

The Problem of Communication between Educators, Learners and Parents in
Multicultural Secondary Schools in the Durban-South Region of KwaZulu-
Natal : Some Management Solutions.

by

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Declaration of Originality

I declare that this dissertation is my own work and that all sources I have used have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Reference declaration in respect of a Master's Dissertation.

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- (1) as far as we know and can ascertain , no other similar dissertation exists
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Dedication

I wish to express my gratitude to my wife Cintha , sons , Brendan and Ryan for their support and endless patience while I was busy with this study. May your dreams also come true.

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Abstract

This study filled a void in the existing educational management literature and highlighted the communication problems that exist between the educators , learners and parents in multicultural secondary schools , especially when the educator , learner and the parent belong to different cultural groups. The communication problems between educators , learners and parents pose a serious challenge to management as they impede the progress of teaching and learning in the classrooms.

The thorny issue of language in education in South African schools has not been given much emphasis. Neither have educationists and policy makers given much attention to the problem of communication in multicultural schools. Opening schools to all cultures did not solve the communication problems, but created new ones.

The main method used in this investigation was the literature study. Using the investigative methods associated with qualitative studies , the researcher attempted to investigate data collected from a number of sources.

Research on co-operation in the multi-ethnic classroom revealed that pupils of different ethnic groups preferred to socialise in their own language groups. This study confirmed that culture and language influenced not only which peers pupils choose to play with, but also who they deliberately excluded from their games. In many schools there are few systematic attempts to enhance pupils' cross-ethnic friendships and this may work to consolidate the evident "own-race and language preference" of a large portion of pupils. Thus there is a need for communication to enhance cross-cultural friendships.

There is an increasing need for educators to encourage intercultural communication. Educators should use the language of instruction to learn about each others' culture and language so that there is mutual respect and tolerance. Teaching in multicultural classrooms demands a high level of expertise among educators. Culturally diverse learners may have prior learning experiences that predispose them to learning in ways that may not be compatible with some methods of instruction in common use in many

classrooms. Therefore , educators need to adopt an inclusive and flexible approach to instruction , observing their pupil's responses and adjusting instructions to meet the needs of individuals and groups in the classroom. It is now becoming clear that even educators and school managers need guidance and assistance in coping with communication in the multicultural school.

The more people of different cultures communicate with each other , the more they discover how similar they are.

This study examined some of the communication problems present in multicultural schools, the possible causes of the problems and management solutions to some of the problems.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa has been comprehensively transformed since the general election of 1994. This election brought a new democratic government into power and with it profound changes in all spheres of South African life. As a result of developments in the political arena and a new constitutional dispensation, far reaching societal changes have begun - changes which will impact socially, as well as psychologically, on the lives of individuals and different cultural groups.

One of the greatest challenges facing South Africa's new democratic government is the creation of an educational system that will accommodate the country's diverse cultural and language groups. According to Grootboom (1999: 4) educational transformation means that schools will have to cater for the needs of all children. At the same time quality education has to be provided for all the country's citizens. This challenge will have to be met in the classrooms of the future. To adequately meet this challenge, South Africa should focus on areas of research that are much broader than educational content alone.

One area of education that requires research concerns teachers and students in multicultural classrooms, which has appeared as a result of transformation. As the educational system becomes increasingly multicultural and classrooms more culturally integrated, research will become a matter of urgency.

According to a recent study by Govender (1996 : 24), desegregating schools alone does not automatically lead to integration : simply grouping students of different cultures together will not bring about the desired integration. The contact hypothesis theory of Lewin (cited in Bargal, 1990:180), that interpersonal contact between members of different ethnic groups may change attitudes and relations, has not been proved . Indeed , Bargal (1990: 180) believes that contact may even result in interpersonal tension and even racism between groups, whether or not such groups are seen as unworthy or unreliable (Thompson, 1997: 34).

1.2 CURRENT RESEARCH IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW.

The field of multicultural education needs to be extensively researched both nationally and internationally. In South Africa some research studies have been conducted on teaching in a multicultural context (Cassell, 1994; Nair, 1995; Tshivhase, 1996 ; Nkosi, 1996 ; Van der Merwe, 1997 and Grootboom, 1999).

In studies at multicultural schools, researchers have looked into the behavioural and emotional problems of pupils. Research has also focused on cross-cultural studies of self-esteem (Manning and Baruth, 1992 : 125); sex, race, socio-economic class and other demographic variables as explanations for pupils' abilities and adjustments ; the relationship between school stress and school functioning and self-worth among urban African-American pre- adolescents ; life-skills in a changing society and navigating psychosocial pressures on adolescents . According to a summary of these studies, patterns of childhood and adolescent problems are influenced by the culture in which youngsters grow up. It is clear that very little research has been done to determine the causes of communication problems in multicultural schools.

Some research studies have attempted to address the issues of cultural and racial integration in South African schools (Heugh, Siegruhn and Pluddeman, 1995:7). These studies have focused on the needs of teachers who teach in multicultural schools, the needs of society, the issues of stereotyping and prejudice but none have focused on communication problems experienced by educators , learners and parents.

The African National Congress (ANC) document on Policy Framework for Education and Training (1994 : 4) states that the education process should aim at the development of a national democratic culture, which respects the diverse cultural and linguistic traditions of all the people of South Africa. Peace, justice, tolerance and stability should be encouraged in all communities and the nation as a whole. Tshivhase (1996:27) is of the opinion that this infers that multicultural education should be developed in

such a way that universal values are followed and respected by all communities both in and out of the school. Thus there is a need to investigate communication problems and provide solutions that are manageable.

The ANC had already planned educational reform, even before the election of 1994: bodies such as the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC), the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) and the National Education and Training Forum (NETF) had addressed crucial educational issues. Since 1994 legislation has been enacted to facilitate better intergroup relations in schools and society as a whole. This includes The South African Schools Act of 1996 and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). In the latter, Chapter 2, 30, the following concerning intergroup relations is stated :

Language and culture

30 Everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights.

Cultural, religious and linguistic communities

- 31 (1) Persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community-
- (a) to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language and
 - (b) to form, join and maintain cultural, religious and linguistic associations and other organs of civil society
- (2) The rights in subsection (1) may not be exercised in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights.

Van der Merwe (1997:4) states that despite these and other measures, the implementation of the new education policy will take considerable time and the transition phase is likely to prove problematical.

1.3 TEACHERS IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS : AN OVERVIEW

Teachers in the schools, which have become recently integrated, suffer from stress as they struggle to manage the changing dynamics of their classrooms and schools, teach large classes, and overcome racial, cultural and language barriers. The impact of one teacher in a classroom on what students learn, appears limited. It is rather the school as a whole, its culture and ethos, which is responsible for the overall happiness, competencies and attitudes of its students.

Teachers' problems have been further exacerbated because education is in transition and teaching in a changing school system has become a great challenge. Classrooms are undergoing enormous changes as school populations become increasingly heterogeneous. Teachers now face the challenge of teaching and managing pupils from cultures, languages and backgrounds unfamiliar to them. Increasing diversity has brought about problems of dealing with the changing circumstances at school, while at the same time maintaining standards of excellence. Teachers in turn are required to create suitable learning environments that will meet the needs of pupils from diverse cultural, linguistic, educational and socio-economic backgrounds (Lemmer and Squelch,1993:47).

Many different factors influence the progress, prospects and perils of multicultural education in secondary schools. Essential are the attitudes, values, skills and commitment of classroom teachers. To a large degree teachers' effectiveness (or the lack thereof) with ethnically different students and multicultural subject content is a direct reflection of the quality of their own professional preparation (Banks and Banks,1989:154).

Few teachers have had the kind of education, experiences or training in multicultural education that create feelings of confidence in their ability to work well with ethnically diverse pupils. Teachers' feelings of inadequacy, coupled with few persuasive incentives or relevant and convenient programmes of professional development have resulted in severe shortages of competent multicultural teachers. This fact suggests that teacher educators and education policy makers should immediately implement

compulsory multicultural teacher training programmes (Lynch,1987:153-158).

In order to enhance their effectiveness in multicultural settings, Hernandez (1989 : 28-29) recommends the following for teachers :

- * Firstly, they should develop an awareness of culture in themselves, both as individuals and as teachers. This usually is a prerequisite to acceptance of the reality and the validity of cultural differences, a first step in dealing with diversity in the classroom.
- * Secondly, teachers should develop an awareness of culture as it is manifested in their students, both as individuals and members of different cultural groups. To understand how culture influences what happens in their classrooms , teachers must have “local cultural knowledge about a group’s history , economic circumstances, religious and social organisations, socialisation practices, conceptualisation of social competence and language uses”.
- * Thirdly , teachers should know which sociocultural factors influence the teaching and learning process and how they do so. Teachers who develop both knowledge of culture and insights into its influence will be prepared to devise effective strategies for working with all students, whatever their backgrounds and capabilities.

1.4 AN INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION (AS AN EXPRESSION OF CULTURE).

1.4.1 COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS :

This research will highlight the communication problems that exist when learners and parents and especially educators belong to different cultural groups. Communication problems in schools pose a serious challenge to

management as they impede the progress of teaching and learning in the classrooms (as explained in Chapter Two).

Therefore it is the task of management to :

- * identify communication problems among educators , learners and parents;
- * determine what is causing communication problems ;
- * provide management solutions for communication problems.

It is clear that interventionist strategies should be tested for their efficacy but, at the same time, the researcher does not expect to find easy solutions to the complexities of multicultural communication.

Evidence indicates that schools should create a climate in which racist and domineering, aggressive-behaviour is challenged and eradicated . This would entail the establishment of a new relationship between the school and the community. This is possible by reconstituting parent and pupil bodies which would seek and represent the interests, concerns and views of the community. This would entail dialogue between concerned groups and lines of communication would be firmly established.

1.5 REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE TOPIC :

The thorny issue of language in education in South African schools has not been given much consideration. Educationists and policy makers have not given much attention to the problem of communication in multicultural schools. In fact opening schools to all cultures only created new education problems. As Cooper (1989:112) argues, medium of instruction is a contentious issue in many countries because it represents a site of possible conflict of interests :

“Since education is, from the state’s point of view, a primary means of social control and from the individual’s or family’s point of view, a means of social mobility, it is scarcely surprising that the language of instruction should be an important political issue”.

In contemporary South Africa this political connection is probably the most sensitive aspect of language in education policy, largely because of the way it was manipulated by the former government in the service of apartheid. Research findings by the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) on the role of language in cognitive development suggest that mother-tongue medium of instruction, in the initial years of schooling, is best for children's cognitive development. The Scottish Study in Nigeria also confirms this. However, among speakers of African languages, mother-tongue policy has a bad image. It is associated with inferior education offered under the ex-Ministry for Bantu Education and its successors. Parent's memories of Bantu Education , combined with their perception of English as a gateway to better education, cause the majority of Black parents to favour English as the medium of instruction from the start of schooling, even if their children do not know English before they go to school (NEPI, 1992,13).

The demise of apartheid and the accompanying elimination of restrictions on residential mobility , has led to linguistically complex classes and schools . Despite this and the official recognition of eleven languages in South Africa, parents prefer English as the language of instruction. Both parents and teachers perceive English as a "language of power" and the key to socio-economic advancement in South Africa. Therefore , using English as the language of learning is considered to be in the interests of all learners.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Chapter 2, 29 (2)) states that "Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation, of this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single medium institutions, taking into account -

- (a) equity
- (b) practicability, and
- (c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices".

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, pupils may demand any one of the eleven official languages as a medium of instruction.

The South African Constitution favours multilingualism but governmental practice suggests the opposite. Like so many African countries, South Africa is moving towards *de facto* unilingualism, that is English.

According to Unterhalter, Wolpe and Botha (1991 : 121), English should be the *lingua franca* of South Africa . But English should be made more widely accessible and not remain the language of an educated elite. Only then can it assist in the process of nation building.

In a society which aspires to meet the needs of the majority of people, language cannot be used in an elitist way - to obfuscate, to confuse , to deceive , to create barriers .To prevent this happening, it may be necessary for those who do not speak an African language to learn to speak at least one - preferably the language of their own region. The best ways to promote this , given the multilingual complexity of some parts of the country , still needs to be explored.

The rapid changes in the linguistic profile of schools were not accompanied by changes in the language policies of schools nor by changes in teaching staff . This means that, in many classes, teachers do not speak the home languages of the majority, or even a significant minority, of pupils .This mismatch in the language competencies of teachers and pupils creates a communication problem in the classroom .

Research studies (Du Toit, 1995 ; Foster, 1990 and Polson and Visser, 1996) at primary and high schools have found that discipline and control problems arise from a communication breakdown between teachers and pupils who speak different languages .

The key to the successful integration of educators and learners of different cultures is "communication" . Unfortunately , this is an area that has been largely neglected by educationists , policy makers and researchers .It is intended that this study will fill a void in the existing education

management literature and offer solutions to educationists , planners and school managers who are experiencing communication problems in multicultural schools .

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH

The main concerns of this research will focus on :

- * identifying the various communication problems present in multicultural schools ;
- * looking at the reasons for the communication problems at school ;
- * exploring management solutions to the communication problems.

1.7 ANALYSIS OF KEY CONCEPTS FOR THIS RESEARCH

An analysis of the key concepts used in this study will help the reader to gain a better understanding of the research topic.

1.7.1 COMMUNICATION

The word ‘communication’ is derived from the Latin *communis* , which means ‘shared , common’. Evans (1995 : 117) is of the opinion that communication is seeking “commonness of thought” with others . “Commonness of thought” means that a sharing relationship must exist between the sender and receiver of a message.

‘Communication’ is defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary as ‘the act of imparting’. This definition encompasses social dealings and the practice of transmitting or conveying information . The Chambers Dictionary broadens this definition to include the meanings, ‘giving a share of ’ , ‘revealing’ and ‘to have something in common with another’.

1.7.1.1 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

When an individual communicates he or she uses symbols that are interpreted by the receiver . Successful communication occurs when both the sender and receiver of the symbols interpret them in a similar way . Communication is unsuccessful when the sender and receiver of the symbols interpret them differently.

Individuals who are socialised within the same culture or microculture are more likely to have shared meanings of symbols than are individuals who are socialised within different microcultures, cultures and nations (Banks, 1997: 82). The wider the differences in cultures or microcultures between individuals, the more ineffective communication is likely to be.

Lustig and Koester, quoted in Banks (1997: 83), define intercultural communication as "a symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings". Communication often fails across cultures because the message producer and the receiver have few shared symbols and have been socialized within environments in which the same symbols are interpreted differently.

Intercultural communication is an important concept in multicultural studies. It helps explain many of the conflicts and misunderstandings that often occur between ethnic groups.

Dodd (1995: 21), states that intercultural communication depends upon reducing uncertainty levels about other people. Cross-cultural communication can be improved when individuals from different cultures begin to interpret symbols in similar ways and when they have a strong desire to communicate effectively.

The above concept will be used to show the problems pupils and educators experience when they are from different cultural backgrounds.

1.7.2 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION (SCHOOLS)

For the purpose of this study 'multicultural schools' refer to schools that are no longer segregated along racial lines: in other words, these schools admit learners of all races. 'Multicultural education' refers to the curriculum in the above schools that caters for all pupils irrespective of race or cultural background.

There are two types of schools in this group: the first type of school admitted a small group of Black pupils while retaining a majority White

pupil population and maintained a European ethos ; the second type of school admitted a majority of Black pupils and retained a minority White pupil population while still retaining a European identity.

'Black schools' refers to schools that have a total Black pupil population, for example, township and rural African schools.

In some multicultural schools in South Africa, Black pupils are taught through the medium of English. These students study all their subjects in English, which includes reading and understanding expository English texts, as well as doing English written assignments, which require a particular level of cognitive academic skills. Furthermore, Black students compete with English mother-tongue speakers in the English First Language classes, although they are English Second Language speakers. This is a far more demanding situation than the one in so-called "Black schools", where virtually all students take English Second Language as a subject (Swartz, 1994 : 76).

Multicultural education has been defined in numerous ways by various groups and individuals . These definitions represent a kaleidoscope of differing views that describe multicultural education from "educational practice" to "inter-disciplinary process" .

Banks and Banks (1989 :1) define multicultural education as " an idea, an educational reform movement and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students , exceptional students and students who are members of diverse racial , ethnic, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school " .

Hernandez (1989 : 3) expresses two formal definitions of multicultural education that describe those dimensions important to educationists . The first defines the essence of multicultural education as a perspective that recognises the following aspects :

* the political , social and economic realities that individuals experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters ;

* the importance of culture , race , sexuality and gender , ethnicity , religion, socio-economic status and exceptionalities in the educational process .

According to Nair (1995 : 11) , multicultural education can be expressed as a process through which individuals develop ways of perceiving , evaluating and behaving within cultural systems different from their own . Here pupils must learn to communicate and interact with people of different cultural backgrounds .

A further definition focuses attention on multicultural education as an instructional approach . Suzuki (1984 : 305) maintains that “ multicultural education is a multi-disciplinary educational programme that provides multiple learning environments matching the academic , social and linguistic needs of students ” . Thus the focus is on the learners as individuals who have special instructional needs in academic achievement as well as social and personal development .

Bennett (1990 : 11) defines multicultural education as an “ approach to teaching and learning that is based upon democratic values and beliefs , and seeks to foster cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies and an interdependent world ” .

According to Banks and Banks (1989 : 53) , multicultural education is a term which describes working with individuals who are different because of race, gender , class , or handicap . The term applies to a “ particular approach , the goals of which are to reduce prejudice and racial discrimination against oppressed groups , provide equal opportunity and social justice for all groups, and effect an equitable distribution of power among members of different cultural groups ” . This multicultural educational approach attempts to reform the total schooling process of all children , regardless of whether the school is an all-White suburban school or a multiracial urban school .The curriculum and instructional programmes are changed to produce an awareness , acceptance and affirmation of cultural diversity . This approach helps all pupils succeed in school and helps them understand and value diverse cultures and lifestyles .

Multicultural education refers to education in a changing , pluralistic , democratic society . Since the education system is functionally related to the society in which it operates , the society that is changing will require a changing educational system (Havinghurst & Neugarten , 1975 : 12).

To this end , Dewey (1916 : 115) , argues that in a democratic society , education provides the individuals with a personal interest in social relationships and the values and attitudes which would secure social changes “ without introducing disorder ” .

Chapter Two will focus on the communication problems among educators, learners and parents.

SUMMARY :

An overview of research in multicultural education was provided. The researcher also provided an overview of teachers in multicultural schools . Reasons for choosing the topic were mentioned. Key concepts such as : communication and multicultural education were explained in detail. Legislation regarding language issues were also mentioned.

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CHAPTER TWO

2.1 COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS AMONG EDUCATORS, LEARNERS AND PARENTS.

2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Given the scenario regarding the state of Black education in South Africa in the Nineties , it was hardly surprising that informed and caring parents of Black school pupils preferred to enrol their children in former White only and Indian only schools, where the quality of teaching , facilities , size of classes and over-all standard of education demonstrably promoted academic success. While government policy in the Apartheid Era prevented or obstructed the flow of Black pupils to White schools , the gradual relaxation of these restrictions in the early Nineties led to the use of the term “ open schools ” to refer to mainly English-medium White schools which admitted Black , Coloured and Indian pupils , mainly at junior secondary level and , initially , in very small numbers.

Following the change in government in 1994 and the closure of the various education departments run on racially segregated lines, an amalgamated Department of National Education was established. All restrictions on racial mixing at school level were removed and, inevitably, the number of Black and Coloured pupils at traditionally White and Indian schools increased (Van der Merwe, 1997 : 18). This influx of Black pupils into single medium schools is the source of the problems addressed in this study. Some of these problems are linked to poor communication between the educators, pupils and parents, discipline problems, poor performance by Black pupils and educators not trained to teach in multicultural classrooms. These problems are discussed later in this study.

Clearly changes have taken place in these “ open schools ” and no doubt will continue to occur. Teachers are trying to cope as best as they can with the racial mix of pupils in their classes. Black pupils are compelled to adjust to the norms and conventions of the dominant educator and pupil culture within the school (Swartz, 1992 : 124).

Dalin (1978) as quoted in Grootboom (1999 : 20) suggests that for successful educational change to occur there is a need to both understand the process of change and manage such educational change. Change should include more than curriculum but should be seen against the changes within society. Natale (1992:67) expresses the same viewpoint and writes that changes within society have an influence on educational change. Moreover he adds another component referring to changes within the students themselves: secondary school pupils experience both external change as well as internal change, resulting from their development from childhood to adolescence . These changes can have deep-rooted psychological effects on how they progress in school . James (1997 : 98) writes that “ adolescents are affected significantly because in addition to adapting to a new society , they must also cope with the psychological , physiological and hormonal changes that accompany the transition from childhood to adulthood ” . The school has to meet not only the needs of pupils in this phase of development, but also their needs in multicultural classrooms .

2.2 PROBLEMS IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS.

Pupils in school cannot be seen as separate from their cultural background: every aspect of their lives must be considered, as education should be, of individuals in their entirety.

In multicultural education, cognisance of the means by and the background against which the curriculum is conveyed to the pupil in a school setting, must be taken. This includes the “hidden curriculum”, the subtle interplay of attitudes and relationships between educators and pupils. When the formal school curriculum is negotiated it is always against the background of the informal (hidden) curriculum, an integral aspect of classroom life.

2.2.1 THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

Teaching activities occur in a variety of contexts, namely, individual, group, class, school and community. Within the classroom context, two interrelated curricula are negotiated by educators and pupils. The first, to some extent, is

invisible, "hidden" in the interactional, social, management and organisational aspects of classroom life. The second is visible, and transmitted through the formal structure of academic content, planned learning experiences and instructional materials. Together, these curricula establish what schools are for and what purpose they are designed to accomplish.

Some questions that are relevant here include the following :

- * What is the interactional level between the educator and pupils ?
- * How do the educator and pupils relate to each other ?
- * How does the educator conduct the lesson ?
- * How does the educator reward answers ?
- * Is the environment in the classroom conducive to learning ?
- * Is time used productively ?
- * What are the unofficial rules of behaviour in the classroom ?
- * Is the amount of praise and criticism sufficient ?
- * Is there frequency of clues or prompts ? (Shulman 1986 : 8).

It is in this context that the hidden curriculum, referring to the interaction between educators and pupils, exists. This informal curriculum gives direction and structure to classroom life and forms the background against which the formal lessons are conducted.

According to Bergh and Berkhout (1994 : 48-53), it is important that teachers, educationists and educational planners are aware of the different dimensions that the hidden curriculum may assume and educators should be guided on how to discover, analyse and account for the hidden curriculum . Educators' recognition of the effects of the hidden curriculum and their manipulation of these effects thus create an environment that is conducive to pupils' performance and self-concepts (Hernandez , 1989 : 445). Banks and Banks (1989 : 46) express a similar viewpoint. These writers assert that " the schools' hidden or latent curriculum is often more cogent than its manifest or overt curriculum". They define the hidden curriculum as that curriculum that "no teacher explicitly teaches but that all students learn". The hidden curriculum is that part of the school culture that communicates to pupils the school's attitudes towards a range of issues and problems

which include how the school views them as human beings and its attitudes toward pupils from the various religious, cultural, racial and ethnic groups, males, females and exceptional learners.

Erikson (1950 : 53) emphasises that the classroom is a socially and culturally organised learning environment. There is , therefore, a need for the teacher to have a heightened awareness of the classroom processes that constitute the hidden or invisible curriculum. The more visible the dynamics of these processes become, the more significant their role in multicultural education.

2.2.2 THE NATURE OF THE HIDDEN (COVERT) CURRICULUM

According to Eggleston (1977 :86) , descriptions of the hidden curriculum focus on the tacit values, attitudes and unofficial rules of behaviour pupils must learn to participate and succeed in a school. The pupils are initiated into the hidden curriculum through developing skills such as :

- * living among people,
- * accepting assessment by teachers and peers,
- * using time productively,
- * competition to gain praise, rewards and esteem from teachers and peers,
- * showing norms and meanings for participation in classroom activities.

These central components embody the real knowledge transmitted by the hidden curriculum and reflect the patterns of communication and participation deemed appropriate by teachers and peers.

Educators should examine in detail the interactional, social, management and organisational dimensions of the classroom in order to better understand the interplay of pupils' competencies within the instructional environment. They should also recognise how ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender and other aspects of culture influence and interact with classroom processes. Some of these aspects are explained in Chapter Three.

Hernandez (1989 : 51) in quoting from the National Institute of Education (1974) exposes the central issues concerning the hidden (covert)

curriculum that should be of concern to educators in contemporary South African classrooms:

“ The actual (as opposed to the intended) curriculum consists in the meanings enacted or realised by a particular teacher and class. In order to learn, pupils must use what they already know so as to give meaning to what the teacher presents to them. Speech makes available to reflection the processes by which they relate new knowledge to old. But this possibility depends on the social system, the communication system, which the teacher sets up ”. In social studies in discussing, for example, contemporary housing problems in an urban area, when an educator speaks of “home” it may mean : a room built of mud and grass ; a structure constructed of cardboard and plastic ; a two-room hollow-block structure in a township ; a hostel ; a barracks ; a block of flats in the inner-city ; an apartment block ; a three bedroom unit with a garden or a palatial home in one of the suburbs. Each pupil in the multicultural classroom will have a different mind-picture of “a home”. The educator should encourage dialogue and discussion about pupils’ experiences so that they are able to understand and provide reasons and solutions to the current housing problems.

The above example highlights the pivotal role played by an educator in establishing a climate that promotes a culture of teaching and learning in a multicultural classroom. The educator has to take the initiative to encourage pupils from different cultural backgrounds to work together as a team. The educator has to encourage pupils to learn about one another’s culture to promote empathy, understanding and acceptance.

2.2.3 THE LANGUAGE ISSUE

Languages have a strong influence on the content and process of school practice all over the world. Language is a system of communication that links sound, written or visual symbols, and meaning and is, therefore, an indispensable bridge for assessing knowledge, skills, values and attitudes within and across cultures. Language is an instrument of cognitive development and it can open or close the door to academic achievement. Language is considered an important part of culture and it is learned. It can

be referred to as a forceful instrument that gives individuals, groups, institutions and cultures their identity. It is through language that human beings share and exchange values, attitudes, skills and aspirations. The development of language is a sophisticated endeavour that takes years to master. Because of this, educators should develop sensitivity to pupils who do not have a sound knowledge of the English language. For example, educators in a language class, should encourage pupils to have a dialogue on mutually agreed topics. This will encourage greater participation than if topics were prescribed.

Language is also seen as a fulfilment of people's needs for continuity with their heritage. Since multicultural education seeks to provide equity and excellence across such variables as race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, social class and language background, it is essential that educators are aware of the function that language can play in either helping or inhibiting the educational fulfilment of individuals. This is why mother-tongue instruction is essential for providing the base for skills development. Because it is comprehensible to pupils it can then be applied to their academic and language growth. The problem arising from mother-tongue instruction would then be the use of Standard English (that is used in open schools) and how to introduce and sustain the African child's use of the English language.

In addition to creating a classroom atmosphere conducive to language learning, the subject educator of English Second Language pupils in the multicultural school is now required to teach academic content as well as coaching literacy skills across the curriculum. This dual challenge implies a fresh look at our notion of literacy. Traditionally literacy meant the ability to read and write. However, literacy in the context of the multicultural school is far more complex. Teachers in multicultural schools do not only have the responsibility of teaching pupils basic literacy and numeracy but have a major responsibility of teaching literacy skills in all content areas of the curriculum and at all levels of schooling. Where pupils are denied proper access to literacy in this sense, they are denied the opportunity to develop fully, to be able to participate in the work-force and to engage responsibly in civil life (Lemmer and Squelch, 1993 : 46).

The problem facing language educators in multicultural classrooms is that they have been trained to teach English as a First Language and are now confronted with a mix of First and Second Language learners in the same classroom. Van der Merwe (1997 : 31) states that “clearly they need training to identify minority students’ language needs and know how best to intervene and support language learning within the mainstream classroom”.

Lemmer and Squelch (1993 : 41) state that “ language diversity exerts a powerful influence on the content, instruction and outcomes of schooling in a multicultural society. Language is a crucial means of gaining access to important knowledge and skills. It is the key to cognitive development and it can promote or impede scholastic success ”.

This infers that there are several issues related to teaching that should be given consideration. They will be addressed by the researcher in order to provide an understanding of the function language can play in determining pupils’ educational achievements. Lemmer and Squelch (1993 : *ibid.*) feel that it is necessary to consider that the transition from mother-tongue instruction to English as the medium of instruction for all subjects in the primary and the secondary phases, causes many problems. The disparity between the English proficiency required of pupils in order to master all school subjects through the medium of English and their lack of proficiency in the language is a major hurdle and prevents school success. The majority of African pupils learn in their mother-tongue from Grades One to Four. All subjects are to be taught in English from Grade Five. However, the researcher has had first hand experience in observing that at both primary and secondary Black schools educators conduct most of their lessons in the mother-tongue. This is known as code switching. The majority of educators in these schools are not proficient in the language of instruction. This exacerbates the problem for the pupil because listening, thinking , learning and writing do not take place in the same language. As a result , many African pupils are faced with a dual educational challenge , that is mastery of a second language and mastery of academic content through the medium of a language other than their mother-tongue.

With regard to language, Lemmer and Squelch (1993 : 42-43) note that most African pupils face the following problems when entering school where the medium of instruction is not their mother-tongue :

- * The school uses only formal language, while the African pupil lacks the more sophisticated command of language that is necessary for success in the school system.
- * These pupils may be able to demonstrate higher order thinking, such as defining, generalising, hypothesising or abstraction in their own language, but they lack proficiency to carry out these higher cognitive operations through the medium of English. This means that a pupil first translates a question into mother-tongue in order to work out the answer.
- * African parents, neighbourhood and community may not be English-speaking and so students are unlikely to have easy access to the resources needed to help them to achieve language competency.
- * African pupils from a disadvantaged background also face general linguistic deprivation. There is often a lack of books, magazines and newspapers as well as educational radio and television, in the home.
- * African pupils frequently lack a childhood heritage, of fables, nursery rhymes, proverbs, songs and games, which form part of the English-speaking child's cultural world and to which reference is often made in the classroom .

African pupils do have a childhood cultural heritage but in multicultural schools, the European, and not the African, culture tends to predominate. Chapter Four shows how parents or grandparents can be used as teacher-aids to relate cultural fables and myths to promote better communication and understanding of other cultures.

2.2.4 THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

The medium of instruction in the majority of schools is English. The African child, who seeks a place in one of the schools, is disadvantaged in that he generally does not have a sound knowledge of the English language, which is sure to have a profoundly negative effect on his education and progress. His inability to grasp concepts will seriously inhibit his acquisition of knowledge in the school curriculum and may even have repercussions on his self-concept and self-esteem and, finally, on his whole attitude to education.

Research by Bennett (1990 :79), indicates that pupils, who lack sufficient command of a language medium (English), are not able to fully follow instruction and so suffer a high failure rate. Introducing a Third Language, such as Afrikaans, compounds the problem.

An important aspect of language acquisition is the fluency with which an individual uses it. For pupils, fluent communication with other peers, educators and parents contributes to both self-esteem and cultural identity.

2.2.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE PUPIL AND HIS EDUCATION

Hernandez (1989 : 56) maintains that Second Language acquisition is a complex cognitive and social process. On the cognitive side, the pupil is expected to figure out the structure of the new language and determine how meaning is communicated. In this instance, aptitude plays an important role. On the social side, the pupil should develop strategies for communicating with speakers of the new language. Personality factors are thus involved. Thereby both cognitive and social abilities are involved. Furthermore, Bennett (1990: 37) notes that if a school ignores or represses the language that an African pupil has known since birth, he may suffer cultural conflict. When the African pupil is confronted with Standard English in the classroom, he often has learning problems. Since he is accustomed to hearing his mother-tongue (mostly at home) he becomes frustrated because he is not familiar with English and tries unsuccessfully

to decode what he hears in the classroom . His lack of success has a negative effect on his self-concept and also creates cultural conflict because he feels that he is failing at something while the other children are succeeding.

Cultural conflict points to a need for the continued development and maintenance of social and cultural bridges between the language of the pupils' home life and school life. The educator's awareness of language usage in the pupil's home and community will lead to sensitivity to the school milieu and that it differs from the former.

Banks and Lynch (1985 : 57) write that language is an integral part of any culture. In order to effectively educate pupils from diverse language and cultural groups, the curriculum must be comprehensive in scope and focus on variables in the educational environment, other than language.

Since most African pupils do not have an early experience of English and their home language is very different from the language of instruction at school , they are handicapped in their intellectual development. The pupil thinks in one language and is compelled to speak his thoughts in another language. This may lead to uncertainty and confusion , especially as parents tend to use their native tongue to communicate at home and so pupils have a "school" and a "home" language and are often expert at neither.

Harmer (1993 : 79) writes that African pupils require basic interpersonal communication skills, so that they are able to communicate fluently in the social sphere of their new educational environment. Academically, they also need to understand and respond to the academic terminology used and so achieve well in their academic work .

In the final analysis, it must be emphasised that language is an integral part of life and is the foundation of our social system. The diversity and richness of all language systems in a country are a reflection of the richness and diversity of its cultures .

2.3 PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCED BY EDUCATORS IN MULTICULTURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Apart from parents, teachers play the most significant role in shaping the general attitudes of pupils. Many pupils enter school with prejudices against other ethnic groups and it is the teacher who can change these attitudes (Banks, 1990 : 47). To do so , however, the teacher must in himself embody the self-same positive attitudes and values he wishes to instil in his pupils - these values should, in fact, characterise his philosophy of life. According to Gunter (1974 : 153), "...the good that the educator seeks to cultivate in his pupils, the values ... and the goals he wants them to attain, must be clearly visible in his own life". Mallick and Verma (1982 : 157) state that the teacher should not readily make assumptions "... about the ability of ethnic minority pupils on the basis of their racial or cultural characteristics ". Von Gruenewaldt (1996 : 27) refers to the need for "cultural relevance" which implies that the educator has to play a role to ensure mutual understanding and respect for the various cultures in society.

The problem of bringing about attitudinal changes in serving educators is a more intractable one. There are right and wrong ways of treating people , though the line dividing them may be at times hard to find (Cook, 1970 : 185).

According to Verma and Bagley (1975 : 119) when teachers and pupils come from cultural groups which use different linguistic conventions, embodying apparently different values and roles, the situation is ripe for the development of prejudice .

Arora and Duncan (1986 : 103) note a further implication of pupils' language needs in the multicultural school .Since ESL (English Second Language) learners need linguistic help not only in an English lesson, but right across the curriculum, it is only reasonable to suggest that all subject teachers should be much more aware of the language demands their particular subject makes on pupils.

Mallick and Verma (1982 : 152) concur that all subject teachers should be involved in improving the English of African students, that is , a language - across-the-curriculum approach. Educators would also need training in teaching English in multilingual settings. They also concur that this is an extremely complex field, but one which will have to feature in teacher training programmes if multicultural education is to achieve its aims.

Lemmer and Squelch (1993 : 110) write that language-across-the-curriculum (LAC) might be seen as overlapping language awareness, but its role lies more within subject-specific teaching, particularly at the secondary level where the complex concepts, terminologies and peculiar language uses in each subject hinder access to subject knowledge. LAC can be explained as educators' and pupils' practical concern and responsibility for the way language is used as a means of access to, and in communication about, the curriculum. Key slogans of LAC include 'language is the key to knowledge' and 'every teacher is a language teacher'. LAC is essentially an educational curriculum and school policy matter, requiring consensual commitment from colleagues in a school to enable it to work as a cohesive and pervasive process in each school.

Educators in multicultural secondary schools generally belong to the same racial group as most of the pupils and so some minority groups are unable to identify with educators. Educators tend to focus more on the majority of pupils because of time constraints in completing syllabuses. They cannot find time in the school day to cater for minority pupils who require special treatment. For example, an educator may ask questions only to pupils from his own cultural background in order to speed up response time. In this way pupils from the group other than that of the educator's become sidelined.

Educators also report that when they try to engage African pupils in discussion their answers are generally monosyllabic. For example, the educator requests a pupil to describe a picture of a person jumping for joy and the pupil responds with a single word - 'happy'. The educators are quick to add that this does not reflect on the pupil's intellect, but rather that pupils lack a verbal and written Standard English vocabulary. This further stifles communication in class. Teachers also complain about the effect on

discipline in class, because when they try to restore order, pupils frequently revert to their own vernacular language. As some teachers do not know the language used, they feel that pupils are being disrespectful. Educators are forced to spend an inordinate amount of time controlling the pupils. In many schools where discipline is lax, educators become 'little more than crowd-controllers'. This causes a further breakdown in communication.

What seems to further exacerbate the communication problem is that teachers have observed that African pupils prefer to socialise in their own groups at recess, and that they revert to the vernacular in the playgrounds and halls. Teachers have also observed that there are little or no opportunities to encourage multiracial or multiethnic mixing. Therefore many a school is in reality two schools sharing facilities only.

Some educators experience problems when they give projects, assignments and homework to African pupils. Some pupils may not fully comprehend the requirements and so may submit sub-standard work. Pupils may submit work that is inadequate or incomplete: for example, an essay may require a five page written response and they submit one or two pages. Therefore they receive low marks and their self-esteem in some cases may be affected. This stifles communication between educators and pupils. Educators should give clear detailed instructions and ensure that these are understood.

Another problem that is quite common is that African pupils live very far from libraries and cannot afford the transport costs to do their projects and assignments. Therefore work submitted is often of an inferior quality which may further strain teacher - pupil communication.

Teachers complain that the pupils are not punctual in the mornings and may join the class in the middle or at the end of a lesson. Some pupils feel that the teachers are not sensitive to their transport problems and this further widens the communication gap. It is important for educators and learners to communicate so that the latter knows whether there are earlier buses or whether there are problems with "understanding time". Attitude to time is culturally determined. Educators should also make attempts to find out the difficulties faced by pupils.

Another serious problem encountered by educators and the school is that the parent of an African pupil may be seen only on admission day. Correspondence with the parent results in no response. This may perhaps be attributed to the fact that some parents cannot read and understand Standard English or to their work commitments.

The above problems have their roots in the initial breakdown in communication between educators and learners. Educators should know the circumstances of learners by communicating with them.

Chetty (1997 : 76-77) is of the opinion that many teachers feel stressed in multicultural schools because some parents have unrealistically high expectations of the teacher. They compare the poor results of African schools with the higher results of multicultural schools and expect educators from the latter schools to improve their children's performance. They expect teachers to bring about changes overnight in the academic and linguistic competency of their children, despite the fact that they are educationally disadvantaged. These unnatural expectations and attitudes cause anxiety in both teachers and pupils. The result is a lack of spontaneity that inhibits the free communication and co-operation which could be in the pupil's interest.

Effective parent-teacher communication will always be essential if the pupil is not to suffer. The parent must feel free to discuss the pupil's problems with the teacher without fear of discrimination or unjust treatment. If the pupil's progress is unsatisfactory, the educator in his turn must feel free to discuss the problem with the parent in a mature, responsible way (Vrey, 1990 as quoted in Lemmer & Squelch, 1993 : 97).

Educators are required to make special arrangements to get to know families and communities better through home and neighbourhood visits, field trips and parent talks (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993 : 97 - 98). The educator must know the community where the pupils live. In some cases this is difficult for educators because some pupils travel a long distance to school. Some educators may be reluctant to visit black townships because of the high incidents of car-highjackings, armed robberies, assaults, attempted murders, murders and rape. These crimes also prevent parents of African pupils from

visiting schools. This further impedes communication between educators and parents.

2.4 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY LEARNERS THAT INHIBIT COMMUNICATION IN MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOMS

According to Van der Merwe (1997 : 9), Black pupils are compelled to adjust to the norms and conventions of the open school and its culture, with little or no effort made to accommodate their needs . Black pupils frequently report on the major problems they encounter in their relationships with both pupils and teachers and complain that the onus is entirely on them to adjust to a school system, that in many cases they experience as foreign. It is also apparent from interviews that many teachers are either unprepared or unequipped to facilitate the integration process, both inside and outside the classroom. The above is highlighted by Aragon (in Gay, 1986 : 155) when he writes that “ the true impediment to cultural pluralism is that we have culturally deficient educators attempting to teach culturally different children”.

2.5 PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCED BY PARENTS IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS

2.5.1 NEED FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

According to McGregor and McGregor (1992 : 133), the parent is, and must be, a key player in the education and training of a society. Pupils can learn as much from their home environment as they do from formal schooling. If the cognitive processes addressed at school are not supported at home, learning is unlikely to be effective. It is in this sense, that the particular importance of the role of the parent in the poor and poorly educated home is of concern. The parent is seen as the central point of reference for the values and ethical beliefs which will guide a pupil's development. An adolescent relies on the support of parents, but parents are not always available and so many pupils grow up in a home environment in which one or both parents are absent. This may result in a lack of discipline in the sense that there is no authority figure to set rules and regulations for the adolescent to either accept or reject the standards set in the home (Ferreira, 1994 : 60). Parents

who work far from the school should keep in regular contact with educators and should take time off to visit the school at least once a term.

2.5.2 OBSTACLES TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Several obstacles can account for the lack of parental involvement in the education of their children. Many parents simply cannot be involved in their children's education because of the nature of their occupation : they cannot find time to visit the school because of their working hours. In addition, they may experience transport difficulties as they have to travel long distances (Lemmer & Squelch , 1993 : 99): in certain cases, township violence may be responsible for the non-participation of parents; many parents may find a school confusing or frightening : there is a fear of acting in a strange environment ; many parents may feel that they are not adequately qualified to hold meaningful discussions with educators because they themselves lack education and experience (Coutts, 1992 : 54-55).

Several other factors act as obstacles for parental involvement in multicultural schools. Many parents or guardians are illiterate or semi-literate. Many parents are employed and , therefore, have very little, or no time, to attend to their children's needs. Some of them may be ignorant of their children's academic or personal needs. Some parents or guardians may not have a sense of responsibility towards their children because of their own habits of alcohol or drug abuse.

All of these contribute to the numerous problems of communication in multicultural secondary schools. Educators , pupils and parents are all affected by communication problems and these problems impact negatively on a pupil's education.

Chapter Three will look at what is causing the communication problems in multicultural secondary schools.

SUMMARY

This chapter detailed the communication problems among educators, learners and parents. It looked at the hidden curriculum and outlined the difficulties experienced by ESL learners. The issue of medium of instruction and mother-tongue instruction was discussed.

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CHAPTER 3

3.1 WHAT CAUSES COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS IN MULTICULTURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS ?

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The fact that English is the language of instruction in most schools is not the result of a coincidence or of a natural occurrence. It is entrenched in its current secure position as a consequence of the fact that educators and pupils continue to conduct their interactions in this language, not because it is an inherently better language for instruction or communication, but because various arrangements, that are part of the wider social structure, have dictated English be used in this context. Parent's memories of Bantu Education, combined with their perception of English as a gateway to better education, cause the majority of Black parents to favour English as the medium of instruction from the beginning of schooling, even if their children do not know the language before they go to school.

Many linguistic markets in Western countries value the English language over many other languages. These markets affect most institutions, including schools in the following way : the mere fact that the language of instruction in most schools is English, sends a message to all about the value of the language. Awareness of this reality, inevitably, engenders a particular attitude towards other languages. Educators can, and do, make incorrect assessments of students' abilities because they do not, or will not, always acknowledge that culturally different students often approach literary activities in ways inconsistent with school norms . Corson (1998 : 113) notes that language is the primary medium through which pupils make new concepts their own. Pupils learn as they listen, talk, read and write about new concepts and ideas and relate them to what they already know . But language is much more than just an instrument of communication, or a tool that facilitates, through its communicative capabilities, the intellectual development of pupils. Language is also a symbol that communicates value to those who are associated with its various networks. Those who participate in language conventions assign worth to language users on the basis of the ways in which they employ these conventions, both in the

classroom and out . This attribution of worth, however, does not occur through natural or pre-ordained processes. Rather it is the result of struggles between and among groups who compete to have their various conventions, styles and meanings accepted as legitimate and accorded corresponding value. The results of these struggles are particularly evident in schools where more than one language is used. In these situations certain language and language varieties are inevitably favoured over others. The value attached to favoured language practices is regularly displayed in those linguistic conventions which are generally employed both in and out of the classroom and in the attitudes of pupils and educators towards the various conventions.

Philips (1983 : 46), for example, in her study notes that teachers see some students as disrespectful, misbehaving and uninvolved rather than users of different languages. It is not surprising then that pupils may learn to devalue their own language heritage and the majority of English users may come to believe in the inferiority of other languages and the superiority of their own (Walsh, 1991 : 98). Those, whose language is not English, may see their own language as a problem, while seeing English as the only viable resource. English Second Language users also adopt this same attitude. This commonly occurs in most schools.

Differences in modes of communication, participation, and world view enter the classroom when pupils and educators of different ethnic groups interact. Equalising the learning opportunities for pupils becomes more difficult to achieve when educators and pupils have different world views. It is challenging to find out how pupils can be taught when teachers do not understand their language, misinterpret their behaviour and fail in the tried and true methods of diagnosing and motivating them (Bennett, 1990 : 77).

Much communication is carried out non-verbally. People convey their feelings and emotions through their facial expressions, their tone of voice, their posture, their eye contact and where they position themselves in a room. For instance, people are frequently suspicious of those who don't look them squarely in the eye. They often interpret fidgeting with hands as

nervousness. When others “keep their distance”, that is, maintain a certain spatial distance, people often take that as a sign of negativism or hostility. These non-verbal actions also create communication problems especially when educators and learners are of different cultures and do not understand each other.

Semantic problems arise in three ways in regard to non-verbal cues. Firstly, non-verbal cues are generally more ambiguous than verbal cues. “Was Sue’s smile a friendly smile? a nervous smile? a smirk?” “Did Bob not sit near me because he feels hostile? came in late? needed to speak to somebody else?” A lot of non-verbal cues are difficult to interpret and may cause communication problems. Secondly, while people typically use non-verbal cues to help them interpret verbal communication, they sometimes find the non-verbal message is inconsistent with the verbal message. The tone of voice, facial expressions, and body gestures contradict what is being said orally. For example, someone may say “That’s great with me”, while the surly tone of voice, down-turned mouth, and slouch indicate substantial disapproval. The overt message (positive feelings) is very different from the latent message (negative feelings). These non-verbal cues may further alienate different cultures and groups. Thirdly, there are cultural differences in the way different groups interpret non-verbal behaviour. In Japan, for instance, it is customary to bow upon being introduced to someone new. In America, the same behaviour could be seen as terribly affected. If people are not aware of what non-verbal behaviours mean to different cultural groups, substantial misunderstandings may result (Arnold and Feldman, 1986 : 161).

3.2 WHY DO EDUCATORS EXPERIENCE COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS ?

Many educators in multicultural schools find that lessons that worked before, when classes were less heterogeneous, are no longer successful. Most educators work hard on lesson preparation, and it can be very frustrating to deliver a lesson that falls flat, or that does not seem to reach some of the students. One of the reasons that lessons may fail to engage some pupils is a mismatch between the educator’s instructional style and the pupil’s learning styles.

Adopting a more inclusive approach to instruction may require educators to re-think some of the assumptions they have about teaching and learning. An educator's instructional style is based, partly, on individual personality, and partly, on the educator's beliefs, explicit or otherwise, about the goals of education, how pupils learn, how educators should organise learning experiences and the role of the educator. These beliefs are congruent with the educator's own educational experiences and world view, but may not be congruent with the expectations or experiences of students and parents of other cultural or social class backgrounds.

When educators and pupils do not share a common background, the potential exists for misinformation or conflict . For example, an educator may expect pupils to engage in behaviour that seeks to draw attention and praise to themselves, such as eagerly raising their hands to answer questions, or participating enthusiastically in competitive games. However, some pupils may avoid engaging in this behaviour, or participate without enthusiasm, and their aversion to it may be based on a set of cultural values about teaching and learning that do not match the educator's assumptions about what is motivating or appealing to pupils.

Educators in multicultural schools acknowledge the value of the English language. Many take for granted a belief that facility in the English language will assist students in their studies and later on in life, when they move into the world of work. As a consequence, some educators even object to pupils speaking their mother-tongue (if it is not English) not only in the classroom, but also in the halls.

Another reason educators have for insisting on English being spoken is to help non-English speakers to learn the language. Practising speaking and interacting in English is one of the ways pupils learn and improve their use of the language. Educators also feel that if African pupils are to learn from other pupils then anything pupils say should be understood by everyone in class. Some educators feel that Black pupils isolate themselves from the rest of the pupils when they speak their mother-tongue in the classroom. They also feel that using English and dispersing these minority groups (within the class) will help these pupils integrate with the other pupils (Begley and Leonard, 1999 : 113-114).

As suggested previously in Chapter Two, the problem facing language educators in multicultural classrooms is that they have been trained to teach English as a First Language and are now confronted with a mix of First and Second Language pupils in the same class. Clearly they need training to identify Black pupils' language needs and to know how best to intervene and support language learning within the mainstream classroom (Van der Merwe, 1997 : 31).

Educators are caught up in the process of transition and , whether they welcome it or resent it, they are subject to the environmental and psychological changes accompanying it. Da Silva (1995 : 5) states that while a multicultural classroom can be a rich educational resource, it has also the potential of becoming a " powder-keg of discrimination and prejudice ". Real change is unlikely to occur if those involved are not committed to the process, that is, if what is expected of them is not congruent with their own perception and values. Changes in education involves an "investment of self" on the part of the educator. Lack of involvement, due to a paternalistic approach, leads to widespread apathy, alienation and anger. Educators should be serious about transformation and should embrace change, because school success depends on the curbing of prejudice against any group or individual .

For teachers, seeing the end of racially segregated education , feelings of positive anticipation and apprehension may be mediated by their individual attitudes to non-racial schooling, their self-confidence and readiness to move forward and their past history of negotiating transition. Although the pressure of change may be external, for example, in the form of a government proclamation, or internal, support has to be generated for successful outcomes to be possible (Da Silva, 1995 :6-7).

Tshivhase (1996 : 54-55) writes that educators experience problems of communication because they do not do careful planning. He states that educators must be aware of the cultural factors that may hinder effective communication. He also suggests that as much of the success in multicultural teaching depends on teaching styles, educators must be aware of all the styles that can enhance pupil's behaviour and attitude in school and classroom achievements.

Hessari and Hill (1989 : 14-15), are of the opinion that the poor use of resources in schools may lead to communication problems and state that it is important to use all resources with sensitivity and with an awareness of the subtle forms of bias and stereotyping that they may contain. For example, much of the older material in schools, and even some of the new material that is advertised as multicultural, over-emphasise the negative side of what are sometimes called 'Third World' countries and cultures. It tends to label whole countries as 'under developed' and to ignore the variety of conditions and cultures within each one. There are positive points in all people's lives, which will not always be made obvious in the materials that pupils use. Educators should emphasise these, to counteract the negative bias which is often present. For example, in discussing rural life (in comparison with industrialised developed countries) examples of this might be the more aesthetic advantages of parts of country life, compared with the more easily recognised material advantages of city life; the closer human relationships of small communities and extended families; the sense of continuity and belonging to be found in long established villages.

Much of the materials being used in schools is biased towards the White, middle-class, nuclear family and often has a masculine norm. Educators and pupils should be made aware of this bias, so that some of its influence may be redressed. Educators should make a positive point of including in their resources single-parent families, extended families, travelling families and communal families, instead of devaluing these forms of family life . The material which pupils see and handle should give equal importance to all of the elements of South African society : majority and minority cultures; males and females; working and middle classes; able bodied and handicapped; young and old. This reflection of South Africa must be sensitively portrayed, avoiding paternalism and tokenism . For example, one does not have to depend totally on the text for instruction. When using the text, it is appropriate to point out omissions. Pupils can examine the author's perspective with the understanding that there may be other perspectives, and discussions can focus on some of these. For example, an examination of how traditional Black groups look at science would provide a perspective that contrasts with a traditional Western view of science.

Pupils would begin to understand that environmentalism is not a new phenomenon (Singh and Nayak , 1997 : 151-152).

Some educators may have negative expectations about working with parents of African pupils and this will cause communication problems between educators and parents. When encounters between parents and educators are non-productive, educators form the impression that trying to collaborate with parents is a waste of time and they question the support parents can give.

They also sometimes judge parents, especially those who, for various reasons, cannot attend or support school functions on a regular basis, as uninterested in their children's education or the school. Educators experience communication problems with parents because they are trained to teach only pupils and not work with parents. Educators should develop the necessary skills for working with all kinds of parents, including those from diverse cultural backgrounds and involve them in the educational process.

Lemmer and Squelch (1993 : 98-99) maintain that some educators are particularly threatened by parents who may question or challenge their professional competence. They also regard parental involvement as interference, rather than seeing it as a genuine concern for the pupil's education. Educators should encourage parental involvement and explain how they could be of assistance to the school.

3.3 WHY PUPILS EXPERIENCE COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS IN MULTICULTURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS ?

While many students may see the English language as a resource, some may also see their mother-tongue in the same light. Not only may the mother-tongue be important in a social sense, it may also assume a crucial role in pupils' intellectual development. Goldstein (1997 : 114-115), sheds light on this issue in her study of a group of Cantonese-speaking pupils in an English-speaking school. Pupils use their mother tongue to gain access to friendship groups. Not only are friendship groups important to these pupils for the usual reasons such as camaraderie and security , but they are also

important for academic reasons in two ways: firstly, friends are helpful in explaining difficult concepts, for example those in mathematics, to pupils who, partly because of language difficulties, cannot understand them ; secondly, friends are also important in the role they play in helping pupils to plead (or make a case) for better marks in cases where pupils feel the marks they deserve are inappropriate. Ironically pupils also see the use of English in certain contexts as a liability. These Cantonese-speaking pupils consider their fellow students 'rude' if they speak to them in English, a practice that jeopardises their friendship opportunities . Goldstein's study exposes a similar dilemma that our Black pupils also face in multicultural schools: they prefer to communicate in their mother-tongue , yet teachers do not approve of this practice.

Another problem facing Black pupils is that when they do not speak or write in Standard English educators develop negative expectations concerning them (Edwards , 1989 : 76) and this in turn impacts on their performance. Citing research by Giles *et al.* , Corson (1993 : 117) contends that teachers' perceptions of pupils' non-standard speech produces negative expectations about their personalities , social background and academic abilities. In the future , what we mean by 'Standard English' will need to be redefined by its Second-Language speakers in South Africa. In other words, what are now called 'non-Standard' varieties of spoken English will be openly used in classrooms. Educators will have to accept the fact that the distance between spoken and written English is likely to increase, as pupils feel free to use their everyday English in the classroom (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993 : 77).

Speakers of an African language are frequently pupils at school and they are often upset by hostile attitudes toward their language. They do not like a negative depiction of it, and they are resentful when told not to speak it. Attributing worth to a language generates effects that are both social and academic in nature. Speakers of various languages are socially marked by virtue of the language or version of the language they use. Those who make use of language practices that differ from Standard English practices will find that, not only are their language practices devalued, but they will also discover that they themselves, their respective cultures and communities, are held in less esteem, than those who employ Standard English.

These social consequences are comparable to the academic effects of using language in what amounts to a "linguistic market place". Those who employ language practices that the market favours tend to do better in school than those whose language practice the market does not value. Cummins (1995: 119) provides convincing evidence of this. He maintains that the extent to which school practices reflect that certain languages and language varieties are esteemed will affect how well pupils perform . Those pupils whose language and culture is reflected in the curriculum (and thereby valued), tend to do better than those whose language and culture is either ignored or devalued. On the other hand, Toohey (1987 : 173) maintains that when the form and content of pupils' oral expression are stigmatised or ignored, reading and writing pose formidable challenges. If what pupils are given to read in no way touches on their experience or expression, if the background knowledge it assumes of the world and language is not their's, they will have difficulty making sense of print. Furthermore, if what pupils write about is foreign in content and form to their teachers then they cannot discuss their work (Begley & Leonard , 1999 : 120).

The lesson to be learned here is that the mode of expression employed by pupils is important to their success in school and in life generally. This is so, not only because of the technical role linguistic practices play in communication functions, but also because of the status and power it confers on speakers. Thus those interested in helping pupils (particularly those who do not speak Standard English) to succeed in school and life must find ways by which all pupils' linguistic expressions and the cultural practices that accompany them are valued.

The influence of self-concept and self-esteem is felt by all pupils, irrespective of race, nationality, colour or creed. With regard to this, Rice (1992 : 256) maintains "that the influence of dissonance on self-esteem is also felt among mixed race groups". To support this claim he finds that when Black adolescents attend White schools, they show a lower self esteem than when they attend predominantly African schools. African pupils in segregated schools have higher self-esteem than African pupils in integrated schools. African pupils are under tremendous pressure to achieve success both academically and in extra-curricular activities as their Indian and White peers do. They find that they are unable to do so as a result of a

disadvantaged background which influences both self-concept and self-esteem.

Bennett (1990 : 182) observes that when a pupil with low self esteem enters a classroom, his self-concept becomes one of the most challenging individual influences on his progress. As a pupil with a negative self-image is not fully able to learn, the school may even prevent him or her from achieving the success needed for self-esteem. If the school itself provides experiences of failure, pupil's self-image could be affected. A negative self-image may lead to discipline problems and a pupil may become abusive, aggressive, hard to control and hostile. In addition to the problem negative attitudes may not be easily observed by some educators.

If the school shows a low regard for and low expectations from the Black pupil, then his poor academic achievement can be partially explained and expected. One assumption of multicultural education is that ethnicity, self-image, self-concept and school achievement are closely interrelated. Educators who hold certain ethnic groups in low esteem, tend to behave negatively towards pupils who are members of those groups. These negative attitudes lead to educators practising instructional discrimination, with the result that ethnic students experience academic failure because of low performance expectations, unequal educational opportunities and culturally skewed diagnoses and evaluation (Banks & Lynch, 1985 : 167).

Thus the discouragement of the African pupil's language, often by well-intentioned educators and schools, is not only detrimental to pupil achievement but also strips away the cultural integrity and cultural esteem of the group. Therefore, it is critical that educators recognise that language is one of the most powerful transmitters of culture and is crucial to the survival of the pupils and their cultural community (Goduka & Swander, 1999 : 107-108).

3.4 WHY PARENTS EXPERIENCE COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS ?

If the language of school administration and of contact between school and home is inaccessible or alienating to parents, their willingness and ability to

take an active interest in the school will be severely jeopardised. Parents may be unable to read or understand notices because they are illiterate, or because they do not know the language itself, or because they are unfamiliar with features of the formal language used. They may also feel inadequate about their speech and therefore, be unwilling to speak to educators or to participate in meetings or school events that might necessitate their speaking to members of staff. It is important to note that parents may feel marginalized not only in cases where their language is different from that of the school administration but also where they are not proficient in it. If they feel that their accent or dialect is likely to trigger negative stereotyping among other members of the school community, they may well prefer to remain silent (NEPI, 1992:11).

Although there is often a great deal of support for increased parent involvement in education, in practice it occurs irregularly. Successful parent involvement depends on the teacher's ability to reach parents and to establish an inviting and non-threatening environment. Parents often feel overwhelmed and intimidated by teachers and the whole school environment, especially if the school does not have an inviting, "open-door" policy.

Many parents would like to participate more in the education of their children but are unsure of their rights and the activities in which they can become involved. They are often afraid of being labelled "interfering parents" and of their children being victimised as a result. Parents, who have had unpleasant school experiences, develop negative attitudes, which prevent them from taking an interest in the school and in their children's work. Negative attitudes, which a parent might have, are also easily transferred to the pupil. This reduces his motivation leading to unsatisfactory academic and behavioural performance.

There are those parents who, for various reasons, doubt and question the teacher's ability and professional competence. These feelings towards a teacher can be communicated in various ways, from outright aggression to subtle questioning. This can also affect the pupil's performance severely and break down cordial home-school relations. Another factor that creates a communication problem is that many parents simply cannot be involved in

their children's school activity because of the nature of their occupations. An effort needs to be made to make it possible for these parents to be fully involved, especially in matters that can be attended to at home, for example, supervising homework. Some parents are excluded from participation in school-home activities because of culture. For example, parents who do not speak the language used at school are often excluded.

Parents from lower income groups also frequently do not get involved in school activities, even though they strongly support education. This may be because they cannot afford to purchase books and educational games or to pay for special educational excursions or extra-curricular activities.

While single parents may share the same interest in and aspirations for their children as two-parent families, circumstances may prevent them from attending and participating in school functions. Thus they are often viewed as unsupportive and uncaring. Educators should be sensitive to these parents and should consider ways of making them feel wanted and needed (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993 : 98-99).

Educators should also be aware of the tensions experienced by parents who are raising their children in a language that is not their mother-tongue, and also of those parents, whose children begin speaking English as their dominant (or only) language. These parents also experience public disapproval and consequent pressure when they use English with their children and they also feel pressure when they use their mother-tongue at home (Tesol Quarterly , 35 (2) : 325). For example, Black parents who live in the suburbs use English when they talk to their children. They are frowned upon by their relatives and grandparents for not using their mother-tongue. These parents also feel that if they use their mother-tongue at home , they are not encouraging their children to learn English.

It is clear that there are many obstacles to good communication between home and school but it is the duty of educators to open the lines of communication and bring teachers and parents together. Educators should take the lead !

Chapter Four will conclude this study by looking at management solutions to the communication problems in multicultural schools.

SUMMARY :

This chapter looked at the reasons why educators, learners and parents experience communication problems in multicultural secondary schools. It also looked at problems arising when language of instruction and home language are different .

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CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 SOME MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding the relationship between language and pupil performance entails studying the role it plays in hindering, as well as advancing, learner achievement. South Africa is plagued by the problem of learner underachievement and high failure rates. It has been suggested that poverty and the lack of resources, as well as learning through the medium of a second language, are the factors that contribute most significantly to poor performance.

A further indication of poor performance is widespread underachievement in mathematics and the sciences. Although there are very divergent views on the importance of language in the learning of these disciplines, a large number of educators believes that pupils who are studying mathematics in a Second Language often experience difficulties with mathematical concepts. Whether this is a language problem, a problem of pedagogy or a result of adverse socio-economic conditions should be investigated. As discussed in Chapter Two, language-across-the-curriculum has to be employed by all educators so that pupils will be able to understand key phrases and concepts. There must be a focus on both content and language. Every teacher must be a language teacher.

There is a strong relationship between language as a subject and language for learning and teaching. Many pupils in multicultural schools learn the language of learning and teaching as a subject, frequently in environments where there is little exposure to the language taught and therefore little opportunity to acquire it well. In such cases, the learner becomes very dependent on the proficiency developed in the language class itself. Proficiency in a language will have a definite impact on the way a pupil learns in that language. This has been pointed out in South Africa by MacDonald (1995) and in Malawi by Williams (1996). In both cases, pupils had not acquired enough of the target language to learn in it at the time of transition from the main language. In many of our schools, Black pupils study English as an academic subject. They do not study English as a means

of communication. The teaching of English will have to change from the present transmission (teacher talk) style to an interactive model which encourages pupils to talk and explore concepts and ideas in English. In the Senior Grades , the emphasis in learning English should be on the uses to which it will be put in the future; that is, pupils should focus on reading and understanding academic Standard English rather than on producing 'Standard' literary English themselves (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993 : 77).

Language learning can no longer be seen as the responsibility of language educators alone, but as the responsibility of all educators. It also highlights that the proficiency of both educators and pupils in the language of learning affects the teaching and learning of other subjects. The issue of proficiency should be seen in its broadest sense. It goes beyond communicative competence in a specific language and includes the educator's ability to create the right learning environment through the use of language. It is about commitment to change, effective teaching and learning styles and techniques, and, most of all, it is about using language to create a love of learning. By looking at educational issues in this way, we can begin to create a nation that practises lifelong learning.

4.2 CURRICULUM CONGENIAL TO ALL CULTURAL GROUPS.

School curricula should create an educational environment in which pupils, through interpersonal contact, learn to respect and appreciate one another as individuals and as groups . Connolly (1992:43) maintains that pupils should learn about one another and also learn to know one another as individuals. According to Starkey (1991: 29-37), they should learn that multiple loyalties are not only possible but are essential in a pluralistic society. The school can no longer be a passive transmitter of a single culture. It must be creatively involved in creating a reconciliatory environment in which pupils from various cultural , religious , economic and ethnic backgrounds can learn to transcend those backgrounds.

It is important that the curriculum be contextualised within the South African situation. The curriculum cannot operate within a social and geographical vacuum : for example , geography , history and literature

cannot be taught as if there had not been any injustice in South Africa nor as if there had not been a struggle.

This is a difficult situation and so when structuring policies and curricula, educators and educational managers should keep on a level of understanding which leads to reconciliation.

Singh and Nayak (1997 : 153-154) are of the opinion that the curriculum is more than the composite of courses that pupils are required to take – the so-called official curriculum. The school setting includes a hidden curriculum as well. This hidden curriculum consists of the unstated norms , values and beliefs about the social relations in school and classroom life that are transmitted to pupils. It is this hidden curriculum that causes communication problems between educators, learners and parents.

Moreover, the curriculum, in many schools, is at odds with the needs of pupils. This mismatch is evident in the irrelevance of the content to the lives and life-styles of pupils and their families.

Regardless of the level of formal schooling , management should ensure that multicultural education should permeate both the formal and hidden curriculum. It should be the task of management to ensure that pupils in a multicultural setting , as well as those in a more homogeneous setting , develop a multicultural perspective.

4.3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The majority of educators interviewed said that their initial training had done almost nothing to prepare them to teach in multicultural schools. It should be mentioned that the majority of these educators had received their training more than twenty years ago, when issues of race and culture were, on the whole, not seriously addressed in training institutions. However, interviews with more recently trained educators provide very little evidence to suggest that initial teacher training is responding to cultural diversity in any substantial or consistent way. Those who reported that they had received some preparation often spoke of limited or optional elective courses (Verma, *et al.* , 1994 : 48).

Pre-service and in-service teacher-training programmes should help educators to explore and clarify their own ethnic and cultural identities and to develop a more positive attitude towards other racial , ethnic and cultural groups.

Educators also need programmes that will equip them to overcome communication problems with learners and parents of various cultures. Education authorities on the macro-level should implement training programmes that are designed with foresight and deliberate intent to incorporate multiculturalism into all aspects of pre-service teacher education and in-service staff development. What is also important is that pedagogical practices should incorporate strategies consistent with the values , practices and the world view of the pupil.

Teacher training modules will have to undergo radical changes. The modules should clearly demonstrate how multilingualism in the classroom can be used as a resource. Comparative grammar, theories of language learning, critical reading of texts of all kinds, intertextual reading, role play, sociolinguistic aspects of language, development of writing, translation and the analysis of the translation process, data elicitation and analysis techniques in a multicultural and multilingual classroom, etc. will be essential components of such teacher-training modules (Heugh,*et al.*,1995: 7).

4.4 RESOURCES IN THE SCHOOL

Resources for education in a multicultural society are essentially of two kinds: those used in the classroom and those used by and for educators. Historically educators, in search of good practice in multicultural education, began in the classroom. Before selecting resources that will allow them to develop the curriculum appropriate to a multicultural society, educators need to think about what they are trying to do . For whom is the curriculum ? Why are these new topics being considered for teaching (Arora and Duncan , 1986 : 147)?

Henning (1991 : 65) asserts that South African educators who have taught mostly in schools representing , albeit broadly their own cultural heritage ,

should be alerted to their own built-in hidden curriculum regarding the use of material . Educators should distance themselves from materials that are biased towards a single race or culture. They should rely not only on the textbook but on all available resources. Educators should encourage lively debate and dialogue on issues that create communication problems so that the discussions lead to an understanding or empathy on the part of all pupils.

The librarian or media specialist in a multicultural setting has the usual responsibilities of any professional serving in this capacity. However, working with culturally diverse children and adolescents requires an understanding of cultural diversity and also includes building a library and media collection that shows positive portrayals of culturally diverse groups. These materials can be used to expose all pupils to other cultures. Management has a vital role to ensure that the resource budget is significantly improved, so that material of a multicultural nature, are acquired.

Experiences of all pupils and cultures should be included in lessons so that pupils are better able to understand and accept all cultures. This can alleviate some of the communication problems and little misunderstandings that are part of our lives. Another role of a library or media specialists is to work with classroom educators in positive , constructive ways that demonstrate a respect and commitment for providing appropriate multicultural education experiences (Manning and Baruth, 1992 : 301).

Hernandez (1989 : 166) states that within multicultural education , particular interest has been directed at how different cultural groups are portrayed in textbooks. Concern over the effects of how issues and groups are depicted goes beyond mere academic debate. A typical example of omission is in South African history because the syllabus begins with the arrival of settlers from Europe. All the indigenous history of Blacks is omitted. The implications are serious because student attitudes , personality development , behaviour , academic achievement and career aspirations are affected by the instructional materials they use. From an educator's perspective , perhaps the most important practices that contribute to bias are stereotyping, omissions, distortions and biased language usage. Educators

should not restrict themselves to the available textbooks but should ask pupils to contribute from their own experiences and discuss issues to bring about another dimension to the lesson.

This will help pupils to empathise with other cultures and open the way for communication. Educators should not pretend that apartheid and injustice towards other races did not take place. They need to put the past in perspective so that reconciliation can take place in the classroom, the sports field and even spread to the community. This will help educators and pupils to empathise with other cultures and open the way for communication so that reconciliation and nation-building can take place.

Management should ensure that the task of selecting appropriate textbooks and resources, should not be left to a single individual. There should be subject committee meetings, where the Head of Department, together with the subject educators, view a variety of books and make a careful selection.

Management should ensure that ethnic diversity in the school's informal life should be reflected in assemblies, classrooms, corridors, entrance halls and extra-curricular activities. Participation in activities should be open to all pupils with participation by ethnic-minority pupils being particularly encouraged (Cohen and Manion, 1983 :191). Pupils of different cultures should be encouraged to present 'cultural items' at assemblies and the significance of these items or events should be explained to all pupils and educators. Theme days should be encouraged at least once a term, for example, Western day, Eastern day, African day or a 'mixed' day. This may help in understanding one another and may improve communication. A multicultural concert or play will bring the educators, learners and parents closer together and may help to improve communication between the stakeholders.

Every school requires rules and regulations to guide behaviour and achieve its specified goals. These rules and regulations should encourage harmony and understanding among the different ethnic groups in the school. Good classroom managers spend time at the start of each school year discussing classroom rules and procedures with their pupils. At each grade level

students should have input in determining class rules. These rules and procedures need to be reviewed with all pupils until they know them. This will prevent possible management problems later in the year (Blair and Jones, 1998 : 65). Management should see to it that school rules and regulations are displayed in every classroom and in the corridors. These rules and regulations should also be printed in the home language of the pupils and copies should be sent to the parents or guardians. Management should have meetings and workshops to explain and discuss the rules and regulations with parents and guardians. This will help to promote communication between the home and the school.

4.5 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

According to Ramsey, *et al.*, (1989 : 122) poor cross-cultural communication skills can create discomfort, disrupt interaction and inhibit child-teacher and family-teacher relationships.

In the management of staff development the role of the principal is crucial. Principals' personal styles vary from those who traditionally provide the school with all its ideas and decisions, to those who see themselves as facilitators to a staff working as a team of equals . Those in the first category often find they have to change their positions quite radically in order to establish the climate in which staff development can prosper (Bradley, 1991: 107).

Initially there can be difficulties with staff unused to offering ideas or unfamiliar with the strategies of problem-solving. Often they are unused to working as a team. The principals in turn may feel a loss of control, a frustration at the slowness of progress and a concern that ultimately the outcomes may not match their own preferences (Bradley, 1991 : 109).

Managing and co-ordinating staff development have emerged as an important element in the leadership role in senior management teams. In common with other management roles, that require the ability to balance the achievement of goals with the creation and maintenance of productive personal relationships - the so-called task and person dimensions of

leadership (Oldroyd and Hall, 1991:21). Managers have to ensure that communication encourages feedback from staff in a positive way so that the institution develops fully.

According to Squelch (1991 : 57) the change from monocultural to multicultural schools and classrooms requires changes and adaptations to existing management practices by principals and educators. Furthermore, additional organisational and managerial skills will be required to cope with culturally diverse pupils and parents. Palm (1991 : ii) asserts that sound strategic management can assist any undertaking in improving its effectiveness by identifying problems in school management.

4.6 MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS FOR EDUCATORS

Good educators learn about their pupils so that they can teach in ways that are culturally and developmentally appropriate. Educators should use a variety of methods to understand the influence of pupils' ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds, to find out what pupils know, what they can do, how they think, what they value and what gets in the way of their learning. Educators can improve their understanding of pupils by reading and studying pupil tests and projects. They can also informally observe, talk with and listen to pupils and their parents (McNergney and Herbert, 1998 : 401). It is the duty of management to supervise classroom activities to ensure that a variety of techniques and methods are used. Management also has to check and provide support to ensure remedial work is given to pupils who do not perform well in tests and projects. Management and educators should work as a team to ensure that pupils benefit fully from the academic and social programme.

Educators should choose instructional techniques that allow for individual differences and also that add a spark of excitement to classroom activities. They should select activities that engage pupils in really listening , speaking, reading , writing and thinking - active involvement that results in learning across the curriculum. Management and educators should read journals and attend current workshops to discover and try new approaches to make teaching more effective and fun.

Educators should make pupils aware of the wide variety of languages spoken in South Africa. It is important for educators and pupils to recognise that English is not the only language spoken in South Africa.

Management should encourage monolingual educators to bring in speakers of other languages to help broaden pupil perspectives. Not only will visitors introduce different languages , they also share ideas and values from other cultures . Sharing stories from different cultures also offers a way of expanding learners' horizons (Tiedt and Tiedt, 1995 : 41).

4.6.1 COMMUNICATING

At its core , professional teaching is an intellectual enterprise : therefore , good educators are good communicators. They communicate clearly , both verbally and in writing . They transmit information about subject matter. They communicate with parents , administrators and other educators . Good educators also use their skills to communicate expectations of pupil performance , to express empathy , positive regard and willingness to help.

4.6.2 CREATING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

In addition to understanding pupils and communicating effectively , good educators typically plan for teaching and for interacting with pupils during the course of instruction . Planning involves a variety of activities such as selecting appropriate content , designing activities that maximise opportunities for pupils to succeed and informing parents and other school personnel (for example , librarians , arts educators and other classroom educators) of curricular plans so they are able to help reinforce the concepts being taught. Planning also entails arranging classrooms and organising necessary materials. Good planners provide for pupil motivation , reinforcement of good work and management of people , ideas and resources.

Management has an important role to ensure curricular plans are well structured and cover all aspects of the syllabuses. Here they can give guidance to educators before approving the schemes of work. Management

should check educator's records at least weekly to check if suggestions are carried out.

Good plans, well implemented, can inspire pupils to do their best work.

4.6.3 MANAGING CLASSROOMS

Classrooms are often "crowded, competitive, contradictory, multidimensional, simultaneous and unpredictable public places where educators work with captive groups of pupils on academic agendas that pupils have not helped to set" (McNergney and Herbert, 1998 : 403). Educators who understand the complexity of classrooms realise the importance of finding ways to gain pupils' co-operation and involvement in educational activities. Through careful planning, these educators can take steps to prevent problems arising. Classroom management involves the collective ability of educators and pupils to agree upon and implement a common framework for social and academic interactions. This will help to improve communication between educators and pupils.

4.7 MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS CONCERNING PUPILS

4.7.1 PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT

Multicultural education should be organised so as to help pupils increase their academic achievement levels in all areas, including basic skills, through the use of teaching approaches and materials that are sensitive and relevant to the pupil's sociocultural backgrounds and experiences. If educators do not understand the community in which they teach, they may have a difficult time developing instructional strategies that relate to the life experiences of the pupils in the classroom. Because pupils are unfamiliar with the life experiences of other groups this does not mean that they should not learn about them, about different cultural backgrounds and experiences. However, pupils' own cultural backgrounds and experiences should be used to teach basic academic concepts. Management should have weekly meetings with subject departments and share the success as well as difficulties experienced by educators. Suggestions for improvement should come from the team and not only from management. A follow-up should be

done to see if suggestion are successful. These regular support meetings build educator confidence and improve communication between management and educators.

The cultural background of pupils in the classroom should guide educators in developing strategies with which pupils can identify. However, educators should be sensitive to students of all cultural backgrounds so that even those from minority cultures can feel as much a part of the class as those from the majority group. For example , in one school , playing cards might be an appropriate method of teaching an elementary mathematics concept ; in another school playing cards would be totally unacceptable because gambling is frowned upon by the community. Instructional strategies must relate to the experiences of learners.

4.7.2 VOICE

Attention to voice must be a part of multicultural instruction. What do we mean by voice in the classroom ? It refers to the dialogue between persons , especially between educators and pupils. Multicultural teaching calls for teaching that starts from the pupils' life experiences , not the experiences of the educator , nor the experiences necessary to fit in with the dominant school culture (Singh and Nayak, 1997 : 155-156).

Through our microcultural memberships and their relationships with the dominant society, we learn multiple voices. Pupils can recognise the voices of their communities. In multicultural education , educators should be able to recognise the conflict between the voices of the "official" school and those of pupils and learn how to use pupils' voices in developing effective curriculum and instructional strategies.

Success in school should not be dependent on one's adoption of the school's voice. One approach that educators should consider is that of dialogic inquiry in the classroom. In this approach , instruction occurs as a dialogue between educator and pupils. It requires that educators know the subject being taught very well . Rather than depending on a textbook and lecture format , the educator listens to pupils and directs them in the learning of the discipline through dialogue. Dialogue inquiry is situated in the culture ,

language , politics and themes of pupils. It incorporates content about the pupils' background as well as that of the dominant society . It requires abandoning the traditional authoritarian classroom and establishing a democratic one in which both educator and pupil are active participants. Dialogue inquiry requires extensive training by experts as it is the most difficult of instructional techniques. The need for in-service training to upgrade educators in multicultural schools cannot be over-emphasised. Management, by virtue of their experience and past , may conduct workshops and deliver "model" lessons so that educators can get "in-house training".

What should the educator's role be when pupils bring biased values and beliefs about other groups to the classroom ? It is important that the educator and pupils set classroom or school rules in dealing with conflict so that the rights of all pupils are protected. Although pupils have the right to hold biased beliefs , they must be challenged and debated so that all divergent views may be reconciled. The educator's role should be that of a chief-negotiator so that everyone is treated equally and that communication and nation-building should be the goal.

The dialogue developed through this approach may help pupils understand the perspectives brought to the classroom by other pupils from different backgrounds. It may help them to relate subject matter to their real world and perhaps take an interest in really studying and learning it . Finally, it is important that educators help pupils to begin to consider how they are both created and limited by their particular life circumstances and to consider what alternative ways of working and living there are, what other ways of defining one's work in the world exist.

4.7.3 COMMUNICATION

In multicultural education , oral and non-verbal communication patterns between pupils and educators are analysed to increase the involvement of pupils in the learning process . These communications between pupils and educators can be problematic because of differences between the cultural backgrounds of pupils and educators. These differences are likely to prevail in schools with large numbers of students from diverse groups.

Educators who are aware of these differences, can redirect their instructions and use the kinds of interaction that work most effectively with all pupils. At the same time the educator should teach pupils how to interact effectively in situations they do not find comfortable. This approach will eventually assist all learners in responding appropriately in classroom situations that are dominated by interactions with which they are unfamiliar.

4.8 MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS FOR PARENTS

Parents are central figures in the schooling of English Second Language (ESL) pupils. Although educators realise that parental involvement is almost synonymous with empowerment, there are significant gaps in our knowledge of how to effectively bring parents into the educational process. Parents become empowered when educators explain how they operate and what the school requirements are. The parents then become "watchdogs" to ensure that the educators and their children are doing what they are supposed to do. Foremost among the unanswered questions is the extent to which parental involvement affects academic achievement and the nature of the process through which this takes place. Management should : encourage parental involvement as this may empower pupils to succeed in new learning environments ; involve parents as this may give them a sense of efficacy as participants in their children's education and as members of their communities and encourage parents in different language groups to work together to secure educational opportunities for their children .

Closely related to the issue of involvement is that of parental awareness and expectations . Of considerable concern is the nature of parents' knowledge regarding their children's schooling . Knowing what parents of ESL pupils know is essential if educators are to work more effectively with these parents and share strategies that can enhance children's academic performance . Surprisingly in many respects , very little is known about parents' awareness of and attitudes towards the school system . What meanings do they attach to 'education' and 'school'? How do the parents define success and failure? What expectations do they have regarding their children's education ? How do they see their role in helping their children achieve academically (Grant , 1993 : 145) ? Perhaps these questions may stimulate further research .

Parents also cherish expectations about pupils and in a similar way communicate these to their children. Low expectations held by a parent has a particularly discouraging effect upon a pupil. Management can help to motivate a pupil by communicating small, yet specific improvement, in a pupil's behaviour or performance to parents. Often a parent only hears about a pupil's performance in school when it is negative or a source of concern to school and home. However, parents should also hear about a pupil's accomplishments. A useful and effective way of letting parents know about a pupil's progress is by sending short but to the point 'Glad Notes' home to parents. Praise should not only include academic progress but any valuable contribution to classroom life the pupil makes. Management may request some parents to act as teacher aids in language classes or volunteers in language enrichment programmes. Parents or other members of the community can be invited to give talks to pupils and teachers on topics in which they have a particular interest or of which they have a specialised knowledge. Parent talks are another essential way of learning about different cultures. Special guidance should also be given to parents who themselves have a limited English proficiency so that they can better support pupil's language learning at home. Management may encourage educators to volunteer to be involved in Adult Basic Education and Training courses which may be administered by the school. If necessary, home / school communication, such as newsletters and reports, addressed to parents of ESL pupils should be translated in the mother-tongue to ensure effective understanding (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993: 44-145).

A serious concern that needs to be addressed is that multicultural schools have not transformed the racial composition of teaching and administrative staff. Management and governing bodies have a vital role to ensure that the racial composition of the staff should reflect the pupil population within the school. The resistance by governing bodies and parents to keep the management and academic staff monocultural needs to be addressed by negotiation. This would promote better communication between educators, pupils and parents.

SUMMARY :

The last chapter looked at management solutions to communication problems among educators, learners and parents. The management solutions are intended to improve the working relationship among the stakeholders. The need for empathy and understanding are crucial in order to improve home-school relations.

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