions

We might begin by seeing what Woods has to say about appearances and reality in the teaching - learning process. In two important collections, Teacher Strategies and Pupil Strategies, Woods (1980a; 1980b) and his contributors focus on, as he puts it (1980a: 9):

> ... the means by which teachers and pupils try to achieve their ends, and the factors bearing on them. The character of the 'means' and 'ends' is highly problematic. We are no longer content to accept what teachers and pupils *seem* to do, that is for example, to 'teach', to 'learn', or even to 'mess about'. The realities behind these activities have suggested other connotations than those implied. 'Teaching' and 'learning' may be 'fronts' --- dramatic activities designed to cover more significant ones, or merely one kind of activity, and not necessarily the most important among many.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

In order to uncover what is really happening in the interactions between teachers and students, as Woods has suggested, and with his cautionary note sounded, we may turn to the concept of perceptions.

In his classic study on the sociology of teaching, Waller

(1965) outlines how a school situation is defined through a 'Gestalt' of the school. By this he appears to mean an active perception of the school, involving an interaction between the observer and the school.

It would appear reasonable to conclude that as people perceive the school differently, so they will define it differently. It will be argued in this study that because teachers and students perceive the school differently, they define situations differently, and therefore behave differently.

An example may help to support this. At my Cape Flats school, which I have fictitiously called Oregon Secondary, it was found at the end of 1989 that the Standard Nine students were behaving differently from the rest of the school: Standards Six, Seven, and Eight were coming to school; the Standard Ten students were at home preparing for their finals. The Nines, however, were following the example of the Tens, and were staying at home. Very few were coming to school. One could understand the behaviour of the Tens, but why were the Nines behaving as they were? Some teachers even admonished those who came on the odd day, urging them to come back to school regularly, where they would be able to learn under the supervision of the teachers. When questioned by me, the Nines said that they preferred to stay at home because they got more work done there than at school, where their classrooms were near-empty, and where their day was 'boring'.

What in fact had begun to happen was an action - reaction series. Some of the Nines had begun to stay at home, leading to partially empty classrooms. Those students who then came to school found themselves without their friends, in what they perceived to be a lonely, boring place. Why it was boring was that staff had begun to respond to the student action by checking the classrooms and then, finding few children, returning to the staffroom. Yet the staff saw the school as a place of learning, where they were in charge, and where they defined how the time was to be used. To some of the teachers, the Nines were not only being disobedient, they were being 'lazy', as the teachers put it.

The result was an impasse. Both sets of people, teachers and students, had different perceptions of the school. From their different perceptions came the differing behaviours.

What is interesting as far as the teachers are concerned, is that they re-defined a formal situation for themselves. When a teacher discovered there were very few students in the classroom (where he was due at that period to teach), he ignored the situation and returned to the staffroom. The few students who had been in the classroom then either continued playing music, chatting, trying to work, or left the classroom to wander about, or went home. This whole process happened fairly quickly until there were almost no Nines at all at the school. I discovered the student

viewpoint only because I asked the few who were at school why they were there. Their parents had sent them. Why weren't they there on other days? Because it was boring and lonely. As far as the Nines were concerned, they were not being lazy at all: they wanted to work, they wanted to prepare for the examinations, but school was not the place to do it in. They were simply choosing another venue in which to work hard. (It needs to be said that this was the student version of what was taking place. It is reasonable to expect that this goal was not shared by everyone. There could well have been students who saw this as an opportunity to stay at home and laze about.)

Let us now return to Waller and explore the question of perceptions more closely. Waller (1965: 292) has this to say:

> Strictly speaking, the definition of the situation is a process. It is a process in which the individual explores the behavior possibilities of a situation, marking out particularly the limitations which the situation imposes upon his behavior, with the final result that the individual forms an attitude toward the situation, or, more exactly, in the situation.

Waller chooses to see this process as Gestaltist, that there is an active component in which the individual forms the configuration of the whole. Such might be the process whereby the new teacher forms a perception of a class, and then imposes his or her definition of the situation upon the

class, or even where the class re-defines the situation when the new teacher enters the classroom. Waller (1965: 297) goes on to say:

> Many teachers have learned that it pays to spare themselves no unpleasantness in order to establish and make secure their dominance in the first few days and weeks of school. They exert themselves particularly to define the situation as one in which the teacher is dominant. Until this definition of the situation is accepted, there will be some conflict between teacher and student, and some hostility of students towards the teacher; the problem will be more severe in a school that has previously been poorly disciplined.

He also says (1965: 297), just prior to that:

> The experienced teacher who faces a new class faces an undefined situation, and it is part of his job to impose his definition of the situation upon the class quickly, before any alternatives have had the opportunity to be considered.

This is precisely what one of the interviewed teachers did. Soraya, a Mathematics teacher, was asked how she communicated to the students how she felt about time and working, and replied:

> There is no way you can be nice to these children. When I walk in the first day, when I met my kids, I took out

> a timetable and I said to them, 'On such and such a day, you're writing Maths Test No 1', and I gave them for the quarter how many tests they were going to write and on which days. That already puts them, 'You know, we must be careful of her ... She's not playing around with you.'

and,

> When I walked into class first the kids thought, 'Gee, she's young, it's a female ...' You know I've got a lot of boys in my class and much older than the other kids, and they thought they could, like, you know, walk over me but I glued them to their desks. I nailed them down! (laughter)

By comparison, in his study of total institutions, Goffman (1968: 26) has the following to say of the breaking down of resistance to authority:

> Because a total institution deals with so many aspects of its inmates' lives' with the consequent complex squaring away at admission, there is a special need to obtain initial cooperativeness from the recruit. Staff often feel that a recruit's readiness to be appropriately deferential in his initial face-to-face encounters with them is a sign that he will take the role of the routinely pliant inmate. The occasion on which staff members first tell the inmate of his deference obligations may be structured to challenge the

> inmate to balk or to hold his peace forever. Thus these initial moments of socialization may involve an 'obedience test' and even a will-breaking contest: an inmate who shows defiance receives immediate visible punishment, which increases until he openly 'cries uncle' and humbles himself.

It should be said that Soraya came to be loved and respected by her students. Clearly, her strategy was correct for her: she perceived a situation requiring her to be in control. She had to get the control and retain it. Out of the control would come respect and then friendship. But she was the one who would decide how the time was going to be spent. She would tolerate no challenge to her definition of classroom time.

Regarding such initial encounters, Ball (1980: 143) points out that:

> ... surprisingly little attention has yet been given to the evolutionary and developmental nature of teacher - pupil relationships in the classroom setting. The tendency has been (with one or two exceptions in the American literature) to treat and portray classroom relationships as fixed and static patterns of interaction within which teachers and pupils select strategies or act out the constitutive rules or procedures which serve to structure this interaction. Little attention has been given to the ways in which

> strategies are tested or rules established and in my view this has tended to inhibit the development of a coherent formal theory of classroom interaction.

It is interesting to compare what Soraya said with the way another teacher imposed his definition of the situation on the classes he had to supervise. In this case a History teacher, Michael, outlined what he did when he was asked to give up one of his free periods to supervise for a teacher who was absent. It needs to be said that the giving up of a free period to supervise for others can make some teachers rather angry. The term 'babysitting' is a colloquialism for supervising someone else's class. Michael said:

> It quite honestly didn't used to bother me because I was never as strict as when I was babysitting somebody else's class, because it was <u>my</u> time. I'd walk in there ... The teacher should have provided work. If he didn't, I'd simply say: 'Get on with some homework!', or, 'Get on with some work! I want no talking, I've got work to do!' And I'd actually find it quite a productive time, because it would be quiet and I'd get on with my work.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

What had happened here was that Michael had lost control of his time when the teacher who made up the roster had come to him and asked him (in effect, told him) to supervise for that period. Michael would have planned to do something else with that time. Now he had lost control of it. One

way of regaining control was to be tough and to brook no competition from the students about how that time was going to be used. He still perceived it as his time, he was in control, and he would do the defining for the class. In effect, he had lost his autonomy and to regain it he had to see the situation (to perceive it) as one in which he was still in control, still autonomous. In this way, Michael defused (for himself) a potentially conflictual situation over his time.

Waller (1965: 297) speaks of just this kind of situation:

> From the fact that situations may be defined in different ways and by different groups arises a conflict of definitions of situations, and we may see the whole process of personal and group conflict which centers about the school as a conflict of contradictory definitions of situations. The fundamental problem of school discipline may be stated as the struggle of students and teachers to establish their own definitions of situations in the life of the school.

In their study of 'trouble', Rosser and Harre (1976: 172) point to a strategy which closely resembles what Michael did.

They say as follows:

> Distinct situations (as recognised by our participants) called for distinctive presentations of self involving distinctive demeanours to others. Correct behaviour is

> not just a matter of following the rules, but of appearing to be the appropriate kind of person. In each situation, action and self-presentation are determined by the judgments of others, whether real or imaginary.
>
> (emphasis added)

In the case of Soraya and Michael, their strategies worked for them: both teachers presented the students with the 'appropriate kind of person' in such a way that the teacher's authority could not be successfully challenged. Thus, their perception, and from it their definition, would be the one to which all would have to submit. In another way of expressing this, they were very powerfully framing the lesson period. Their resource of time was in this way secured and they were able to proceed with their overall goal of teaching or marking. In short, their autonomy was protected.

It is also important to see the link between the teacher's perception of the school and his perception of his career. The teacher's perception of his career may or may not encompass the school. Purvis (1973) has shown how important the concept of career is to what happens in the classroom, but it goes further than just the classroom.

In three cases (Michael, Soraya, and Vanessa) teachers who were interviewed resigned and left not just their schools but also the profession. They left the profession because they could not see themselves continuing in the job. Their

career perception no longer took in their being at that place. In their mind's eye, they had moved on. They therefore found it difficult to accept interference with their time: both Soraya and Vanessa were deeply distressed by what they saw as a lack of discipline at their school, as a result of the run-up to the General Election, when students had been able to define the time as they wanted to, to come and go more or less as they pleased, and even to enter the classroom and to challenge what the teacher was doing.

Challenges to the authority of the classroom teacher may take several forms. For example, it is possible for a class to influence the nature of a lesson by competing with the teacher for control of the lesson content or, in Bernstein's (1971) view, contesting the teacher's framing of the lesson. In such a contest, the students are attempting to create or construct a reality that accords with their perception of what schooling should be about.

Two examples from Oregon Secondary may be cited of differences of perception concerning what schooling should be about. Firstly, the 'official' perception of schooling stresses the individuality of academic achievement (in almost every academic test, students compete individually with their fellows), yet there is a growing counter - perception which stresses communal achievement and communal values. This perceptual opposition results in classroom conflict between those students who want to spend their time

studying and being taught, and those students who want to spend their time expressing solidarity with the suffering and protesting community, through boycotts, marches, and other political action. There has been a real cleavage between the matriculants and others in the school over this very issue.

Secondly, there has been a strong emphasis at the school on regular testing and examining. This may be linked to a tradition of transmission teaching at the school. Attempts by teachers to move away from this direction and style of teaching have been resisted (a form of behaviour also reported in Hargreaves (1988)). It appears that at least some of the students don't want to be involved in activities that won't help them in the examinations. In this way, classroom time can be powerfully coerced by students in the direction of examinations.

This type of behaviour was also reported by Michael, the History teacher interviewed. He said:

> It was soul-destroying. I had a very naughty Standard Nine class and I tried everything to really get things going in History. And we were doing Rhodes, the Jameson Raid, events leading up to the Anglo-Boer War and I got what _I_ thought was interesting material. I got actual transcripts of the court-case with Jameson, where they ask him a whole lot of questions and how he tries to protect Rhodes and how they're cross-examining ... It was very exciting. Well, _I_ found it exciting stuff, so

> I then made copies of this and we were going to act it out in class. We hadn't got one minute through, when some, into this, when a person put up their hand and said, 'Sir, are we going to be examined on this?'
>
> (emphasis in the original)

This coercion of the lesson content may be the case in subjects which progress closely to the textbook, as school History tends to do. In this way, the students would be familiar with the syllabus (apparent in the textbook), and would thus be able to spot any departure from the syllabus immediately. This may not be the case in subjects where there is traditionally a large measure of curriculum development, such as the Languages. Having taught both History and English at Oregon Secondary, I can corroborate this: I cannot recall once being challenged about the examination-relevance of the English content, yet this occurred several times in History lessons.

On this question of challenges, what may be remarked upon is the view that it is not correct behaviour for the students to challenge the teacher's right to define the lesson content (that is, how the time should be spent), but that it <u>is</u> correct for the teacher so to define the content and thus the time. In Michael's example, he is sufficiently self-perceptive to remark that <u>he</u> had found the material exciting. What is not remarked upon is that he had intervened in the mediation of the syllabus to the students. Thus, there is a very real contest here between the teacher

and the students, but also one between the teacher and the syllabus (or, if one prefers, between the teacher and the structure of thought being imposed by the State). At issue here is the autonomy, separately, of both teacher and students. It would seem that the issue of student rights is very much in the melting pot at the moment with the democratisation of schooling. However, the issue of student rights is beyond the limits of this study. As far as the teacher is concerned, returning to the case of Michael, although he may not have consciously seen it as such, his introduction of the court-case transcript was a clear attempt on his part to be autonomous, to be educative, to use the limited amount of time available to him to challenge the boundaries of the syllabus with what he saw as interesting material that would enlarge the experience of his students. He had assumed that he had the right to do this. He perceived it as part of the job. The contest occurred because the students didn't share his perception of the job. Which really means they didn't recognise his autonomy.

If one accepts a paraphrase of the student message as, 'Schooling should not be about having these kinds of experiences. Schooling should be about passing exams!', then this message could be interpreted as an instrumentalist mode of thinking very close to the self-sabotage found by Willis (1977) in the way his 'lads' undermined any attempts by the school to free them from their working class destiny. In a macro sense, the State may be seen as mediating its

ideology to the students through the school. In turn, it is this ideological structure that the students have been contesting when they say, 'Away with gutter education!'. They recognise that the State has imposed its own perception of education upon them. They disagree with that perception and want some form of non-racial, democratic education in its place. So, consciously and publicly, they demonstrate their rejection of the current education system. However, far more powerful is their acceptance of the need for qualifications. So, when the demonstrations cease, the students go back into the classrooms and, instrumentally, call on the teachers to get them through the forthcoming examinations. What they have failed to see is that the dominant ideology has been successfully mediated to them in their very acceptance of the need for pieces of paper. Like Willis's 'lads', they bind themselves ever tighter with the ropes of economic bondage.

As noted earlier, challenges to the authority of the classroom teacher may take several forms. The coercion may in fact come from above. Vanessa, teaching General Science to Standard Eight, spoke out strongly about her perception of the syllabus. She spoke of how difficult it was to get teachers to work together, in particular teachers from the different levels in a department, to ensure there was no overlapping of the syllabus from one year to the next. She found that teachers preferred to work on their own:

> ... each one is just doing his little thing and they're so afraid. I don't blame them. <u>I mean the inspectors come and they expect you to finish your syllabus ... The inspector always thinks I work too slow ...</u>
>
> (emphasis added)

She then tries to express her perceptions of how teaching should be, to bring it alive to the students:

> ... I've always said: if only I could break down these walls and make them see that this is life. It's not a classroom ... and school is not a building ... it's children. It's what's happening outside that's important, not what's happening in the classroom. Because there's very little happening in the classroom. I want to take them outside. I want to make them realise that school is not such a drag, because people are actually showing you the way to ... You might not go further in Biology. You might never use it again. Doesn't matter! It's so interesting because now when you plant your little seed, now you know why you're doing it ...

Yet she is aware of the cost in terms of time:

> I hate to tell the kids, I hate to teach everything. I want them to give me the answers. And that approach also make my class ... quite lively ... I want them to partake all the time, doesn't matter what. And then again I believe that the child in you never disappear if

> you're a normal balanced person. People love listening to stories, doesn't matter what. So, <u>in that way I lose a lot of time</u>.

Here, she talks of teaching by story-telling and, after giving an example, indicates how the students responded:

> They love it! They will never forget it! And I mean the inspector sit there aghast, you know. He can't believe it, you know. He says, 'This is fantastic!' But then again five minutes later when my kids leave my classroom, he criticises me and says, '<u>Juffrou, jy's dan baie agter met jou werk</u> ...'
>
> (emphasis added)

Two things are worth saying here. Firstly, I have attempted to give some sense of Vanessa's perception of her teaching because I think it is important to see that a teacher can successfully challenge the syllabus through her public approach to teaching, and not just in individual lessons. This teacher is a dramatic person, both in speech and action, and she appears to have presented Biology (as part of General Science) to her students with excitement and enthusiasm. <u>Her modelling of enthusiasm itself becomes a strategy</u> in her relationship with her students. Secondly, she was coerced by the inspector, who was clearly more interested at this point in schooling than in education. She accepted that her teaching style took a lot of time, but she was prepared to lose time in order to raise the quality of participatory learning (she wanted the students to give

her the answers). While the inspector could appreciate that something special was happening here, he was unable to release her from the confines of the syllabus and the time-span needed to finish the task. In short, he was unable to recognise her autonomy.

In this section, then, we have a successful challenge to the lesson-frame by Michael's History students (which ultimately works to their detriment), and a successful challenge to the syllabus by Vanessa (which ultimately works to the detriment of her students). In Vanessa's case, however, her challenge to the syllabus, which takes up so much of her time, is itself challenged by the inspector. Both examples suggest how competitive forces can challenge the classroom time of teachers and, ultimately, their autonomy.

We may now turn to the second of the assumptions, mentioned above.

3. Strategies

Woods (1983: 9) provides a natural beginning to this section:

> Perspectives, derived from cultures, are linked to action through strategies. This is increasingly coming to be regarded as the central concept in the interactionist approach, for it is where individual intention and external constraint meet. Strategies are ways of achieving goals.

He says further (1983: 10):

> Devising and recognizing strategies is not a simple matter. Though identifiable and repeatable packages of action linked to broad, general aims, such aims cannot be taken for granted. What they appear to be may be a 'presentation of front'. In other words, the manifest aims may be part of the strategy, acting in the service of other, hidden, aims. There may be aims within aims, some deferred perhaps to await more favourable situations. Or a teacher may deploy a whole range of strategies, on which he rings the changes depending on variations either in the situation or in himself. The more complicated the goal, the more complex the strategy; and the higher the goal, the greater extension of risk. For it is the problems that intervene between intention and risk that give strategies their character. Schools are places that invite complex strategies, for ideals are strong, yet the gap between ideals and practice is large because of the problems previously mentioned.

Implicit within the concept of the strategy is the obstacle. For if there were no obstacle, the route to the goal would be straightforward. It is the presence of the obstacle that invites or necessitates the devising of other routes. There could even be an element of subterfuge. Lacey (1985: 4080), developing Becker's (1971) concept of 'situational adjustment', has proposed the term 'strategic compliance'

for a situation like that mentioned by Woods, above, where:

> ... the individual complies with the authority figure's definition of the situation and the constraints on his or her action but retains private reservations about them. He or she is merely seen to be good.

Clearly, a great deal of school behaviour could be seen as falling under strategies. It is with a refinement of this general concept that we are most concerned here. This is the concept of the 'coping strategy', introduced by Andy Hargreaves (1978). The merit of this concept, as noted by Banks (1978: 44) is that it helps to bridge the gap between the macro and the micro:

> Andy Hargreaves, for example, suggests that the concept of coping strategies is a useful one, since it suggests that teachers' construction of the classroom reality takes place in situations not of their own choosing. Nevertheless, while the constraints under which teachers operate are not ignored, the concept opens up the way to see teachers' behaviour as the product of constructive and creative behaviour. In short, concepts of this kind allow us to build bridges not only between macro and micro sociology but also between deterministic accounts on the one hand, and the interactionist position on the other.

The concept is based in part on middle school research done in England: Hargreaves is at pains to show in this (1978)

paper how the middle schools are useful for studying the effects of structural constraints as they are neither primary nor secondary schools, and may tend to fall between the stools in official planning. For example, he says (1978: 80):

> ... many teachers, especially those middle school teachers who subscribe to the central tenets of 'progressive' Plowden ideology, find themselves teaching in buildings totally unsuited to such an educational approach (many middle schools have been set up in old secondary-modern school buildings) ...

He then concludes (1978: 81-82):

> In time, it is conceivable that a short term pragmatic response of the realist to a set of overwhelming and frustrating constraints, shifts to an acceptance of those very constraints such that ad hoc measures become accepted and defined as educational goals. That constraints not only determine possible educational policy as a set of mere pragmatic responses with which the practitioner need not necessarily agree in principle, but that they also lead to a broader shaping of educational goals and desirable definitions of teaching itself, is the essence of coping strategies and their institutionalisation.

Given the societal constraints upon South African schools, this concept can be used to show how the teachers manage to

cope within the confines that are peculiar to their station. Thus, we see how Soraya, the Mathematics teacher, faced the difficulties of teaching at a physically large (spread-out) school, where she had to move from classroom to classroom, and where it was not possible to establish a presence through teaching aids such as wall-charts and other visual stimuli. At the time when she was interviewed (at the very end of the school year of 1989), vandalism was rife at the school. Her form of response needs to be noted. She said:

> I could not use an overhead this year. It was difficult for me because I have to walk from the one end of the school to the other end, and that's to me ... I could not afford to walk with it (she was afraid of dropping it and being faced with replacement expenses) ... that's actually a snag, because when I was practice-teaching I used the overhead for almost every lesson that I taught and it was great because the kids could actually see the things, it was better than a chalkboard because they're so used to everybody using the chalkboard. Variation. That's what the kids need and that's what makes it interesting and somehow they understand it better, because you're using a different method. It was a bit difficult to use charts. I tried that in my first year and ... there's a problem at this school ... if I had a classroom of my own I would have been able to have had beautiful charts, because I made good charts and they were all wasted. I actually gave my charts away

> because of that ... But you have to walk around with the charts each time, you know. And if you leave it up in a classroom, you're guaranteed not seeing that chart again, or it had been tramped on. (She was asked if it had been vandalised.) Yes. Because that's what happened to me last year and I was absolutely disgusted. I made such beautiful charts and that's what happened to us now (unclear). I was very upset about it actually. <u>You know, I took such a lot of time in making them, that was the crux of the thing</u>.
>
> (emphasis added)

Despite Soraya's best intentions, her teaching style was gradually reduced to chalk and talk: this in fact became her coping strategy. She coped with the overcrowded and discouraging conditions by reducing her classroom style to its simplest and poorest, when her wish would have been to have taught in many different ways in a rich, stimulating environment. She resigned and left at the end of that year, vowing never to return to teaching. We shall see that her 'final strategy' was not unusual: others used similar means to escape what they saw as intolerable conditions.

It is instructive to note that Soraya's perception at the end of that quotation, above, was that the crux of the matter was how much of her time had gone into the making of the charts.

By way of sharp contrast, Jessica Howard teaches at a private, 'progressive' elementary school in rural Vermont.

The school programme aims at creating the kind of open, rich environment which allows for the creation of knowledge. In such an expansive setting, the role of the teacher is essentially that of facilitator, making it possible for the children to share, explore, and build their own knowledge. Howard describes her literal and metaphorical 'place' in the process as being that of the 'middle ground'. She describes the process (1989: 227):

> Thus, as a teacher I am creating a setting that gives plenty of room and time for the making of knowledge. This pursuit takes lots of time and requires a feeling of expansiveness around it. I want my children to feel that they are in the middle of plenty of time and room. I want them to learn how their own perspectives position them in the larger world. Sometimes I think I _create_ the middle ground for the children as I work continuously on the setting, its space, provisioning, and group expectations. Other times I think I _am_ the middle ground as the children use me as a calendar, mediator, advisor, resource.
>
> (emphasis added)

This picture is included to show how it is possible for a teacher to create the ideal environment, given the right conditions of employment and social milieu. From the full description given in her paper, it is clear that Howard has considerable freedom to create her curriculum: in the light of this, she _can_ become the middle ground for her children,

and serves as a contrast to Vanessa, who wanted so much not to teach but to let the students create their own answers.

This may also serve as a criticism of the notion that teachers are <u>always</u> struggling against confining forces which require them to 'cope' by way of response. This is at the heart of Hargreaves' concept of the coping strategy: that one employs strategies in the midst of structural pressures and that these are powerful enough to require one to <u>cope</u> with them. We return here to the notion of the obstacle in the path of fulfilment. In Howard's case, it appears that it is possible to <u>enable</u> a learning environment to come into being. This is not to say that she does not have problems. But such is her manifest freedom to enable discovery to take place, that it might be more accurate to describe her efforts as <u>enabling strategies</u>, rather than coping strategies. It would seem that the kind of strategy employed will vary with the basic setting, the context of the school: this would make it possible to see a place not just for the coping strategy, but also for other forms as well.

To return to the South African situation, however, and in particular to that of the Cape Flats, there are economic constraints such as community unemployment (which has an immediate effect upon the payment of school fees, leading to a curtailment of what can offered audio-visually, or by way of excursions, or the purchase of additional library books, and so on). Teachers learn to tailor their lessons around

the available resources or the limitations of the home background.

In regard to the economic constraints, what Bot says about the school boycotts of 1984 in the 'African community' applies in some measure also to the schools on the Cape Flats. She comments (1985: 5):

> The increasing interaction between different sectors of the African community and the willingness of pupil organisations to speak up about issues not directly related to their own situation has established a trend for school boycotts to occur around issues not immediately linked to education. This is exemplified by the statement made by Cosas president Lulu Johnson in October 1984: 'Before they are students ... the students are members of their community. Students are affected by rent hikes because it affects the amount of money their families have for schooling ... The schools and the community are inseparable' (FM 12/10/84).

But the tailoring of the lessons in keeping with the community background is not something limited to the Cape Flats. A similar pressure upon her lesson planning was reported by Jo, one of the preparatory teachers interviewed in this study. Jo spoke about the difference between the background of the children she is currently teaching (a lower income background, but not on the Cape Flats), and the background of the children she had previously taught at a

well-endowed school. At her current school, some of the children have few if any books in the home, and no crayons or other colouring-in materials. In other words, their background may be impoverished in some respects, relative to the home circumstances of the other children. This has to be allowed for in planning of the contents of a lesson: Jo has learned that she cannot expect her present children to be able to go home and to look up information in reference books, or to be able to experiment with colouring-in if these facilities or materials are not available in the home. In this manner, the way classroom time is spent can be affected by the nature of the community which the school serves.

There are also the constraints brought about by the direct application of apartheid: Cape Flats schools 'bursting at the seams' while classrooms stand empty in other Cape Town suburban schools. The high rolls that Cape Flats schools have to contend with can lead to the following effects: the high roll matched against a fixed number of classrooms leads to large classes; this can mean few if any subject rooms for the generalist teachers (that is, those not teaching subjects requiring specialised rooms like laboratories and workshops); the lack of subject rooms means little use of fixed teaching aids, such as wall charts, overhead projectors, and even dictionaries (how much can the teacher carry from room to room?) And so the high rolls often mean coping strategies such as chalk and talk, authoritarian discipline, or transmission teaching. All of this means

that the teacher has to take these constraints into account when planning how to use the time with a class. We have seen how this very situation arose with Soraya, at her Cape Flats secondary school.

Later, in Chapter Four, we shall see further evidence of the strategies adopted by teachers in regard to their classroom time. We shall conclude this present chapter with a brief look at the title of this study.

4. The Title of the Study

The full title of this study is as follows:

> Time and teachers : an empirical and conceptual study of the competition for the use of available time in the classroom practice of teachers working in the Western Cape (1989 - 1990)

The purpose of this section is to introduce the title and to show what is meant by the various terms composing it.

By time is meant that formal concept which is basic to the life of the teacher: it is continuous and all-embracing. The premise here is that it isn't possible to separate the private from the public life of the teacher. In this sense, we are looking at the full life of the teacher, and not just that time spent at school. A second premise is that the private and the public 'time' of the teacher, which make up the 'full time' of the teacher, affect one another. In this

sense, the life of the teacher is a full-time life. Several of the teachers who were interviewed remarked that it was a full-time occupation, a calling, a vocation. When asked whether they meant it was a full-time occupation like that of a priest or a nun, they agreed.

We have already looked at the meaning of classroom time, in Chapter One. Following from this, it will be argued in this study that all of what happens in a school ultimately has a bearing upon the classroom time of the teacher. But it goes further than this: it can be argued that all of what happens in the life of the teacher can have a bearing upon the classroom time of that teacher. This may have important implications for time management within a school and for the assumptions and expectations management have about their rights in calling on the time of the teacher.

By teacher is meant a school teacher: a certificated person employed at a formal school, public or private, whose task is to give instruction to schoolchildren. In this study, all the teachers interviewed had some degree of certification, worked in formal schools, and were either classroom teachers, or were involved in managing classroom teachers. In the case of these 'managers' (two principals and one deputy-principal), two were still involved in a limited amount of classroom teaching, and the third had been teaching in the recent past.

By empirical is meant that the findings would be derived

from observation, rather than logically from theory. In this study, the findings are derived from interviews (which are outlined in Chapter Three), and from participant observation at a Cape Flats secondary school.

By conceptual is meant that those interviewed were asked how they saw time and conflict, and what they did about time and conflict in their daily lives. As explained at the start of this present chapter, the two concepts of perception and strategy were integrated into the interviews, though they were not formally used by name in the process of talking with the teachers.

By competition is meant a form of conflict which occurs when participants pursue the same goal, yet which inherently has a recognition of certain rules or conventions (see Owens (1985a and 1985b) for a discussion of both competition, and cooperation, in the classroom).

Raising the question of competition requires that the matter of power be considered, for it would seem that power is inherent in the notions of competition and conflict. If we follow Hunt, it would seem that power, influence, and authority are closely connected. Hunt (1981: 60) has this to say:

> Power is the capacity to affect another's behaviour. Influence is the effect. Power is a resource; influence is the result of using that resource. Power is the ability to choose outcomes in the light of our own

> interests; influence is the actual achievement of those outcomes. (...) Authority differs from power, but contributes to it. Authority refers to a formal or legitimate right to control resources -- people, money, materials, equipment, information, for example. Authority relates to position in an organization and is structurally bound.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

Davies, who has looked particularly at 'pupil power' by way of script analysis, believes the more traditional views of power propounded by scholars like Parsons have been limited by seeing power as goal-directed. She says (1984: 3):

> ... power has to be more than the ability to make others do what you want, for I am not convinced that pupils are necessarily aware precisely what they want teachers to do, although the reverse may be true. Thus, although the concept of power to be used here does include the ability to evoke a response from another -- which is of course the bedrock of human relationships -- this does not mean that the other's response is unwilling. Pupils will react to teacher power quite happily in answering questions, in submitting to discipline; but it means that without such impetus from the more powerful, that response would not have been made.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

Davies has shifted the emphasis from goals and from being goal-directed towards a sense of the origin of power, to the

impetus which produces a response (what Hunt would have called the 'influence'). In the sense that Davies has drawn attention to compliance, or consensus, her view is an advance on the Parsonian view of seeing power as being directed towards an obstacle for its removal or its conquest. Hers is a refinement which makes more sense in the reality of the classroom, where consensus has to occur for the business of the school to proceed. The Parsonian interpretation she finds in Musgrove (1971), and quotes as follows:

> ... the capacity of persons or collectivities to mobilize resources for the attainment of goals, especially when these goals are obstructed by some kind of human resistance or opposition.

Davies herself defines power as follows (1984: 3):

> In its broadest sense, power is the ability to alter the course of events, to create a happening, <u>whether or not a particular end is in view</u>.
>
> (emphasis in the original)

This matter of power will be examined at greater length later. Returning to the discussion of the title, what is meant by studying <u>the competition for the use of available time in the classroom practice</u> is studying how the various agencies or structural forces compete with the teacher's autonomy in defining the allocation of time for teaching.

Finally, regarding time and place, the study deals with teachers in the Cape Town area, including the Cape Flats, in 1989 and 1990.

4. Summary

This chapter looks at the sociological approaches that were made in addressing the issues of time, conflict, and autonomy. In particular, it looks at the meaning of two key concepts: perceptions, and strategies. It ends with a discussion of the title of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD OF RESEARCH

1. Introduction

This chapter will outline the fieldwork methods involved in data-gathering for the study.

It will detail in turn: the time-span that the fieldwork entailed; the way the issues were settled upon that the teachers would be questioned about; the way that the teachers were selected; the composition of the teachers as a body for research; the nature and length of the interviews, and the curation of the interview material; the degree of confidentiality within the interviews and in this dissertation; and finally a location within the field of time research.

2. Time-span

The interviews began in November, 1989, and continued until March, 1990. It should be noted that the first interviews took place immediately after the final examinations, when the marking of scripts was complete, and when staff were free for the first time to relax and look back at the year which was ending. For some of the teachers, this had been a

particularly traumatic year with the school timetable more or less continuously disrupted through political expression by the students and within the community, in the form of the Defiance Campaign and the attendant run-up to the General Election of September 6th. Several of the Cape Flats teachers who had been interviewed were pessimistic about the political outcome of the country: they could not see the school's situation changing and had decided to leave (one left on transfer to a rural school in another province, and two resigned from the profession).

The interviews continued into the New Year and ended in the period following the De Klerk February announcement of the partial lifting of the State of Emergency and the unbanning of restricted organizations.

3. The Issues

Based on my experience of teachers, over several years, I knew there were a number of issues about which they tended to have strong feelings. The possible number of issues was considerably higher than could be managed easily in, say, an hour-long interview. The choice of issues therefore was restricted to those dealing with time, and to a number which would be manageable within the anticipated time that the interviews would take, that is, about 45 -60 minutes. As it turned out, this was too short an estimate. The interviews generally ran much longer: up to about 90 minutes on average.

In commenting upon the nature of inductive methodology, Medawar (1969: 29) gives the following warning:

> Any adequate account of scientific method must include a theory of incentive or special motive; must contain a canon to restrict observation to something less than the whole universe of observables. We cannot browse over the field of nature like cows at pasture.

The incentive here was to discover what teachers thought and did about certain issues <u>that were explicitly related to time</u>. In other words, time was a critical element in each of these issues. The teachers were therefore asked to talk about the issues specifically as they related to time. In the best sense of the term, the canon of time guided the discussions and provided a central, unifying theme.

The issues were therefore pre-determined by myself and laid before the teachers so they would know in advance what we were to talk about. This was thought to be best as some of the teachers evidenced a degree of nervousness prior to the discussion: there was a definite sense of their not being able to contribute anything worthwhile. They were assured that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, that whatever they had to say would be considered as valuable, given our ignorance of how teachers managed and thought about their time. The interviewing strategy was therefore to assure each teacher that he or she had a contribution of value to make in illuminating our understanding of their workaday

worlds.

To make the actual selection of issues, I asked myself what aspects of their daily time did local teachers get most upset about, or talked most about, or that we knew least about? On the basis of personal experience, and what has been said, I judged the following would be important to ask the teachers about:

(a) their personal timetables

(b) their attitude to free periods, and the loss of those free periods when asked to supervise a class for an absent colleague

(c) when lesson preparation took place and the factors that affected when it took place

(d) their attitudes to extra-mural duties in terms of how those duties affected the rest of the day

(e) their attitudes to afternoon and evening meetings that they were obliged to attend in the course of their duties, in terms of how these meetings affected the rest of the day and whether they saw such attendance as part of their professional requirements

(f) their attitudes to homework: whether they used this as an extension to the lesson-time, and whether they saw it as worthwhile in terms of its effect on the time that could be given to teaching in the following day's lesson

(g) their attitudes to tests and examinations in terms of their effects on the allocation of teaching time in the

year

(h) Their views on the question of time as an aspect of professionalism

In addition to these eight issues, other issues suggested themselves in the course of the interviews (see below, under Interviews).

4. <u>The Choice of the Teachers</u>

The object here was to find twelve teachers in the Cape Town area who would be prepared to be interviewed. The number twelve was chosen as it seemed initially important to get about four teachers from each of the three levels of preparatory, primary and secondary teaching. It wasn't known how much data each teacher would generate: too few teachers would mean going back for more data, or finding other teachers. Too many teachers would mean being swamped by the data. So, twelve was an arbitrary figure.

It is important to see this as an exercise in finding out what some teachers were currently thinking about these issues, rather than seeing it as an exercise aimed at establishing trends. For trends, a far larger number of teachers would have had to be interviewed. However, some attempt was made to obtain a limited range of teachers by getting interviewees from different kinds of schools. The total number was limited to the Cape Education Department (six teachers), the Department of Education and Culture of

the House of Representatives (five teachers), and a diocesan school (one teacher). No comparison of Education Departments was intended and none will be made.

Another factor that was borne in mind when approaching teachers was that they should not be first-year teachers. The reason for this is that the newcomer to the profession is fairly well studied, but the seasoned teacher by comparison is not. In fact, Lacey (1985) has commented that little research has been done on the older teacher. As it turned out, only one teacher was young: she was a second-year teacher, but was chosen because she was an outstanding Mathematics teacher. This was an illuminating choice (from the point of view of the study) for she had decided to leave the profession because of her disillusionment with the disruption of schooling experienced at our Cape Flats school, and proved to be a voluble interviewee. For the rest, the teachers were spread from four years to twenty-eight years of experience.

An attempt was also made to obtain a spread in terms of training, specialty, or level of post. In all, the following subjects were represented at the secondary level: Biology, Counselling, English, General Science, History, and Mathematics. The rest of the teachers were generalists, from the primary and preparatory levels. One interviewee was a teacher-librarian. Two were principals, one was a deputy-principal, two were heads of department. The rest were class teachers at Post-level One. Finally, one

interviewee had resigned from a secondary school at the end of 1989, had recently joined a private company, and was able to speak reflectively four months after leaving teaching.

Eleven of the teachers were known to the writer, and all 12 agreed immediately upon being asked about their willingness to be interviewed.

After beginning with the ideal pattern of an equal number of teachers from each of the three levels, it seemed important to concentrate upon the secondary level, for it was at this level that the political activity of the students was taking place, and the interaction with the teachers under those circumstances seemed important to document, particularly in view of the emergence of the Defiance Campaign. Although I knew teachers at each of the three levels, I knew probably the greatest number at the secondary level, so this was also a factor in the choice of the secondary teachers.

In the end, two teachers were from the preparatory level, two were from the primary level, and the remaining eight were from the secondary level.

Several of the teachers were Afrikaans-speaking, or were more familiar with Afrikaans than they were with English, yet they generously agreed to be interviewed in English.

The verbatim records are accurate. Readers should accept that oddities of language stem from the use of a second language.

5. The Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured, or what Madge (1953) refers to as the 'focused interview', that is, not free-flowing after the manner of some psychotherapeutic methods, but directed at certain topics. The list of issues (given above) made up what Madge calls the 'interview-guide', so none might be forgotten in the course of the discussion. However, the discussion was sufficiently loose that it could flow with the interesting answer. Sometimes issues were subsumed in the course of talking about something else. In the interests of what Wilby (1980) calls the 'illumination of the relevant particular', it was clearly important at times to follow the crucial point at the expense of a slavish adherence to the interview guide.

The interviews were tape-recorded on 90-minute cassettes and these were copied. The originals were then deposited for safe-keeping in a strongroom, together with photocopies of the hand-written, verbatim notes of the interviews, as these were made.

6. Confidentiality

An undertaking was made to all the teachers interviewed that their participation would be anonymous: in no way would they or their schools be identified. This undertaking will be respected. In each case, the teacher has been given a

fictitious name.

7. Other Research

To ensure that this research was not covering work already done by someone else, scans were made of the data-bases held by the UCT Libraries, and the Institute for Research Development, of the Human Sciences Research Council.

Whilst a large number of titles of books and theses related to time (and its derivatives, such as timetable, schedule, and perspective), none appeared to cover the field that this study covers.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FINDINGS

1. Introduction

In this chapter the findings of the study will be presented. This will be done by listing the eight issues and the views of the teachers as they arose in the interviews. Clearly, some selection of material will be made: this will be done on the basis of relevance to the central issue of time, and the attendant issues of conflict and autonomy. No attempt will be made to quantify the views.

2. The Issues

(a) Their personal timetables

It should be pointed out at the start that different kinds of timetables exist in local schools. For example, at the preparatory level, the integrated day is the usual approach. This means that each teacher, who is the class teacher of only one class and with whom she stays for most of the day, has a timetable with subjects such as Mathematics, the

Languages, Environment Study, Bible Education, or Handwriting scheduled into each day. However, some subjects may be fixed at certain periods in that day for management reasons such as access to the music room, or the hall. With these subjects, the teacher has no choice about what to do in that period. For the rest of the day, however, although periods are allocated to subjects, it remains the teacher's prerogative to switch these around should she so desire. She may also allocate more time on one day to a particular subject, than she would normally, provided that she catches up with the allocation.

In other words, the teacher has a great deal of flexibility to decide how her day should run, should she want to change the order of the subjects taught. She may not skip subjects unduly, nor should she fall behind. Despite this, the preparatory teacher has some recognised autonomy of choice about the allocation of her time.

This freedom to allocate time may still exist at the primary level, though this can vary from school to school, depending to some degree on who teaches what, for there may be a greater degree of specialisation, particularly at the higher end such as Standards Four and Five.

These two levels, however, contrast with the pattern that may emerge at the secondary level. With its high degree of subject specialisation, teachers at this level usually teach one subject, possibly two, rarely three. At this level, timetables can vary considerably in form and approach. Some

schools adopt a cyclical timetable of fortnightly cycles. Others may drop subjects such as Music, Bible Education, and Physical Education, for a given term, and use the acquired time for augmenting the allocation to the study subjects by extending their length from, say, 35 minutes to 50 minutes.

In regard to time, the principle that emerges is that as subject specialisation grows, so the teacher's freedom to make choices diminishes: the teacher is tied to the framework of the timetable, which instructs the teacher where to be at what time. The only choice remaining is the choice of what to do within the confines of the classroom for the period allocated to that class. The situation thus varies considerably from preparatory, through primary, to secondary levels.

Of the observations that the teachers made when they talked about their timetables, then, some are specific to their level of teaching, others may apply to all levels of teaching.

The interviews were begun by asking about their personal timetables. This provided a convenient ice-breaker to get discussions going. The initial question posed was: Are you happy with your timetable this year?

An affirmative or negative response was then followed by asking why they felt that way. This led them to give their reasons and in this way deeper issues were revealed.

Teachers were seldom perfectly happy with their timetables. In almost every case, they were happy but said there were problems. In other words, they were making do within a less than perfect situation. Bearing in mind what was said earlier about the coping strategy, this would seem to be the appropriate kind of area for such strategies to emerge: when the teachers were in situations not of their own choosing or their own making.

An English teacher, Mrs Dawson, with 28 years of experience but who was still only a class teacher, responded to the initial question by saying that timetables were drawn up according to the regulations, and that we had to accept them. This response suggested that she had learned over the years to accept what was given to her. She was a meek, somewhat frail widow and breadwinner to her family. Despite her reply, it turned out that she had been given three double periods on one day, and she found them 'very exhausting'. To accept the situation, to cope with the incontestable timetable, was then her means of survival. It is likely that her main aim was job security, and she used whatever strategies she could to serve that end, even if this meant acceptance of an exhausting timetable. It should also be noted that she had very little power: she was at the bottom of the hierarchy: she had nothing to bargain with.

Her view contrasted with that of the Mathematics teacher, Soraya, who was energetic, confident, and who 'quite

enjoyed' double periods for they gave her an opportunity to 'flow'. By this she meant that she was not interrupted by the shortness of the single period and could accomplish some kinds of teaching best with double periods. But this had a price. She too was exhausted. She felt she deserved her free periods as time in which to recover, and felt that it was 'so grossly unfair' that she had to go to a class and supervise for an absent colleague. She was happy with the rest of her timetable. So, despite strong feelings about the loss of her free periods, she was unable to do anything about the loss: she too was at the bottom of the hierarchy. As has already been noted, her coping strategy took a severe form: she resigned and left teaching at the end of the year. Until then, her perception of the situation was one that she would have to bear. She coped.

Vanessa, in need of a great deal of time because of her dramatic, story-telling teaching style, found a unique answer to her timetable problem. She was given permission to take Bible Education periods and use them for her General Science classes. Her opening words were:

> I'm one of the older ones here ... I've cheated along the years in that I always ask for the religious periods so that I could have them as well to teach my children.

She had argued that nothing was happening in those periods and that it would be better if she could have them to give her the extra time she needed. Of all the teachers interviewed, she was the most aware of time and the most

concerned about it. Everything came down to time.

What needs to be asked, though, is why Vanessa was given permission to do this. She was a very confident teacher who had raised other issues with the leadership of the school and so this matter of asking for the 'religious periods' fitted her style of business. It is doubtful if her request would have been granted had she been unable to come up with good results. She coped with the conflict between her need for more time, and the rigidity of the timetable, with a clearly lateral thinking strategy.

Although this does not strictly fall under the question of the timetable, the following is included because the two instances cited have an immediate bearing upon the load carried by the teacher in that timetable. Debra, a primary school head of department, provided an example of unusually thwarted power. In the previous three years, she had moved three times from one level of standard to another, in each case because of the needs of the school. Each time she had had to build up her resources from scratch and had found this exhausting. Her tolerance had snapped when she'd been told at the end of 1989 that, yet again, she would have to take a new standard this year. Despite pleading to be left where she was, this was regretfully turned down. It was unavoidable. Her coping strategy was promptly to ask for a term's leave, scheduled for the first term of this year. This was granted. Our interview took place at the very end

of that leave. She said:

> It's taken literally nine years to realise what I've done to myself. And now I've just had enough.

From then on she intended to do things for herself, to bring some balance back into her life after the years of giving to the school. By reputation she was a gifted teacher and showed enthusiasm and vitality in the interview. She made it clear that she enjoyed her teaching, but had a new perception of it. Despite being happy with the timetable itself that she was returning to, within that timetable lay new and wearying burdens of resource development. This meant new strategies were required to cope with that fact.

What needs to be asked is why a head of department, an officer one might expect to have some measure of power with the principal, had been unable to get what she wanted: to be left alone for a couple of years at the same standard. The answer would have to be speculative, but it is possible that she was too valuable a resource to the school. Her value over-rode her authority to bargain.

Debra's situation is related in one way to that of Michael, the History teacher. Michael had originally been an English teacher. After two years of English, which he enjoyed but found was very time-consuming, he had switched to History. In turn he had discovered that History was less demanding to teach but, once more, he had found it very time-consuming to develop resources all over again. Thus, it seems that a

move to a new subject or to a new standard can pose severe problems of time management for the mover. The perception of the timetable therefore needs to be seen in that light.

It is not often that teachers in South Africa have the opportunity to write their own contract with a school. When this happens, it is worth recording. The person in question was Sandra, a Mathematics teacher. She was approached by a private school in the Cape Town area and asked to join the staff to teach Mathematics. She was at first not very willing to do so, for time with her family was important to her. She put it this way:

> I was asked to teach which I was not really keen to do basically because I do things in order of priority and to me one of my biggest priorities is looking after my children, and to me teaching would clash with that, so I wasn't keen to go and teach. But what I did was I said I need to be with my children in the afternoon, so the guy said, 'All right, in that case, you can teach in the morning.' But he gave me to start with a complete like a full timetable and I said I <u>cannot</u> do extra-murals because that ... is the same as when I want to be with my children. So I went on the understanding that I was teaching but not doing extra-murals, and that if my children were sick, I would not come to school ...

She then explained how this arrangement failed:

> So I started off on a full timetable, but it was crazy

> because I had absolutely no free periods, because what he did was he put me on for seven lessons in a row every day. (...)
>
> ... the worst thing about it was that ... I suppose there were two things. The one was that the only break I had was 15 minutes, which meant I never really got to know the staff. (This was) the first break which occurred during my time there. So, and I felt that a huge handicap because I need to understand the people that I'm working with. And the second problem was that all my preparation for reading up or marking had to be done at home. There was no time to do it at school. So I had to basically do that in the evening, and it was just too heavy going because I had other commitments during the afternoon and normal things that I'd do outside of teaching which I don't want to give up, because it's part of being a total person.

We should stop at this point and examine what is happening. This is a process of negotiation: both parties need something, but for the moment the principal's need is the more urgent, and therefore the more powerful. He has to find a Mathematics teacher. Sandra's need is weak: it is to respond to a call for help, to render service, to teach. She hadn't needed the money, and hadn't made the first approach. So, in fact, her negotiating position was strong.

Furthermore, her bargaining counter was made the more

powerful by the scarcity of good Mathematics teachers prepared to work in the private school context.

In the course of her explanation, however, something else begins to emerge: she has hold of her priorities. She feels strongly about being a total person and engages in a variety of activities contributing to that sense of totality. She is not prepared to give those activities up. And she is not prepared to see her children as a lower priority than the needs of the school. She therefore declines to do extra-mural duties. This is an unusual stand for a teacher to make. However, it is powerful enough for the principal to give in and to accept her on her terms. But then, for reasons we do not know, he gives her a full timetable. Once more, she counters with another move, as we shall see.

Sandra was asked how long this arrangement had gone on. She replied:

> For two terms, but it was too much. So basically I proposed to them that I share my job with someone else and split it down the middle, which they were prepared to try out for two months. So I got somebody else who was a Maths teacher and she took over two and a half of my classes. So we were actually sharing one class, where she'd do one part of the syllabus and I'd do the other. And that worked much better because it meant that I could do my preparation and my marking <u>in</u> school

time, while I was there.

She also found that this gave her the time she needed with the staff, so that she could get to know them.

What is unusual about this contract is how this teacher was able to keep bargaining until she arrived at the arrangement which best suited her perception of herself as a teacher, and as a mother, and in which her autonomy over her time was recognised. If we return to Hunt's (1981) notion of power as the ability to choose outcomes in the light of our own interests, then it might be suggested that Sandra displayed a greater measure of power than did the principal.

One last point needs to be made on the question of the timetable. Jo, on a small preparatory staff, was happy with her timetable, though it should be remembered that she operated on the basis of an integrated day, with some real measure of autonomy over her time. Debra expressed satisfaction with the timetabling arrangements at her primary school, for the timetable was made up by one of the teachers and the staff helped that teacher to draw it up by saying what they wanted. It was at the secondary school level that most of the complaints occurred. Remarkably, none of the secondary teachers expressed any sympathy for the person who had to draw up their timetable. It does appear to be a thankless task.

We turn now to the question of free periods.

(b) <u>Their attitude to free periods and the loss of those free periods when asked to supervise a class for an absent colleague</u>

To begin with, a definition is needed: a free period is an unallocated period within a teacher's timetable. How that time should be used produced a variety of responses.

One view saw the free period as a time to recover. This view believed that the teacher should be able to decide how to use that time. The other view, believed that the free period should not be seen as free at all: it was an <u>administrative</u> period, not a time to relax.

The first view is captured in the following response by Soraya:

> There were times when ... like for example, I think it's on a Tuesday, I have to teach seven periods and then I'm free in the last three and I'm absolutely bushed by the time I get to the seventh period, but I deserve that three periods that I have, and then they still put me on to invigilate (supervise) which I think is so grossly unfair, because I am so deadbeat by that time, you know like your interval is about 15 minutes, and you just about get to the staffroom and the bell goes again.

Ed, a teacher-librarian, defended the right of a teacher to go into the staffroom and relax:

> He should be able to smoke and relax without the headmaster coming in and giving him a job ...

A view midway between that of relaxing and that of working was expressed by Debra, who saw it as a teacher's right to have a cup of coffee and relax, but preferred personally to try to finish her marking at school. She therefore used her free time for that or for the administrative work connected with being a head of department. Her view was that how the time was to be used should be up to the teacher.

In contrast with those views, the attitudes of most of the senior teachers interviewed was that the free period should be an administrative period. The clearest expression of this attitude came from Anthony, one of the principals:

> As far as the timetable is concerned, we don't ... there aren't free periods ... the time that they've got free, they've got to write there what they're going to do, you know, like admin or preparation, or whatever, so they can't just leave it: 'Gee, I'm free during that period.' But the majority of ... what we've done also with the Standard Five classes, if we've got 18 in the one class and 18 in the other, then we will combine them for their content subjects, because you can take a whole class of say 36 for History or Geography or Science, or whatever, and we've got rooms for that, so then that sets one teacher free at that time. So we try to share the free periods according to their seniority. So the heads of department are going to get of course far more and the

> teachers at an average will get say about four free periods per week which is not, I mean it's not a lot, but they'll get at least four and I say that most would be my senior members of staff with about eight.

The other half of this question related to the attitude taken when a teacher lost a free period by having to supervise for an absent colleague. Michael's strategy has already been outlined, where he so re-defined the situation with the class that he was able to regain control of the time and mark. Soraya's attitude has also been given, in her response above. Generally, teachers disliked giving up this time, particularly as this tended to disrupt the plans they had made for the day. Many activities could have been scheduled for that time: marking, meeting with a colleague for discussions, telephoning in connection with forthcoming sports fixtures, checking on details of lesson preparation in the library ... It could of course also include simply sitting down and catching one's breath. Despite this, it should be said that supervision was often accepted, even by those who disliked it, as part of the job. Classes could not be left without teachers in charge, so it simply had to be done. What tended to irk, though, was the sudden removal of the right to use that time as one had planned, and this relates to the teacher's autonomy.

(c) <u>When lesson preparation took place and the factors that affected when it took place</u>

One of the observations that emerged in the interviews with the teachers was that some of them were aware of the fact that it was possible to take short-cuts in some aspects of the teacher's daily time. This will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter, but here it should be said that teachers recognised that it was possible to save time in marking, in lesson preparation, and in actual classroom teaching. As these three issues are related, it would be best to deal with them together.

Many of the teachers said that they spent some two hours or more each night preparing for the following day's lessons. There was no way of checking on the accuracy of these claims. At least one teacher, Michael, was quite open about his failure to prepare adequately. He was asked whether, in order to achieved a balanced life, teachers were not short-changing the children somehow, such as in lesson preparation. He replied:

> Yes. In my case, that was the case often. There were some days when I'd walk into class and I knew I'd done five minutes of preparation, so the children were disadvantaged to a degree. I still think I sometimes had very good lessons like that, but I mean that shouldn't be the norm ... I'm quite a conscientious, sensitive person and I would go through tremendous torment during the period, because I knew that I hadn't ... I'd feel very guilty that I hadn't prepared. There are other people who have different personalities and

> that wouldn't bug them at all, and I know people said to me, 'Michael, you take teaching too seriously. Just calm down. Don't take everything so personally.' And I wanted everything right and that was one of the pressures. I'd feel so guilty when I hadn't prepared for a day, or I'd be up late at night and then marking and still have to do preparation. I was running around with this guilt trip all the time that I was not doing anything to the best of my ability ...

He went on to talk about short-cuts:

> I have this tremendous sympathy for the teaching profession. They're working incredibly hard and as I mentioned earlier, unless they're very capable and doing well and getting through all these things, and being involved in all these things, then they must be taking short-cuts ...

He was then asked if the taking of short-cuts with preparation had anything to do with not having to show the preparation publicly. He replied:

> Yes. I had my own priority system that I'd first prepare Matrics and would drop down to the Standard Sixers, so if a class was not going to have preparation, it would be my poor Standard Sixers. And sometimes my Standard Sixers had my worst lessons ... And I know a number of other teachers who had a similar sort of prioritising of Matrics first. So my Matrics I'd say, I

> was always prepared for them, and I always went out of my way to make sure that was a good lesson ... And so that's what I'd do with my Standard Sixers: I'd chalk and talk. I wouldn't do a proper preparation. I'd have notes there and I'd literally do it text-book style. If we were doing a History lesson, I would try and make it as much fun as possible. I'd say, 'Let's just read this paragraph ...', and try and put enthusiasm in my voice, and would read through a paragraph that I hadn't even read through the night before, and I actually caught myself once or twice saying, 'Good Grief! Your teacher makes a mistake!' Because I hadn't gone through the work. So my short-cut was that the lesson was badly prepared. And I was not using my best style of teaching.

The implication here is that the Matrics were more important than the Standard Sixers. Michael was the only teacher to have been aware of the prioritising of work that results from a ranking of classes. This was an important observation. When this was explored in the interview with him, it appeared that a ranking could be made of the power that classes could have over a teacher. For example, a teacher would prepare well for a large class, as opposed to a small class. This it was thought had something to do with control: a large class was easier to control if the lesson had been well-prepared. A lesson for a bright class would be better prepared than for a dull class: the bright class could be more pleasurable to teach than the dull one, and

thus preparation would ensure that pleasure with the bright class. Fear could play a role: a teacher might prepare better for class that he feared than for another class in which control was easier. And lastly, preparation would be unusually thorough for an inspection lesson: here there was the factor of being shown up before a colleague, or a superior, and that the resulting judgement could affect one's career, in terms of merit awards and promotion, and so on. This 'showcasing' was readily recognised by teachers as a farce, an act of hypocrisy. Furthermore, the model lesson showed what could be done, what was possible, but which was not done as a norm. However, Michael spoke of one teacher who clearly disagreed with this 'hypocritical' approach and who had made a point of doing nothing more than the usual for an inspection. It is possible to see in this teacher's (perverse?) stance an assertion of autonomy against the bureaucratic requirement of inspection.

Most teachers used some system for both preparation and marking, with the most efficient (that is, those claiming to give back sets of books or tests the following day) having a system of marking everything immediately. Most attempted to do the marking at school, thus saving themselves the burden of taking the books home and of working in home time. In this system, they used part of the lesson period for marking some of the class's books. They attempted to do some marking in each class, each day. In this way, they created cycles of marking and were able to keep a check on what the

classes were doing. Marking is closely related to remedial teaching, and so affected the preparation for remedial lessons. The preparation and the teaching that followed it could not be done until the marking was done. Marking strategies were therefore crucial for the flow of the teacher's work. Wherever the marking was interrupted and was not done, the teacher's preparation and teaching were bound to be affected, if only by having to avoid the areas covered in the tests or books, until the marking had been done. If marking was not structured into the lesson itself, it would have to be done at some other time, such as the free period, and if that was not possible it would have to be done at home. But if home time was itself affected by extra-murals and evening meetings, or weekend sporting management, then the marking would not get done in time, and this would have a snowballing effect on the course of the teacher's work over several days or even weeks.

Michael observed :

> ... marking essays would take me a long time. As a result I could never get through as many written pieces of work. I think I was doing the department bare minimum of trying to get through three pieces a term. And I really liked written work, and I'd have liked to have done more and I always wanted to do more but I could never ... it was like a vicious circle. I could never mark them and so I'd sit with a batch of books that would be at home for two weeks as I tried to mark

> them ...

He found the students reacting to this:

> ... and they'd say, 'But, Sir, whyn't you mark it last night?' And the dear old pupils ... they have no concept I realize of the teacher's time ...

The inter-relationship between marking and lesson-content, that is, remedial work, can be seen in the following response by Charles, the History teacher:

> ... I would say I do it as it comes, right? Say for instance I've written a test (sic) , then I'll do the marking as soon as possible. If the test has been finished and I've got two administration periods, that is what we call free periods, then I'll use those two periods to mark a test. If for instance I have a class of about 15 pupils and they also write that same test on that same day, and I don't have any administration periods in between to mark those books, then I will distribute my pupils in such a way that they may not copy from one another and then I'll sit at the back of the class and I use that time as well for doing some marking. Otherwise if I can't finish my marking at school, then I take my books home especially over a weekend, because a test that I normally write (sic) is towards the end of the week: Thursday or Friday.. So Friday I take my books home and I complete my marking at home and I bring it back.

He was then asked if he tried to get work back to the children as quickly as possible.

> That's right, yes. I think that is a very good objective because the children want to see results, you see, and if they see good results, if they see how they have done in the test, it might motivate them to do much better in the next test. Right? So when they write the next test they are eager. They know already that the teacher will come with the marks the next day, so they are eager to wait for their marks, but if you are going to delay the marking for two, three, four days then it won't be so effective on the pupils.

Soraya, the Mathematics teacher, said much the same:

> What I would do is, I would mark it immediately. Always. There was no delay for me. I would never delay a test, because I know those kids want to know if ... it's important to them. The test could have been a challenge to some of them. And to some of them it was competition, so it's important that you hand it back to them and they can see where they went wrong.

Vanessa, the General Science teacher, said the same sort of thing. She maintained that she had never failed in several years of teaching to hand back a test the following day. She would do this even if it meant staying up the whole night to finish the marking.

At least two of the teachers, Debra and Mrs Dawson, mentioned sitting down as a matter of practice after supper and devoting about two hours to school work. Mrs Dawson mentioned having to turn down invitations from friends to come round and have a cup of tea. She would tell them she couldn't, that she still had too much to do. She made the significant remark that it was only in the holidays that she was finally able to catch up on her friendships ...

It would seem that the cost of delivering the goods to their classes can be very high for some teachers.

(d) Their attitudes to extra-mural duties in terms of how those duties affected the rest of the day

Once again, there was a cleavage between those teachers who saw extra-murals as part of the duties of the teacher, and those teachers who felt it was an unwarranted requirement.

The majority saw extra-mural work as a reasonable requirement, and extra-murals as an important part of the development of the whole child. If this then affected the rest of the day, that was regrettable but inevitable.

A minority, all secondary teachers, felt strongly that extra-murals were inappropriate work for school-teachers to undertake. Extra-murals should not be part of the professional package of requirements. Others, such as parents or even sporting professionals, should be used to provide what teachers were now providing, at great personal

cost.

Sandra saw it clearly:

> I think it's a cop-out from parents. I think it's actually a parent's job to do extra-murals (...) I feel very strongly about that. I feel that parents relegate everything to teachers. They want them to do their moral education, their academic education, their sports education, and when the kids turn out bad, they say, 'It's the teacher, or, the school. Why doesn't the school do it?' They don't say, 'Why didn't <u>we</u> do it?'

She felt 'normal' teachers should not have to do extra-murals as the time spent with extra-murals was actually preparation and growth time for teaching.

Two other teachers saw that the extra-mural load could lead to personal stress amongst teachers. Michael, who had resigned and was working in the private sector, recalled his reasons for going:

> My primary motivation for actually moving to the private sector was because of time. I moved across ... there was no salary change this year ... it's perhaps a misconception: many people think people are going purely because of salary. I went solely because of the pressure. The fact that I thought that after four years I'm still struggling, if I'm still taking strain in my personal life, if this is not going to change for the

> rest of my life, I'm going to ... something's going to happen. Something's going to give somewhere and so I moved basically because of my time and the stress of teaching, which is related to the time issue ...

Michael quoted heads of department friends of his who had felt that over the last five to ten years teachers had been given increasing responsibilities, including matters such as legal responsibilities over the safety of children when supervising them on outings, or the legal responsibilities for injuries on the sports fields. Michael added:

> I'm finding that the professional standards placed on a teacher are greater than what were perceived to be the standards say ten years ago. All the time more and more is demanded of the teacher. Sometimes it's not actually explicitly stated, but it's implied: you must maintain this, you've got to be in charge of admin, you've got to know your pupils, and I can remember always trying to grapple with this as a teacher, saying you know, somewhere I'm going to have to chop off ... I think last year I was teaching all my different classes, it was 163-164 pupils, and now I was supposed to know all these children so that if a parent phoned me, I would know their child. I was even battling just to remember that that child was in my class. Now you're responsible for all these different things, and just to try and find out what your main priority ... is your priority the formal classroom activities; is your priority to the school in

> general; in the overall extra-mural activities form combined (sic); is it to the child on a personal level, getting to know them? And although I had my feelings where my priorities lay, I didn't always know whether the hierarchy at the school had the same priorities, and whether I was actually slotting in with their priorities and often what the hierarchy says is their priority, there's a hidden curriculum that comes through. And pupils pick it up: when an extra-mural activity is suddenly given, sort of takes over during the week, and irrespective of whether the headmaster says, 'You know, we must concentrate on our studies, or whatever', when you're cutting into classroom time, where the school's finishing early so that they can carry out whatever the extra-mural activity is, you're saying to the pupils: 'This is very important. This week, you know we're actually going to take short-cuts elsewhere,' and the teachers pick it up, and there're these conflicts going on all the time.

What Michael says here is important. He is saying that it is often difficult for teachers to sort out the real priorities of the school, because of the different messages being given out. On one level, there is a strong message emphasizing the importance of the academic performance. But on another level, and underlined by the amount of time devoted to it, is the message that the extra-mural activity is actually more important. Anyone who has experienced the massive concentration of time and energy that goes into the

annual match against the arch-rival school, or into the school play, in the days and even weeks running up to it, could probably corroborate this. However, many of the priorities in a school are less obviously ranked, and it can become a real management problem for those unskilled in reading the messages, such as novice teachers. Their time can become so mismanaged that the personal level of stress can reach critical levels.

The organizing of large annual events can be particularly taxing on the time of the organizer. Michael spoke of the teacher who organized their annual match with their arch-rivals:

> The poor teacher in charge, the administration's sports officer, I mean he did a phenomenal job, but I mean that's all he did and it was known at that school that you'd never find him in his classroom. And I mean that was not just a perception. I knew it for myself for he was my subject head for one of my subjects, and he would be in his office all the time, making for ... maybe the previous two weeks, all his time would be taken up organizing something like this ...

The number of extra-mural events can be so high that it can lead, in the eyes of some teachers, to serious inroads on classroom time. Ed noted that there had been so many events at their school in the preceding year that teachers were asking:

Well, when do I get to see my class? I'm forever involved in this sort of thing ...

(e) Their attitudes to afternoon and evening meetings that they were obliged to attend in the course of their duties...

For most of the teachers, this was not an issue, though it was a matter that led to strong feelings amongst those teachers who felt they were being over-worked at their schools. At the preparatory and primary levels, it seemed that few meetings were called per term and that these were mainly the PTA meetings, or meetings with the parents for termly reports on progress. Meetings at the teacher centres were often delegated on a roster basis, or by special interest and thus were not matters for contention. Meetings were often merely publicised and it was left to the teachers to decide whether or not to attend.

It was at the secondary level that there seemed to be resistance to the number of meetings, and to so many of them being scheduled for the evenings. This has to be seen, however, in the context of the overall load of extra-mural activities that these teachers were carrying. It may also be a characteristic of high-pressure schools and not a feature of all secondary schools.

(f) Their attitudes to homework ...

It seemed that a majority of the teachers interviewed felt that homework was counter-productive. It took so much time the following day simply checking that the homework had been done, or done correctly, that it interfered seriously with the progress through the syllabus.

Certain problems were subject-specific. For example, Soraya felt that it was self-defeating to give her students work to do at home because they would cheat, by copying from others. This simply defeated the purpose of studying Mathematics and would in any case show up as weaknesses in the examinations, when students would have to work on their own anyway. She also felt that many students didn't do the work set for homework and needed someone behind them to encourage them or to see that it was done. She was aware of the problems that home backgrounds could pose.

Only Charles, the History teacher, was adamant that homework had to be done. He said:

> I would say that it's absolutely essential that a child gets homework. He must go home and do some work, even if it's just reading up something. Even if it means that he has to go to the library and look up some book, right? We must remember, however, that the teaching process is not completed in the class. I would say that 30% of the child's learning process takes place in the class, the other 70% of his knowledge he will gain

> outside, so it is very important that he go home and do some homework. In my particular subject, homework is basically limited to doing their notes and reading up or finding out the answers to some questions that will be related to the lesson tomorrow.

What Charles says at the end here, is important. Homework can be so skillfully integrated into the run of the week that it successfully adds to the amount of teaching time available. By setting as homework work which is a follow-on to the day's lesson, a teacher can add time to the day's lesson period. Then, by setting work which anticipates tomorrow's lesson, it can add to that lesson-period as well.

Although Charles recognised the dangers of overloading children with homework, he was nevertheless adamant that in his subject homework was necessary. In the past, the school had tried a homework roster, but it hadn't worked. Was this because some teachers had cheated?

> I would say some teachers cheated, yes. But for me especially, I would say it is very difficult. I mean, I can't give the child homework two days of the week, which is very difficult. The child must go home ... you see as soon as you give the child a timetable, now he firmly believes he's not doing History homework on a Monday, and that's an impossibility because he _has_ to go and do his notes, or summarise whatever we've done during the course of the day, or he _must_ go and find out

> the answers to three questions that will link up with the lesson tomorrow. So for me it's absolutely essential to give the child everyday homework. There must be close cooperation between the teachers.

The underlying message here is efficiency in the use of all available time: teacher preparation time, classroom time, and the child's home time. This strategy copes with the pressures of time, and makes it possible for the teacher to cover a lengthy syllabus. As such, it is a successful coping strategy. This teacher produces excellent Senior Certificate results. One can see why.

(g) <u>Their attitude to tests and examinations ...</u>

Just as there was an almost uniform rejection of homework, so there was a similar response to the issue of tests and examinations, and how this affected the allocation of teaching time in the course of the year.

It was generally felt that examinations took up far too much teaching time, that there was a high degree of examination - orientation in the course of the year's teaching, and that examinations resulted in stressful marking schedules to meet the necessary deadlines at the end of each quarter.

Teachers were almost uniform in their positive attitude to testing, which they saw as an essential component to the process of learning. As each piece of work was completed,

they felt the ideal would be to assess it and to use the assessment in a cumulative form as a guide to evaluating the child's progress.

(h) <u>Their views on the question of time as an aspect of professionalism</u>

Again, there was a division amongst the teachers. Those who saw teaching as a full-time activity, a calling, felt that the school had a right to their time, within reason. On the other hand, there were those who believed that time with one's family came first. But all were aware of the conflict that existed over where to allocate professional time.

Vanessa, who was married, captures the essence of the conflict:

> I think the husband of a teacher is a very unhappy person, if his wife is doing her job.

But the splitting of one's commitment doesn't take place only between the home and the school. The conflict may be very real <u>within</u> the school. Charles, the History teacher, outlined what happened to him:

> As I said in the past, I had this attitude of helping people. It doesn't matter who it is, and that really drained me. If I look back into 1988 then I was teaching History Standard Ten. I was teaching Guidance Standard Ten. I was helping the new teacher head of

department Mr--- with the issuing of free stationery and I was in charge of all the registers of the school, and I felt of that year that I reached the maximum. I felt completely drained then already. What really happens when you do these administrative jobs, you overwork yourself. I have said once in a meeting with the principal, I have told him the Department is making use of professional cheap labour in that we at this school, especially the head of departments, they are doing the work of three people. If I take myself in that particular, in 1988 I was a teacher, I was a counselor, and I was a clerk. And so I was doing the job of three different people. Not one of these three jobs I have done 100%.

Q. So they all suffer?

A. All of them suffer. The one that suffers most is your teaching.

Q. Why?

A. Simply because you have to get the administrative work done. The Department wants it done.

Q. So those are deadlines that have to be met -- the administrative work?

A. Yes.

What Charles is revealing is that he actually understands the real priorities of the school: there is a hierarchy of priorities and he is aware of it. Not only that, he obeys the demands of the hierarchy: he knows which must be met first. However, because he is also a professional charged

with the education of children, his professional belief in what is right or wrong tells him something is not right. He sees the non-professional demands getting in the way of what he feels is far more important: the teaching of the children. This takes us back to the question of autonomy and the tension between the <u>positional authority</u> in the hierarchy above the teacher, and the <u>expert authority</u> which is intrinsic to his professionalism. This tension shows up in his awareness that teaching time is suffering at the hands of administrative time. But it also shows clearly the relative degrees of power that both forms of time have: administrative time is more powerful than teaching time.

Within the perception of teaching as a calling is the notion that the teacher is a role-model for children. This came out clearly in what was said by both principals, the deputy principal, and Vanessa. Each of these teachers believed that teaching was a high calling. Vanessa spoke of it idealistically:

> Teaching is such a commitment. It is almost like a preacher ... people look at you. A child must be able to look at you anywhere, anytime and know you are a teacher. Is there anything else more important on this earth than working with children? What could be more important?

Diane, one of the principals, said:

> Being a principal is a full-time activity ... even going

to the shop, there's a position to maintain ...

Most of the teachers in authority felt there had been a decline in the standards of younger members coming into the profession, who tended to see teaching as a job. They felt this showed itself in a lack of punctuality, in getting work in on time, or in following instructions. This added considerably to the burden of work, and thus to the drain on the time of the teacher in authority.

Those in authority at the preparatory and primary levels were critical of the quality of teachers being trained, and blamed the training institutions for failing to see that their students were adequately prepared for lessons. This failure added to their own work as they had to help the novices with the preparation of lessons or material, which should have been done, they maintained, at the institution. In this way, their own time was stretched unnecessarily.

Finally, although none of the teachers attempted to define professionalism (they weren't asked to do so), they all knew roughly what it meant for the profession and for themselves. They saw time as a commodity within that profession: for example, it was not to be wasted in class by the students, nor in their free periods by the teachers. There was a clear showing of conflict over who or what owned their professional time, however: this applied not only at school (there were real attempts to preserve autonomy within the classroom), but also on the home front (my children need

me). This question of time and professionalism will be taken further in the last chapter.

3. Summary

In this chapter excerpts are provided which attempt to give an understanding of the main lines of inquiry in the study. In no sense are the excerpts meant to be exhaustive. What is presented here should be read in conjunction with the excerpts presented earlier.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

In this last chapter, the conclusions will be presented, followed by a brief set of suggestions for future research.

2. Conclusions

Differences of kind and degree

To begin, it should be said that each level of teaching produces its own kind of problems of time, conflict and autonomy. This is because time itself tends to be structured in different ways at each level. For example, we have already seen the distinction between the integrated day of the preparatory level and the subject-dominated framework of the secondary level. In each case this produces its own confines and freedoms of time.

On the other hand, there are problems that relate time, conflict and autonomy together irrespective of the level of teaching. Such are problems of extra-mural loads, the marking of books and the preparation of lessons, and the presentation of expertise before the critical eyes of inspecting officers.

Any examination of time, conflict and autonomy should take these differences of kind and degree into account.

Perceptions and strategies

Schools are complex institutions located within milieux of time and space. Although schools are physically fixed in place and thus have a permanence, they are essentially made up of people, who change, and thus have a transience within the permanence. Each of these elements affects the nature of the school and how people see the situations that make up the school. These differing perceptions produce differing strategies for the gaining of personal goals by staff and students.

Examples have been given of ways of coping with the structural elements that bear upon the classroom activities of both the teachers and the students. As we are looking particularly at the working lives of teachers, it is the coping strategies of the teachers that most interest us. In using these coping strategies, teachers attempt to acquire and preserve their autonomy to make expert decisions within the relationships of the school. It is in attempting to express their autonomy over time that teachers create, or have to deal with, conflict.

It would seem that there are numbers of teachers who find the stresses of that conflict increasingly unbearable, and who are leaving the profession. Those who remain may be

disguising their unhappiness in different forms of role retreatism or resignation within the circumstances of their lives.

Priorities

Each school, at any season, has a ranking of priorities. These rankings may not be readable by all members of staff. Those who have difficulty in decoding the several messages that a school leadership may give out, are likely to show evidence of mismanagement of their time. This in turn may lead to conflict and to larger misgivings about the profession and could result in negative coping strategies, that is, strategies which affect the level of performance of the teacher, or which could result in the teacher leaving the profession.

Rankings of Power

It would seem that there are rankings of power in schools and that these rankings do not always follow the natural hierarchy of authority. Teachers whom one might expect to have power in a given situation may surprisingly be unable to demonstrate it. Others, such as students, who might be far down in the ranking of authority, may demonstrate real power such that all else must give way before it. There are assumptions and givens in the world of local schooling that need careful challenging, for all is not what it might seem to be.

3. Future research

This study involved a handful of teachers. It would seem important to cast the net wider, particularly with the advent of open schooling. One of the areas that will need the kind of careful examination mentioned above, is that of multi-culturalism. It might be predicted that one of the areas of time-expenditure that could undergo great change is that of extra-mural involvement, particularly if rolls rise considerably. It could be that teachers are going to be thin on the ground in some schools: this could be a recipe for conflict over their autonomous control of personal time. Much of the success of non-racial schooling could rest on the delicate balance between time, conflict and autonomy.

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