

DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

**EDUCATING TEACHERS FOR PEACE IN A
CONTEXT OF VIOLENCE**

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EDUCATING TEACHERS FOR PEACE IN A CONTEXT OF VIOLENCE

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis herewith submitted for the PhD: Public Management (Peace Studies) at the Durban University of Technology has not previously been submitted for a degree at any other university.

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We hereby approve the final submission of the thesis.

Dr Simóne Plüg

Professor Geoffrey Harris

15 August 2025 at Durban University of Technology

DEDICATION

To the many great South Africans who nourished, inspired and challenged me. Some of the best were taken brutally away from us – Rick Turner, Steve Biko. Others had full and productive lives, such as my mother Joan Hemson, and my brother David, who is still with us. And then the array of people: remarkable scholars, colleagues of deep professional commitment, students of such promise, young people who may have thought they had nothing to teach me – from all of whom I learnt so much.

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Now this is complete, my brother Jonathan no longer needs to put up with my perennial excuse of ‘working on my doctorate’. Being creative, I will find a new way to dodge my familial and domestic responsibilities.

And thanks to my many friends who, by listening patiently to the explanations of the study, helped me to clarify my thinking.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial intelligence
CHE	Council for Higher Education
DUT	Durban University of Technology
ICON	International Centre of Nonviolence, Durban University of Technology
NBR	National bourgeois revolution
NLS	National liberation struggle
OBE	Outcomes based education
SRC	Student Representative Council
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

Arising from violent community conflicts in 2021 in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, an action research project was launched with the aim of developing people in educational roles – tutors, teachers, students, activists – as facilitators of dialogues and discussions on sensitive issues that often involve questions of violence. The overarching research question was, ‘In a society that has experienced historical violence, how can understandings of contexts, of students and of ourselves inform the pedagogy of a teacher education that aims to build peace?’ The emphasis was thus on pedagogy; there is very limited scholarship regarding the pedagogy used to promote peace within teacher education, and much less still on this work in a context of extreme violence. South Africa meets the criteria for what is termed *chronic violence*. Such violence is evident not only in the broader society, but specifically within education. The study took a critical paradigm and used dynamic realism as the philosophical basis, which combined process ontology and phenomenology. An eclectic theoretical framework drew on Galtung, Freire, Bronfenbrenner, Bourdieu and Zembylas; this focused attention on how violence or peace become part of the dispositions or habitus in specific fields of practice, and the role of transformative learning in advancing positive change. A pilot over six weeks in 2021 and one session in 2022, much of which was constrained by the need to work online during the Covid-19 lockdowns, was followed by a much longer intervention phase from April to October 2023, with roughly 30 participants completing the programme in each phase. Thematic analysis was used to develop themes from the data that was generated. This data drew in part also on my experiences within the course and the ways in which I understood the continuity from my history as an educator. Arising from the synthesis of themes from both phases of the study, the final themes were as follows: The pervasiveness and costs of violence and trauma in this context; the significance of a safe space; the centrality of emotions; the value of questioning; embracing diversity; ‘beyond facilitation’: education as personal development and healing; the time taken to develop depth. The implications are spelt out for teacher education, though with some caution with regards to how readily transferable the findings are to the context of formal teacher education: first, teacher education in such contexts needs to take recognition of the reality and consequences of violence. Secondly, it needs a vision of teacher education as an oasis of peace that develops a habitus of peace amongst staff and students. Developing teacher educators as agents of peace as a logical first step because their role in the system is of critical importance. It is acknowledged that the recommendations are far-reaching and a strategy for implementation is touched on. The study contributes to knowledge, first, by being one of the

few studies on pedagogy for peace in a context of violence and by its emphasis on the consistency of pedagogy between education and teacher education. The need for investing in the development of teacher educators is a key point made. A specific theoretical contribution is the notion of teacher education in a context of violence as a 'benign order', given the chaotic interactions across fields of practice. This would also be a productive area for further research.

Key words: Teacher education; pedagogy; violence; dialogue; benign order; peace; safe space; emotion; facilitation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION: WHY AND HOW THIS MATTERS

We are faced by the manifest failure of society to address issues as fundamental as the survival of millions of species on Earth, including the human species. While so much emphasis falls on the knowledge needed for science and technology, scientists themselves reveal how we have used that capacity to inflict overwhelming damage on ecosystems (Sentient Media, 2024) and how humans can use our technical knowledge to carry out war that, even if very limited, could end much of human life (Helfand, 2013).

Our capacity to address these problems is not so much the limitations of technology or lack of knowledge of how to grow food without damaging life or to create conditions for health; rather it is that we have not developed our capacity for creating the conditions for imagining and taking steps towards establishing relationships amongst humans and between humans and the rest of nature (Martin, Maris, & Simberloff, 2016) that are mutually respectful and that are not based on coercion, domination and exploitation. Without these relationships, every essential initiative is likely to fail.

Responsibility for developing such relationships cannot fall only on education. However, education is always about bringing change and thus has the potential either for reinforcing destructive relationships or for strengthening our capacity for ethical collaboration. Dewey (1916b, in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2025) refers to, ‘...education as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual and emotional, toward nature and fellow-men’. Of course, in South Africa, we have ample experience of the ways in which education has been a destructive process, of education being used for advancing prejudice and division, of reinforcing social inequalities and exclusion (Morrow, 1989; Kallaway, 2002). Secondly, education – in schooling and in higher education, and, I would add, in many other settings such as workplace learning or community education – absorbs a large and probably growing part of our lives, and the least we should expect is that those settings should be organised so as to be as free from violence and injustice.

Soudien (2015, p. 347) makes the case for both recognising both the limits of education and its potential role in addressing violence: ‘Education by itself, and deeply engaged with, will not end the problem of violence, but it will provide young people with some of the means by which

they begin to take control of their destinies.’ Similarly, the stance I adopt is that we should set high expectations for education in all settings, even if we know that we will not be able to achieve everything. An entirely reasonable first step is that the conditions under which education proceeds should themselves model peace and be just, in terms of the full inclusion of all. Secondly, we need education to give specific attention that enables young people and adults to achieve learnings that would assist them in creating these conditions around them, that builds their capacity and agency for peace and justice. We need, if you like, students to learn a kind of social literacy (an extension of what Reygan and Steyn (2017) refer to as ‘critical diversity literacy’) akin to the literacy in terms of texts that we reasonably require education to achieve. Lotz-Sisitka, Wals, Kronlid and McGarry (2015, p. 73) further argue that we need “transgressive learning and disruptive capacity-building” that require measures that cross disciplinary boundaries if we are to achieve sustainable systems.

We need education to provide us with a positive sense of what it is like when we are with other people in ways that convey our connectedness, a sense of being with people in mutually beneficial ways, a sense of ubuntu (Eze, 2000; Jared Reichbaum, 2007; Murithi, 2009). I think of those moments in my teaching when there was an expression of mutual care and commitment amongst us, of human solidarity, perhaps most when people were able to speak of events of pain and of silencing, knowing that their pain was recognised and felt by others, or when there was joyous laughter as someone was able to challenge our limitations. Memories of that sense of possibility sustain us in working to create societies that affirm life. Achieving such experiences in adult life requires thoughtful creation, and it is the capacity for such creation that this study addresses.

While appreciating these possibilities, I recognise the limitations in the ability of education to change all society. Berliner (2006, pp. 954-5) quotes Traub:

...educational inequality is rooted in economic problems and social pathologies too deep to be overcome by school alone. And if that's true, then there really is every reason to think about the limits of school (Traub, 2000, p. 54).

Schooling alone may be too weak an intervention for remedying the lives of most children now living in poverty; nor would the other forms of education. However, the point about limits should be a spur to make the best of what we can within those limits. Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a, p. 203), argue that:

Educators cannot do it all, they cannot change the world, but they should do the most they can in changing, a bit, their immediate contexts. The explicit acknowledgment of this important philosophical premise is valuable as a starting point for a reclaimed critical peace education, because it constitutes a pragmatic call to prevent one-size-fits all approaches that can only enhance the gap between the elites and the rest.

Given these broad and ambitious aims, the questions must arise as to how educators (schoolteachers, lecturers, trainers, facilitators) will be aided in developing the capacity, the commitment and the confidence to enable education to do this. This is the focus of this study, though more particularly, it addresses these within a context in which violence and injustice are always evident and often extreme. The immediate nature of the threats to social and economic life in such a context may lead to greater recognition of its relevance, while simultaneously making it feel harder to achieve.

1.1.1 Organisation of this chapter

The chapter deals first with the challenges that violence in its varied forms poses to life on earth. It then locates this study within my own life and history, before dealing with the evidence that South Africa is a society caught in ‘chronic violence’ (Adams, 2012).

It then sets out the rationale for this study, focusing on the research problem related, first, to violence in education and to our limited abilities to address this violence, and secondly to the limitations of the literature on assisting educators to address violence, especially in such a context. This section ends with an account of the events of July 2021 that precipitated the focus on the development of facilitators on difficult issues.

The chapter moves to a conceptual clarification and then to setting out the research questions. It records briefly the research design and methodology, before addressing the limitations of the study. The section on limitations addresses the rationale for using the teaching of facilitation as a subset of teacher education. Finally, it outlines the role of the chapters.

1.2 POSITIONING MYSELF AT THE CENTRE

In chapter 8 I explore the issues of positionality and reflexivity, drawing largely on an autoethnographic approach. Here I locate the study within my professional career. This study falls into a category of work known as action research, as first described by Lewin (1946). There is a sense in which the action research connects with so much that happened before. This study comes unusually late in my life; as I approach completion, I am 77. My long involvement in teaching since 1969 has shaped my understandings and practices, What would be formally

seen as the ‘action’ element of the study, the project that tests what I have learnt, is part of a longer cycle. It provides an opportunity for me to review my own learnings and my practices, and to reflect on the many ways I have been implicated in these issues. I have also had the great advantage of having interacted over the years with scholars who have been significant in intellectual innovation and in developing my own thinking, such as Rick Turner, Wally Morrow, Lynn Slonimsky, Maurianne Adams, Lee Shulman, Crain Soudien, Linda Chisholm and Kevin Kumashiro. The work engages in places with theirs, as it does with my previous writing and publication, both to capture what was learnt from that and to identify the limitations in the work.

I have also, over the years, engaged with activists who, including some with no particular assistance from education, have created on the ground the possibilities within which imagining a world for peace and justice became real – some of whom achieved this despite the active limitations of their own schooling. The deaths of so many of these remain with me, as do the memories of what they achieved. For that matter, I have also encountered skilled practitioners of violence and injustice, from Hendrik Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, at whom I shouted as a student in 1966, to people in the region who directed or personally enacted extreme violence, with whom I had polite and guarded conversations.

Thus, this thesis will at times move between the conceptual and theoretical to the specific experiences, at times to illustrate a point, at times to problematise a theoretical issue. A fuller exploration of how my life has been caught up in the violence of the histories of the context and in the movements to bring change to it is given in chapter 8.

My guiding assumption here is that we all, myself included, have the capacity for violence and that our task is made easier if we do not waste energy on categorising people as good or bad; rather that we take responsibility for creating the conditions through which the human capacity for love, respect and reverence for life can be fully expressed.

1.3 THE CONTEXT OF VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

This section addresses the justification for referring to the South African context as a context of violence. The study takes as its starting point the implications of working in a context in which violence is a prevailing norm – what Adams (2012) describes as a condition of chronic violence – and the history of which is one of systematic and, until relatively recently, legislatively endorsed oppression. The detailed analysis of how South Africa meets the criteria

for this judgement is given more fully in chapter 3. Here I present a short overview of some elements that characterise such a society, such as the high levels of homicide.

It is readily evident that South Africa is a society that has levels of violence higher than most countries. Whatever the prevalence of violence before then, there are long-established patterns of violence that were instilled from early in the experience of colonialism (Adhikari, 2010; Guy, 2013). It is helpful to see these trends over a long period of time; what becomes clear is that the 20th century was one of rapidly increasing levels of violence.

The first element in the research problem is the serious situation of violence in the society. This is a major concern; the 2025 Global Peace Index revealed that South Africa is one of the most violent places in the world, ranked 124 out of 163 (Global Finance, 2025). It has one of the highest murder rates found globally outside of a war zone (Republic of South Africa, 2020, p. 22). With regards to GBV, Sigsworth (2009) sets out both the extent and the nature of sexual assault against women. Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012) report that the rates of homicide are six times the global average. Furthermore, 'a dedicated GBV population-based study on women in Gauteng (2011) has shown that more than 1 in 3 women (37.7%) have ever experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence (IPV), 18.8% reported sexual IPV, and 46.2% reported economic or emotional abuse' (Republic of South Africa, 2020, p. 35).

One way of approaching this is to set out the homicide rate over a period of time. The argument is that homicide rates provide an indicator of levels of violence more generally. For example, according to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2019, p. 7), 'The study of intentional homicide is relevant not only because of the gravity of the offence, but also because intentional homicide is one of the most measurable and comparable indicators for monitoring violent deaths.' Similarly, the World Health Organization (n.d., p. 9) reports that 'Mortality data are the most widely collected and available of all sources of data.'

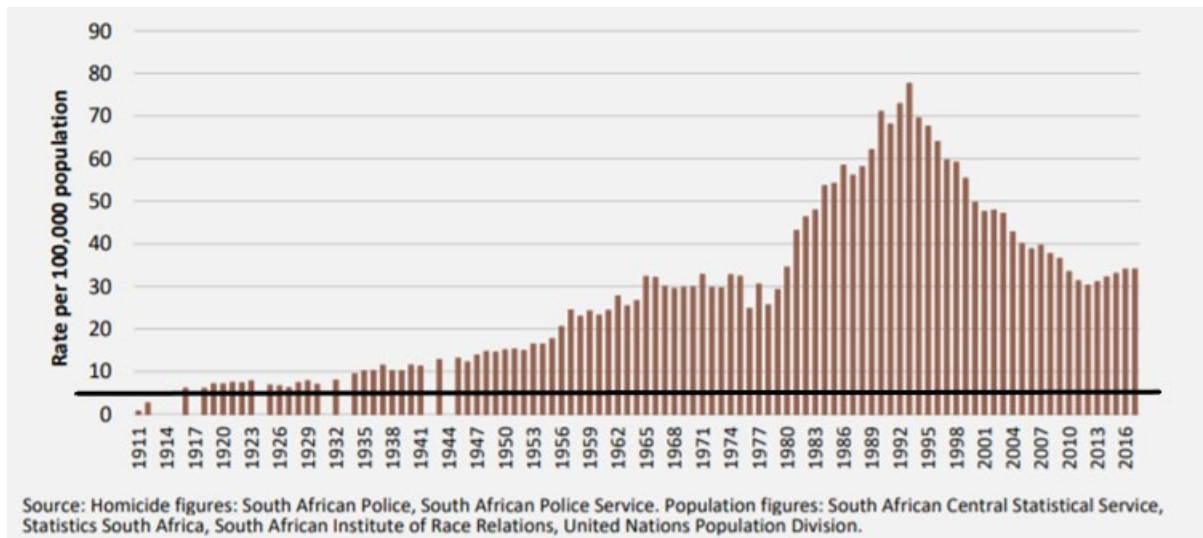


Figure 1.1 Long-term trend in estimated homicide rate in South Africa (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2019, p. 25). The straight line indicates the 2017 global average, for purposes of comparison

To contextualise these rates, one may compare them to the global average, or 6.1 per 100 000 population in 2017, represented in the figure by the straight horizontal line.

Thus, there is strong evidence for regarding South African society as caught up in extremely high levels of violence. Furthermore, the resources available for addressing the violence directly are limited.

According to Seedat et al. (2009, p. 1011):

...there has been a conspicuous absence of government stewardship and leadership. Successful prevention of violence and injury is contingent on identification by the government of violence as a strategic priority and development of an intersectoral plan based on empirically driven programmes and policies.

This lack of attention to prevention of violence contrasts with the huge expenditure on coping with violence. Collins (2013b, p. 5) points out that ‘Nearly a hundred billion rand, or close to ten per cent of the national budget, is spent annually on various elements of the criminal justice system, but very little is directed toward the specific problem of violence.’ The work of this study is intended to contribute to various forms of prevention – and recovery – within education.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Here I address the research problem, including where there are gaps in our knowledge, and the broad aims of the study.

1.4.1 The research problem and the gaps in scholarship

My argument here is that that education, broadly defined, generally fails to address issues of violence and peace effectively, fails to equip students with the capacities to advance peace and restrain violence, and lacks an adequate theoretical foundation for it to play a significant role in ameliorating violence and advancing peace, especially in areas of great violence.

McCombes and George (2023) describe a research problem as:

...a specific issue or gap in existing knowledge that you aim to address in your research. You may choose to look for practical problems aimed at contributing to change, or theoretical problems aimed at expanding knowledge. Some research will do both of these things...

Similarly, the University of Southern California (n.d.) describes it thus:

A research problem is a statement about an area of concern, a condition to be improved, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a troubling question that exists in scholarly literature, in theory, or in practice that points to the need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation.

From these perspectives, this study addresses both the practical problem needing to be addressed and the theoretical problem to be understood. It is a problem that has both practical and theoretical dimensions.

More specifically, these are aspects of the research problem:

- 1) Education is itself a site of considerable violence in a context such as South Africa. It reproduces violence rather than modelling peace.
- 2) There is a lack of a coherent response within education broadly and within teacher education specifically; the education of educators fails to advance peace and restrain violence.
- 3) There are unresolved issues in theory and addressing them would strengthen our capacity to advance peace.

1.4.1.1 Education in South Africa as a site of violence

There is ample evidence of violence that takes the form occasionally of homicide (The Sowetan, 2024; ENCA, 2025), of assault, sexual assault, of bullying, and of the continuation of corporal punishment, despite its being prohibited. A study early in the post-apartheid era

(Vally, 2002) and two more recent major studies (Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Mncube & Harber, 2013) have reported the extent of the violence. In my own experience, a student whom I had taught in teacher education was killed by a student in a school that I had visited. I served on the school governing body of another school where it became apparent that the principal was systematically engaging in sexual harassment of girls. In that case, attempts to address this revealed how violence, including sexual violence, in education has been normalised, including by those agencies, such as the police and education officials, who had the responsibility to end it, but failed. Higher education is not immune; there is considerable evidence of violence on campuses, including homicides of students by fellow students (News24, 2020) intimate partner violence, sexual violence and violence against sexual minorities (Shefer, Clowes & Vergnani, 2012; Collins, 2013; Gordon & Collins, 2013; Jagessar & Msibi, 2015; Munyuki, 2016; Hewett et al., 2023). In violent clashes between security guards and students on our campus in 2020, a student died after being shot; the same day an administrative worker suffered severe facial injuries at the hands of students. Hlatshwayo (2024, p. 241) extends the account of violence in higher education to epistemic violence such as curricula that serve to exclude the context and experiences of students and violence in the social sense (institutional and cultural) against black and poor students. There is thus ample evidence of the need for research that strengthens the response to violence within education.

What seems *not* to be an element of the problem is the apparent willingness of society to address the problem of violence. A recent report sets out a national plan (Republic of South Africa, 2020) to address GBV; at various points, it calls out for ‘evidence-based programmes’ to address the problem. The support given to the plan is indeed evidence that there is apparent desire by government, civil society and the private sector to address such issues (Mafolo, 2021), though it can be queried whether that intention leads to effective intervention.

1.4.1.2 Lack of a coherent response to violence within education – in particular, by teacher education

While we cannot expect education alone to resolve violence in society, the potential of educators to address violence within education is central. Yet there has very limited focus in the literature on how teachers can be effective agents for change, and this is the one significant gap in the literature, both within and beyond South Africa. There is copious literature on whether teachers are effective in imparting knowledge to learners, but little on how teachers can be mobilised to be effective agents of systemic change (Lai & Cheung, 2015; Brown et al., 2021).

A comprehensive review of the relevant literature (Horner et al., 2015, p. 8) states: ‘Across the literature, teacher professional development is considered vital in supporting teachers in order to ensure equity, peace and social cohesion.’ The authors stress the significance of teacher agency in peacebuilding, as well as the potential for teacher agency to promote violence and damage social cohesion (ibid., p. 9). Yet, a significant element of the research problem is the lack of a coherent response within education and specifically within teacher education.

A second gap is that, internationally, there has been limited teacher education that addresses the development of peace educators. A survey demonstrated ‘clearly that rather little is done in teacher training related to peace education in schools at present’ (Bjerstedt, 1994, p. 5). There has been no evidence of increased development since then. For example, Brantmeier (2003, p. 10) writes that ‘Peace education has been excluded from mainstream teacher education rhetoric’.

Within South African education, there has been a series of reports and recommendations that have addressed issues of racism. For example, the initiative Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (2001) by the then Minister of Basic Education, Kader Asmal, set out the values intended to underpin the whole system. It took a frame of inclusion within a democracy free of oppression and injustice. However, specific initiatives seem largely left to nongovernmental organisations (chapter 4 addresses this in greater detail) with only one teacher educator (John, 2013, 2016, 2018a, 2018b, 2019) publishing systematically on this area. While the limitations of the response in higher education systems are evident (Hewett et al., 2023), more troubling is the failure of formal teacher education to provide a way ahead. In South African teacher education, during the growing public anger over GBV, there is very limited focus within the formal curriculum on addressing violence, despite some isolated initiatives (described in chapter 4).

1.4.1.3 Lack of conceptual clarity

However, within this willingness lies some further conceptual problems. The one is that there is no common understanding about what constitutes violence, even within the narrow limits of what Galtung (1969) would refer to as ‘direct violence’. While the plan itself does not demonstrate the problem, Collins and Plüg (2020) point out how the language of many who denounce violence makes a sharp distinction between the good people and ‘monstrous perpetrators’, even though an analysis of actual situations of violence demonstrates that so much violence is carried out by people who see themselves as good and moral. Thus, attempts

to reduce violence, including GBV, run up against language such as ‘discipline’, which is used to normalise assaults against children (Collins & Plüg, 2020) and against intimate partners (Sigsworth, 2009). Thus, South African responses to violence often involve appeals for greater punitive violence as the solution (Sonke Gender Justice, 2019); in the case of GBV, there have been calls from various political parties for chemical castration and even the return of the death penalty. Apart from the inherent contradiction that violence is being used as a first line of defence to stop violence, these calls do not take into account the reality that many perpetrators are themselves people who have already been subject to great violence and for whom violence is a constant presence anyway (Gould, 2015). Such approaches imply that the real problem is not violence but rather whose side you are on; they normalise violence provided it is carried out by ‘our’ side. Thus, worthy national plans for action to reduce violence may fail because people have not sufficiently thought about what constitutes violence.

The area of gender-based violence provides a good example of the lack of clarity about what constitutes violence. While people speak confidently as if the issues around gender-based violence are well defined, we may well fail to identify some of the key features of the problem, in terms of the nature and extent of the violence. For example, while South Africa has obviously very high levels of violence against women, ranging from femicide to sexual assault (Sigsworth, 2009) to the under-recognised fear of violence (Ncwane, 2024), there are also extremely high levels of assault and homicide against men, in particular young black men. In 2006, the rate of homicide of males in Cape Town was about ten times that of homicide of women (Ratele, 2013). This raises major questions about what the relationship is between violence against women and violence against men. To take the stance that the one is gendered but the other is not would seem strange. Practically, most interventions are presented as being ‘for women’ when potentially they could be seen as being ‘for all in society’. Certainly, men are being privileged as against women in terms of key power relationships, but that is not the only dynamic at work. Thus, while the language of the National Plan for combatting GBV holds men responsible for their actions in relation to women and children, through phrases such as ‘Men are held accountable in public and private spaces for being respectful of ALL women and honouring their financial responsibility towards their children’ (Republic of South Africa, 2020, p. 88), it does not hold society responsible for reducing men’s violence against men. The emphasis in the plan is on messaging, on communicating messages that would, no doubt, contradict whatever messages women and men are given from their socialisation. In contrast, the word ‘mobilise’ is rarely used, and then mainly in terms of mobilising resources. Once it is

used as mobilisation of interest groups (Republic of South Africa, 2020, p. 67). While as a national plan there is a necessary element of starting from the centre, this suggests that it is overly top-down, in that it does not take sufficiently into account how people mobilise at community levels for positive change. Specifically, with regard to men, there is a strong emphasis on ‘toxic masculinity’ with little sense of how men would benefit from the plan. This raises another fundamental question – over how we understand groups that are seen in our structural analysis as privileged and the implications of those understandings for our pedagogy.

1.4.1.4 Theorising violence and trauma

A problem that this study must address is that educational work for peace has until recently failed to engage with the emerging field of trauma studies (Herman, 1992/2015) – and, for the most part, the reverse is also true. While there has been considerable development in recent decades in theorising the nature and extent of violence, we have lacked sufficient attention to the long-term effects of violence and the long shadow it casts, especially in societies that can be described as characterised by chronic violence (Adams, 2012), such as South Africa. This applies not just to peace education generally but also specifically to teacher education.

1.4.1.5 Lack of coherence between theories of peace and theories of social justice

A logical extension of Galtung’s work on structural violence (Galtung 1969) is that there is an inherent relationship between racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, and violence. A system of racism such as apartheid is structurally violent – and, one could add, has inevitably and consistently included, as a central feature, cultural violence (Galtung, 1990), in which discourses of language and other cultural practices normalise and justify the direct violence of the system. Further, his concept of positive peace spells out this relationship clearly:

...peace would be a strange concept if it does not include relations between genders, races, classes and families, and does not also include absence of structural violence, the non-intended slow, massive suffering caused by economic and political structures in the form of massive exploitation and repression. (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, p. 173)

Similarly, Iris Marion Young, from a different perspective (Young, 2000), identifies violence as one of the seven faces of oppression. In her approach, there needs to be evidence of the presence of these elements if we are to characterise a system as one that privileges one group over others.

The argument in this study is that educators need to keep both violence and oppression in mind; the theoretical position adopted here is that relations of oppression are violent even when they

do not involve such forms of direct violence as killing, assault and sexual assault. There is, though, some disconnect in the literature, with writers in social justice education and in peace education often writing as if they are dealing with separate fields of knowledge.

The gaps in the literature then include the lack of focus on how teachers can effect systemic change, on how teacher education addresses both the understanding of violence and the capacities of teachers to build peace, how trauma is addressed within teaching and within teacher education, and finally how issues of peace and issues of oppression are brought together in the education of teachers.

1.4.2 Rationale for the focus on pedagogy and on facilitation

Here I deal with the reasons for researching pedagogy and facilitation rather than all aspects of teaching, in relation to the promotion of peace.

First, pedagogy concerns the process of teaching, and peace education must largely concern itself with process, as it is through process that some of the generally accepted goals of peace education – such as a commitment to peace, skills in handling conflict in positive ways, empathy, attentiveness to others and self-awareness – need to be achieved. To treat peace education as purely related to the learning of content knowledge would bring the point of it into question. Clearly, to promote learning of such a complex of emotions, commitments, skills and practices as well as the relevant content knowledge requires considerable attention to pedagogy.

Secondly, the action research originated as a response to violent events in the region by the staff of ICON, the International Centre of Nonviolence. At that point, we realised that the local conflicts required facilitation of sensitive discussions, but we had not developed people with those skills.

Finally, facilitation is a significant element of pedagogy. In 1.5.2 I provide a definition of teacher or educator. My own definition of facilitation is based on and extends that: A process used by a teacher (or educator) to organise the systematic learning of others by bringing into the conversation the relevant thoughts, perceptions and experiences that they make available. While all teaching involves organising the systematic learning of others, there is a range of processes, including lecturing, demonstrating, etc., that do not necessarily involve engaging with students or participants in this way.

From its Latin root, facilitation means to ‘make easy’. Cross (2002) traces the development of the concept, noting the significant role of Rogers (1983). Cross (1996, p. 351) quotes Brookfield:

‘What is important to consider is the nature of the teaching-learning transaction itself and the extent to which mutual respect, negotiation, collaborativeness, and praxis are present’ (Brookfield 1986, p 9). Brookfield outlines key principles to effective facilitation: these include the voluntary participation in learning, respect among participation for each other’s self-worth, a collaborative relationship where there is continual renegotiation of activities and a general spirit of critical reflection. The ultimate goal is self-directed, empowered adults.

The one emphasis that tends to come through is the context of adult learning. However, there is increasing recognition of facilitation as an element of school teaching (Wilkins et al., 2023). The review of literature by these authors sets out many practices by teachers that are relevant to these principles (Cross, 1996). In addition, teachers need to develop skills in facilitation for development of their professional work; the work of Allen and Blythe (2015) is to provide a resource for teachers who need to facilitate the collaborative learning of teachers.

Teachers in a range of contexts need to listen attentively to the full range of students and to assist them in learning from the interaction with others; learning to undertake this takes time. This focus is particularly important for a study focused on pedagogy, as pedagogy concerns process, and, as Raelin (2006, p. 83) observes, *‘A review of some of the classics of group behavior as well as of popular accounts of facilitation... delimits facilitation as focusing on process rather than on content.’* Beyond the development of facilitation skills for peace educators, the development of such skills is an integral part of any teacher education.

The research design for this study thus incorporates a programme to develop participants as facilitators of learning who can lead dialogues around sensitive issues. As the purpose of their facilitation is to be able to educate, it takes this as one example of teacher education (‘teacher’ being used here in the broad sense defined above) and explores what we learn about pedagogy in this programme. What then is the rationale for using the development of facilitators as the vehicle for learning about pedagogy for the education of teachers?

Because of the immense costs and time required, it was not feasible to design and implement a comprehensive programme of teacher education as a way of exploring pedagogy for teacher education. Inevitably, as researcher, I had to focus much more narrowly on the pedagogy being

used for only one aspect of teacher education. There are indeed many elements of teacher education that could have been used. We could, for example, have run a programme that focused on how the teaching of mathematics can use a pedagogy that advances peace or the pedagogy being used to equip principals to build peace in their schools.

Thus, the understanding of facilitation within this study is not as oppositional to teaching, or an alternative to teaching. Some popular literature sets up an opposition (Wagle, 2019), possibly as a way of challenging assumptions about education. It does so by reducing ‘teaching’ to the formal presentation of knowledge, which is one aspect of teaching, as is facilitation (or, for that matter, assessment).

Furthermore, the selection of facilitation skills was not based on an argument that content is an insignificant element. With Hemson (1995) and Morrow (2006, p. 66), I do not reduce the role of teacher purely to that of a director of educational process. Deng (2018, p. 372) points out the limitations of teaching education in which the role of teacher is reduced to that of facilitation:

In that discourse, teaching is construed as the facilitation of learning that is constructivist and learner-centred, and the teacher as one who no longer passes on content (knowledge) to learners but who instead supports and facilitates the learning process (Biesta, 2005, 2010).

Biesta refers to the significant work done by Muller and Young (Young, 2008; Muller & Young, 2019) and their arguments for ‘powerful knowledge’.

Indeed, our programme could have been framed as one that could have addressed the pedagogy related to the learning and teaching of significant content related to peace. An action research study of how the teaching of mathematics or languages can proceed in ways that promote peace would also be valuable. The focus on facilitation simply is more generic and has a broader attraction. I return in chapter 9 to the issue and its implications.

1.4.2.1 Facilitation for learning

What makes the concept of facilitation less clear is that the concept is used across a range of different organisational settings, and with purposes that range from the instrumental to the critical. Thus, Raelin (2006) distinguishes facilitation for task accomplishment from facilitation for learning and for praxis. Not all facilitation is directly educational; it can be in group settings where the purpose is not educational but conflict resolution or simply to develop a shared

understanding among group members. I would though contend that, even in those forms of facilitation, there is a strong and perhaps growing tendency to see them as processes leading to new learning, an approach common within management thinking in recent years (Senge et al., 1994). Bursom (2002, p. 28), writing about facilitation focused primarily on conflict resolution, writes, ‘While dialogue may be seen as an end in itself, it need not necessarily be so. The tools and values that support dialogue are also useful as part of a wider approach to organizational learning and development.’

1.4.2.2 Pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge

A further point is that this study focuses on pedagogy and not on the learning of specific content organised within a curriculum. A reasonable point to raise is the question of what Shulman (1986) identified as pedagogical content knowledge, that is, the theoretical knowledge that pertains to the effective use of pedagogy. Is that a focus of this study? The research questions do **not** include a focus on such content knowledge, thus delimiting the scope of the study. However, presenting or referring to theory was an element of the programme and there is some attention in the study to how this element related to the pedagogy.

1.4.3 Events that triggered the action undertaken in this study

The form this study took was prompted by a highly destructive outburst of anger and opportunism, focused primarily on KwaZulu-Natal, in July 2021. There had been some preceding events that suggested an undercurrent of grievance and resentment. One was attacks on truckers on the major freeway between Gauteng and the coast, at Mooi River, the motive being, it seemed, the use by companies of foreign drivers. The second was a series of attacks on the shops of foreigners in central Durban; attacks at which the police witnessed events but failed to intervene.

The immediate spark, though, was the conviction of the former President, Jacob Zuma, and then the carrying out of his sentence of incarceration; he handed himself in on 7th July. Over the subsequent weekend a series of disruptive protests began. For example, on the evening of Sunday, 11th July, according to a friend of mine in the township of Lamontville, who was an enthusiastic participant in the activities, someone he knew was shopping in a Spar store at the Mega City mall at Umlazi, Durban. He and others received voice messages encouraging them to walk out with their goods, without paying. Shoppers left en masse with their goods, pushing past security guards, and notified friends nearby. My friend was amongst those who rushed down to the narrow pedestrian bridge across the Umlazi River to the mall. Locked shops had

their windows smashed in and people looted with abandon. At some point he was in a liquor store where people had been smoking, activating fire sprinklers. The floor was wet, and people were falling and breaking bottles. A young man crashed to the ground next to him; he tried to lift him up, but he seemed to be dead. On his way back, he found he was trying push a trolley over the bodies of people who had suffocated on the bridge and thought he recognised the one face – later he discovered it was an older man who had once helped him. At least two people had fallen into the river and, unable to swim, had drowned. Once home, he sent me a video of people coming past the house, telling his aunt of the deaths.

Sleep that night was difficult. There was the constant sound of gunfire, and by morning a smoky haze over the area I live, above the city centre. That day my friend was in the area, assisting two police officers. One went into the shopping centre, where he stood patiently in line while two men used an angle grinder to chop through an ATM. Once they had succeeded in accessing the cash, he stepped forward with his service revolver and his ID and said, ‘I am not going to arrest you. I just want my share.’ The officers sat in the car while my friend went on errands into the mall to loot the goods they wanted.

In the township of Phoenix, built by the Durban City Council for Indian people (at a time at which I was a member of the Council, in the 1980s), events became much more violent. It seems that there was minimal looting in the area; there were barricades set up to prevent that. However, what provoked outrage was that there were attacks driven apparently exclusively by racism. A colleague was teaching at that time in a high school in the large African township of KwaMashu. The teenage son of a member of the school governing body went with his friends to play soccer at grounds in Phoenix. They were shot dead.

In total, 354 people were identified as having died in the unrest (Expert Panel, 2021), clearly the majority being in Phoenix. One of these was of an Indian person, when a taxi veered onto a sidewalk and hit him. As far as I could determine, all the others were of African people. I became personally involved in challenging on social media what I saw as extreme racism in these events.

There was immense disruption to food supplies; in my home area we were able to find enough food for a few days, after which supplies resumed gradually. There were many examples of African people being denied entry into shops in suburban areas, even if they were clearly there to shop and not to loot. Little reporting was of the looting within townships and the destruction of small businesses, many of which failed to recover. The absence of any intervention by the

South African Police Services and of political leadership was sharply criticised in the media, with allegations that the non-intervention was deliberate in many cases. I was also asked to speak on radio and television about these events, and, based on my long knowledge of areas like Phoenix and the neighbouring area of Inanda, explained both the origins of trauma and how we could create conditions for people to deal with these histories.

At the University, our Centre was asked to join a discussion with the Provincial team responsible for responding to the social divisions. The analysis that both I and Professor Monique Marks (of the University's Urban Futures Centre) independently arrived at was, in brief, that one could not understand all these events without a realisation of how traumatised people in the region are, that trauma connecting to issues of class and race. Secondly, that a way ahead would be to set up dialogues that brought different groups into a thoughtful conversation with each other.

It was my conviction that such dialogues would be excellent ways to develop nonviolence practically; however, there was no training available for equipping people to facilitate such dialogues. It was this conviction that led to the next steps in this work, as addressed in chapter 5.

1.5 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

It has been difficult in this study to escape the ways in which people have invested terms such as 'education' and 'teacher' with meanings at variance with the way I understand them. Here I attempt to clarify my use of some key terms. In each case, I have first highlighted the concept as I understand it and then provide brief comments. A fuller understanding of these concepts is developed in the two chapters of the literature review.

1.5.1 Education

The full formation of the individual through the development of intellectual and moral capabilities and cultivation of dispositions or virtues such as sensibility, self-awareness, liberty and freedom, and dignity (Deng, 2022, p. 605),

Reardon (1999), writing about teacher education for peace, makes frequent use of the term 'formation'. The term 'formation' includes the sense of development of values and capacity for reflection, a sense that is often missing from public images of the teacher. The term 'Bildung' used in German scholarship, is similar to that of 'formation', with a similar notion that there is a process of growth that the educator supports. Vollmer (2021, p. 150) calls for an extension of the concept of bildung, in which there is both the long-established 'tacit forms of

shaping the individual mind and personality of each learner’ and ‘the development and unfolding of basic capacities or key competences and skills for personal development as a social being and for solving problems of the twenty-first century in a participatory, interactive way’.

I thus use the term ‘education’ to refer to an ongoing programme that promotes learning and development across a wide range of capacities. Ideally, it encompasses elements of transmission of knowledge with processes that enable the optimal unfolding of development. However, in this study, it will also in places be used to describe an organised system for learning that is in operation, whether it meets this ideal or not.

1.5.2 Teacher or educator

A teacher (or educator) is one who organises the systematic learning of others.

I am casting the net very broadly to include all those who take on the responsibility to lead others in their learning, in school, university, community and even workplace settings. This covers teachers in such diverse contexts as formal teaching within schools and universities, formal teaching of such teachers, within teacher education institutions, workplace training (and the training of such trainers), nonformal education (such as short courses offered by universities or NGOs), community education (for example, courses that aim to strengthen community organisations in such areas as civic education, environmental action and programmes against violence), sports education, and so on. Similarly, Morrow (2006, p. 71) writes of the significance of teaching across a very wide range of contexts. He argues (Morrow, 2006, p. 72) that this approach ‘helps to release us from the limiting and atrophying grip of the idea that teaching is essentially a kind of face-to-face live performance in classrooms.’ For Morrow (2006, p. 35), teachers are those who ‘organise systematic learning,’ a process that takes place across various contexts.

The term ‘teacher’ has sometimes become associated with a rigidly didactic approach that does not typify the best teachers I have encountered. I could use ‘educator’, but ‘the education of educators’ becomes too clumsy. So, I will use ‘teacher’ or ‘educator.’ In this study, I do not draw a sharp distinction between the role, say, of a teacher in a school and that of an adult educator. The distinction between pedagogy for children and andragogy for adults, a distinction made by Knowles (1980), is in my view based on untested assumptions about how children learn – it promotes, for example, the idea that children do not learn from experience.

For the purpose of this study, it is necessary to clarify how the concept of ‘teacher’ relates to that of ‘facilitator’. Here I extend the discussion from 1.4.2. above. A facilitator is not only in educational settings; the term could equally be used in such settings as negotiation. Not all facilitators are teachers. Burrows (1998) provides a full analysis over the evolution of the term from Rogers (1983) to Brookfield (1996). My understanding of the role of a teacher is that one element of that role is being a facilitator, but that there are other elements that are not, such as the role of assessor.

1.5.3 Dialogue

An open-ended conversation on a specific topic between two or more people.

The term is used here in line with the tradition that distinguishes dialogue from mere speech or casual conversation. I understand a dialogue as a process that constitutes a particular relationship amongst those involved. Writing of Buber, Habermas (2015, p. 11) states: ‘Any interpersonal relationship calls for the reciprocal interpenetration of the perspectives that those involved direct to each other, such that each participant is capable of adopting the perspective of the other.’

What makes this open-ended is this character of being open to the other and open to revisiting one’s own perspectives on the basis of the process of interaction. While potentially a dialogue may deliver some kind of product – for example, a formal statement – I focus more on the process of interaction that rests on an assumption of equality between people. This aspect is explored below, in 2.6.5, in relation to the work of Freire (1972/2005).

Rule (2011, p. 959) writes of what he terms a ‘dialogic space’ that he understands ‘as a zone of engagement, underpinned by values of trust, openness and responsibility, that enables dialogue at interpersonal, intrapersonal and discursive levels.’ He writes of it within the context of education (Rule, 2011); much of this thesis explores how to achieve the conditions for such a process within education.

1.5.4 Pedagogy

The process followed within an educational setting intended to enable learning.

Typically, the term refers to process rather than content, which is generally seen as within the realm of curriculum. As in the original Greek construction of the word, the leading of a child, there is some vagueness about what that process is. However, the notion of the child does give some uses of the term a connotation of an adult who directs the child; thus, Hinchcliffe (2001,

p. 32) refers to pedagogy as seeming ‘to be connected with ideas of training and discipline with the purpose of developing the well-formed person.’ He contrasts it unfavourably with education, seeing the latter as a freer and more critical endeavour. Thus, the contrast he makes is process/education rather than process/content. That, though, is not the sense I use it here, as it ties pedagogy to a specific and more narrow social purpose. For Young (2013), the distinction is between curriculum and pedagogy. Whereas curriculum refers to ‘the knowledge that pupils are entitled to know’ determined prior to teaching, pedagogy pertains to ‘what teachers do, and get pupils to do’ when they ‘transmit’ or ‘convey’ knowledge (Young, 2013, p. 111). With Freire (1972/2005), I conceive of pedagogy as having either liberating or constraining purposes.

1.5.5 Teacher education

Teacher Education is a kind of education which enables someone to become more competent in the professional practice of organising systematic learning and enables their commitment to do so. (Morrow, 2006, p. 69)

Including the term ‘professional practice’ usefully conveys a sense both of requiring standards (including ethical standards) and becoming part of a ‘community of practice’ (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). The term ‘teacher training’ that was originally in use, as in ‘training college’, is one I do not like as it suggests developing rigid response to situations. However, Reardon (1999, p. 4) still uses it when she seeks to extend the use of the term ‘teacher education’. She writes, ‘I profoundly believe that the notions of enlistment and training which currently characterize the paradigm as applied to teacher education must be extended and complemented by those of vocation and formation.’ She further states (1999, p. 10), ‘Whereas training is the development of capacities for particular, educative interactions between teacher and learners, formation is the evocation and articulation of the motivating values that call teachers to engage in those interactions to achieve both personal satisfaction and social goals.

I thus use ‘teacher education’ with this sense of the full and thoughtful development of people with professional capacity, commitment and values appropriate to the task. This I apply to all processes of teacher education.

1.5.6 Educators for peace

Educators who work with an understanding of how violence and peace operate in education and the broader society to develop in others a similar understanding as well as practices and a commitment to advance peace.

This work is clearly relevant to peace education but is not limited to the ways in which that is generally understood. By the phrase ‘educators for peace’ in the title, I mean educators who understand how violence operates within education and how their teaching can advance peace. Harris and Morrison (2003, p. 85) ask, ‘Is peace education *about* peace, or is education *for* peace?’ My emphasis lies on the latter, which I see as addressing the broad aims of education and thus encompassing the former.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is focused on the development of theory to enable teachers to develop more effective action within education. From a similar perspective, Whitehead (1999, p. 9) sets out four ‘educational enquiries’ that guide his work within education:

- 1) *How do I improve this process of education here?*
- 2) *How do I improve my practice?*
- 3) *How do I help you to improve your learning?*
- 4) *How do I live my values more fully in my practice?*

These questions are very close to the underlying purpose of the research undertaken here – the broad area of improving education, the specific focus on improving my own practice, the endeavours through the study to strengthen the learning of participants and, crucially, the need for my values to inform my educational practice.

While this framing is relevant, I needed to formulate questions that go beyond these very general points and that delineate the study clearly.

1.6.1 *Overarching research question*

In a society that has experienced historical violence, how can understandings of contexts, of students and of ourselves inform the pedagogy of a teacher education that aims to build peace?

1.6.2 *Subordinate research questions*

In a teacher education project that aimed to build peace in contexts of violence:

- 1) What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about **violence and the possibilities of peace**, and how did we learn about them?
- 2) What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about **a pedagogy** that would address violence and the possibilities for peace, and how did we learn it?

- 3) What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about the nature of a **pedagogy for teacher education** based on these learnings, and how did we learn that?

The distinctions between the subsidiary questions are based on an analysis that effective learning for teacher education that seeks to build peace would require learning about violence and peace, learning the related teaching skills, as well as the application of these understandings to teacher education.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section is very brief, as I see no need to explain in depth the points covered fully in chapter 5. Here I aim simply to provide the reader with sufficient information to make an informed reading of the chapters on the theoretical framework and literature review.

The research design takes the form of action research (Harris et al., 2024; McNiff, 2013; McNiff & Whitehead, 2011; Stringer, 2007), with two phases. The first was a pilot, which was a response to the immediate situation after July 2021; this was on a rather larger scale than usual. The action involved development of a group of facilitators of dialogues that focused on issues related to violence. The second was an intervention phase, the design of which was influenced by what had been learnt in the pilot.

This study falls within the critical paradigm and raises questions over the relationship between violence and social inequality, including critical questions over the role of the self as researcher. For its ontology and epistemology, it draws on dynamic realism (Röck, 2024). This combines process ontology with phenomenology.

Sampling was based on those who applied to become participants in the programme; in the pilot there was a process of selection of participants, but for the intervention phase, all applicants were accepted. Participants in the educational programme (in both phases) were invited to join the research as research participants; all did in fact agree and signed the necessary consent forms.

Data generation drew on a range of techniques, including my field notes, video recordings of sessions and of staff meetings (where these were available), a focus group discussion, online reflections by students, evaluations and, finally, interviews with five participants. Data analysis took the form of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012).

There are major ethical dimensions to such a study, and these are explored in chapter 5. Similarly, that chapter addresses fully the delimitations and limitations of the study.

1.8 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

This first chapter has attempted to set out the perspective that informed the study and the rationale for why it was undertaken. It has provided a short conceptual clarification, before exploring the research questions and objectives. This includes the lack of congruence between peace education and education that attempts to address diversity, as well as the need to address this form of teacher education in contexts of great violence. It has grappled with the difficulties of the concepts needed for this task, before addressing the research problem and specific research questions. The chapter has further explained the nature of the study in terms of action research and has provided a brief overview of the research design and methodological and ethical issues. Key limitations have been addressed, including the rationale for the focus in the action research on facilitation specifically and not on other aspects of teacher education.

Chapter 2 sets out the theoretical framework. The reason for putting this next is my choice to explore the literature with the theoretical framework already in my mind. The chapter presents the theories that are drawn on, in particular for the analysis of data. The theoretical framework is eclectic, combining the work of six theorists, taken together. The first is Johan Galtung's work on theorising violence (1969, 1990) and the distinction he promoted between positive and negative peace (1964). Secondly, I take on Pierre Bourdieu's development (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) of the concepts of symbolic violence, habitus, capital and field of practice and of the relationships between them; Zembylas, with his work on emotional capital (Zembylas, 2007b, 2009) takes this possibilities of these theories further. I incorporate Paulo Freire's (1972/2005) utopian vision of education that advances change. The ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979) is also used for its perspective on how change at one level may affect the whole system.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide a review of literature relevant to both the theoretical framework and the scholarship on the concerns of the study. The reason for there being two chapters and not one is that the study connects with two fields of study, first, that of violence and peace, and, secondly, of education that promotes peace. Of necessity, this study has to cross different terrains in this way, and it felt that to attempt to do this in one chapter meant that I would not do full justice to each.

In chapter 3, I review key authors and research in the areas of violence and peace, drawing in particular on Gandhi, Fanon, Bandura and Herman. I then review what I gather from the literature on violence, and what I gather from the literature on peace.

Chapter 4 directs attention to education for peace, first exploring different approaches within peace education and the critical views of the limited or even negative role of peace education. Three key areas that are analysed in depth are critical pedagogy, Mezirow's transformative learning and social justice education. The chapter then moves to report on peace education within South Africa, revealing just how limited its extent has been. The final section deals with the scholarship at the heart of this study, teacher education and its record of promoting peace, both international and in South Africa. At this point, the paucity of literature becomes evident. The aim here is not only to set the scholarship that informs education for peace, but also to explore the implications for action in the Intervention Phase.

Chapter 5 sets out the research design and addresses the necessary issues of methodology. First, it accounts for the philosophical underpinnings of the study, which is dynamic realism (Röck, 2024), and the approach used, which is action research. It explains the events that precipitated the pilot of the study, and then the intervention phase. Next are the issues of sampling and recruitment, the different forms of data and the use of a thematic approach to data analysis. Issues of trustworthiness and of ethics are explored, and finally the limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter 6 reports on the pilot. It provides a brief overview of the phase, including the difficulties arising from having to run the programme primarily online. It then sets out the themes and sub-themes developed from the analysis, with supporting evidence drawn from the data sources.

Chapter 7 reports on the intervention phase, which was almost entirely face-to-face. The design of this phase was influenced significantly by what had been learnt from the pilot. While the themes are broadly similar, there are some significant differences, leading to a somewhat wider range of themes.

Chapter 8 takes an autoethnographic turn; it explores my own positionality and reviews the ways in which the issues of violence and peace in my own history have influenced me as a person, as an educator, and as a researcher. It culminates in an analysis of two critical incidents that affected me in the research process. This chapter aims to be reflexive and to come to a deeper understanding of what it means to engage with the issues of trauma, learning and unlearning, teaching and researching in a violent context.

Chapter 8 is an auto-ethnographic study in which I engage in a reflection on my own formation in terms of race and violence. It explores some of what I understand as the transmission of

trauma within my own family and how that has connected both to my socialisation into being a white South African and also to my resistance to that. It is highly selective and incomplete but aims to go beyond the recognition of white privilege and our structural location to question how identity comes to be so deeply implicated in violence and the possibilities for moving beyond that.

Chapter 9 presents a critical account of the findings from analysis of data from the specific project for the education of facilitators in a specific context, that of pedagogy that seeks to enable teachers in a context of violence to advance peace and justice in their work. It sets out a series of questions and proposals for the educator of educators to consider for their practice in pedagogy. It seeks to locate this work in relation to the other responsibilities of teacher education.

1.9 CONCLUSION

I have tried in this introductory chapter to set out the perspective that informed the whole research process. It has dealt with context, my role in that context, the rationale for the study (including gaps in the relevant literature) and the conceptual tools used. It has explored the research questions and objectives and briefly reviewed the design and methodology, as well as the limitations of the study.

The study turns now to a full exploration of the theoretical framework, aiming to provide a firm basis for the research process.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The study will draw on four sources for its theoretical framework. This selection is driven by the need to appropriate and apply different perspectives for the work, which requires the exploration of different theories (of violence and peace, of pedagogy and the formation of teachers) and requires me to ask different questions at different times. Like a mechanic working on a car, a complex mechanical, electrical and electronic system, no one tool for diagnosis and intervention will suffice. Despite this diversity, I regard these theories as complementary; where there are areas of contradiction between them it will be necessary to explore these, make judgements as to those elements I will include or discard, and to consider the implications for this study.

I need to return to the research questions to shape this discussion:

In a context of historical violence, how should understandings of context, of students and of ourselves inform **the pedagogy of a teacher education** that aims to build peace?

In a teacher education project that aimed to build peace in contexts of violence:

- 1) What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about **violence and the possibilities of peace**, and how did we learn about them?
- 2) What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about **a pedagogy** that would address violence and the possibilities for peace, and how did we learn it?
- 3) What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about the nature of a **pedagogy for teacher education** based on these learnings, and how did we learn that?

This chapter thus needs to address the meanings we give such concepts as ‘pedagogy’ and ‘teacher’ and ‘violence’ and ‘peace’; it needs to engage in debates around pedagogy that are relevant to questions of violence and peace.

The theoretical framework assumes greater significance in a qualitative study (Cresswell, 2009) because it is seen as foundational, driving the processes of the study through guiding the research questions and methods. This differs from quantitative research, where a theory is set out, tested and then confirmed, rejected or modified. In a study of this kind, the task of a theoretical framework is to organise relevant theory in such a way that the researcher can use

it as a systematic tool for identifying, selecting and analysing data, thus guiding research process in ways that are coherent and consistent. For example, it shapes the ways in which data is generated and in analysing what is relevant and what is not. It also enables the reader to understand the nature and extent of the claims being made, as well as the limitations of the study. As Grant and Osanloo (2014) write:

The theoretical framework is the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed (metaphorically and literally) for a research study. It serves as the structure and support for the rationale for the study, the problem statement, the purpose, the significance, and the research questions. The theoretical framework provides a grounding base, or an anchor, for the literature review, and most importantly, the methods and analysis.

This foundational role is essential, but I am also mindful of the theses I have read that seem based on an assumption that the writer's task is merely to provide supporting evidence for the theoretical framework, an assumption that I think stems from immersion in an authoritarian system. Lather, (1986, p. 267, quoted in Creswell, 2003, p. 65), expresses this well:

Data must be allowed to generate propositions in a dialectical manner that permits use of a priori theoretical frameworks, but which keeps a particular framework from becoming the container into which the data must be poured.

I will, if necessary, wrestle with the theories I have selected and hope that the findings will push against the boundaries they have set.

A central point is the need to select theory that can speak to the concerns of the study, that brings into focus the processes that are relevant to the research questions. For this study, I start from the concern – arising from my personal and professional commitments – that we seem to have limited understanding of how to work with present and future educators to enable them to work for peace, in the context of a violent society. This requires theory that speaks to both the personal (the educators) and the social (violence and peace). It must speak to processes of transformation at both levels. The focus must be on learning and on what processes would develop the capacity both to change one's own relationship to peace and to assist such changes in others. A significant element of such a framework is the identification of the assumptions that inform the work. This makes it clearer to both myself as researcher, and to the reader, which questions fall outside of the scope of study, and what the necessary limitations of this work include.

This chapter will first present the argument for including a theory in the framework, then lay out the four theories that make up the framework. After a review of each theory, the implications for the study will be set out.

The selection of a theory should depend on its appropriateness, ease of application, and explanatory power. (Sacred Heart University, n.d.)

An immediate requirement is for whatever theory is included in the framework not to be in fundamental conflict with another in the framework. There will inevitably be differences in focus and areas of possible disagreement, but we need theories that address the realities of the context without introducing elements that jar with each other.

Specifically, we first need a theory that provides an account of violence in its complexity and that can highlight the different ways in which societies are organised such that violence is more or less likely. It needs also to account for the ways in which relations involving violence are transmitted. It needs to provide a sense of what peace entails and what the process of moving from violence to peace may entail.

Further, theory is needed that explains how society operates in ways that perpetuate inequality. A recurrent point made in this study is that such relationships of inequality always involve at least some forms of violence. Such a theory should also not create a rigid distinction between structure and agency; people must be understood, in my view, to be creating or recreating social structures – they do not exist independently of people – while structures also shape people and their agency (Archer, 1999).

A particular requirement is that theory is needed that indicates how people have a capacity to bring about change within education and within society more broadly. The possibility of thorough change away from violence is asserted here as a fundamental assumption without which this study would have no value. As someone who has experienced major social change initiated by various actors – South Africa is now a very different society from the one I grew up in – we need to theorise how to strengthen the capacity for positive change and the reduction of violence.

Finally, we need theory that focus on the educational context, and how the interactions between educator and learner and amongst learners can be congruent with the building of peace.

The four theorists I have selected for the framework are these:

The first is Johan Galtung's work on theorising violence (1969, 1990) and the distinction he promoted between positive and negative peace (1964). His conceptualisation of these forms a useful tool for exploring what we mean by 'peace'. Conceptual clarity is essential if we are to understand the relationship, if any, between education and violence, and what the term 'educators for peace' means.

Secondly, Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) developed the concepts of symbolic violence, habitus, capital and field of practice and proposed the relationships between them. The debates about these concepts and relationships are illuminating for a study of education. 'Symbolic violence' raises the question as to whether much of education is an exercise in normalising the violence of an unequal society. I will explain how useful the concept of habitus is for thinking through the relationship – if any – between education and social change. Similarly, there are important questions over the forms of capital that a peace-building education draws on and possibly develops. Finally, how autonomous is education, as a field of practice, from other fields of practice in society? Is the goal of an education that advances peace only to do so within its own sector? To what extent can such an education inform other fields of practice?

A section on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory serves to provide a perspective on how the work of both Galtung and Bourdieu can be located in relation to each other.

Paulo Freire (1972) presents a utopian vision of education that advances change. His work sets out a sharp distinction between a domesticating education and one that is inherently open-ended and potentially liberatory. He also develops a radical perspective on the roles of teacher and student. Without such an approach, the idea of an education that advances peace may not seem possible.

Finally, Zembylas (2007) extends the work of Bourdieu in ways that bring him closer to the more hopeful spirit of Freire. By focusing on the element of emotion in the habitus and the role of what he terms *emotional capital*, he brings into educational settings a sense of how the ways by which teachers and students engage with emotions that either confirm or challenge the workings of habitus.

These theorists do not fit seamlessly together. While Bourdieu and Freire, for example, may concur on the ways in which much education serves simply as a form of social reproduction, Freire develops an optimistic model of how it could be, one that is foreign to the pessimism

(even determinism) of Bourdieu. To some extent, the differences are about what the theorists focus on – thus, while Galtung develops a fine sense of the complex ways in which violence permeates society, he gives less attention to how people learn alternative visions.

To make effective use of these theories I will need to develop my own understanding and judgement of their strengths and limitations.

2.2 GALTUNG, VIOLENCE AND PEACE

The Norwegian theorist Johan Galtung has brought to the field of peace research a specific focus and greater conceptual clarity in theorising both violence and peace. In a seminal article (Galtung, 1967), he argues that ‘violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations’. The language of ‘potential somatic and mental realizations’ sets out a standard of what is **not** violence, against which violence is measured. This applies to how one’s life can be impaired through physical or sexual violence; it applies also to situations (such as apartheid) where systematic exploitation, neglect or economic exclusion limit the possibilities for human existence to flourish in full.

The implications of this are very far-reaching, as it extends our understanding beyond the immediate situation in which the well-recognised violence of assault, sexual assault and homicide is visibly present. It also extends responsibility for violence to those who may be physically distant, but who are responsible for systems that serve to impair the life prospects of people.

2.2.1 Galtung’s categorisation of violence

Galtung categorises violence as direct, structural (or ‘indirect’, Galtung, 1967) or cultural (Galtung, 1990). This study draws on the distinction. Its value lies in the capacity of such a theoretical lens to direct attention to the different ways in which violence manifests itself in the context of the study, as well as to the ways in which one form of violence may connect with another. In reporting this categorisation, I will take some examples from my experiences as a white child and young man growing up within the system of apartheid.

First, *direct violence*. Galtung (1967, p. 170) refers to direct violence as follows: ‘We shall refer to the type of violence where there is an actor that commits the violence as *personal* or *direct*, and to violence where there is no such actor as *structural* or *indirect*’. Thus, direct violence consists of such acts as physical or sexual assault, homicide, humiliation and the threats of such direct physical attacks. This is the common-sense understanding of violence,

though it extends beyond the idea of a purely physical form of violence to encompass psychological and emotional violence.

Simultaneously, Galtung introduces the concept of structural violence as a contrast to the term 'direct violence'. What typifies the latter is that 'The violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as un-equal life chance' (ibid., p. 171). Thus, economic or political systems within which there is inequality of power are defined as inherently violent. These will result in inequalities of outcome, whether this refers to health, level of educational development, life expectancy, etc. A key common element in both direct and indirect violence is that the effects are on the body, whether in physical or emotional suffering.

Such inequalities of outcome were and continue to be vividly present in the health outcomes by race and class in a context like South Africa. Even as a youngster, before the language of structural violence was well known, I understood from work done at the nearby health centre that treated rural people that the structure of apartheid was a central factor in child malnutrition, for example. Fullerton (1979, p. 1) reports that, 'In 1967, the rate of kwashiorkor [a disease of malnutrition] in the African population of South Africa was 66.6 cases per 100,000 although kwashiorkor ceased to be a notifiable disease that year because the white rate had dropped to 0.19:100,000.' Galtung distinguishes between the intentional violence of an actor and the unintended consequences of systems set up for other purposes, such as, in the case of apartheid, the preservation of white power and the subjugation of those seen in Biblical terms as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' (The Bible, Joshua 9, 21). One could argue that there are limits to the term 'unintended' when the consequences of such structural violence are apparent to all those who choose to see them.

The indirectness of structural violence may suggest some kind of dilution of impact, but the evidence is of huge loss of life as a result of failures of government, for example, to address hunger and preventable disease. Eckhardt (1992) estimates that 795 million people, mainly children, died between 1945 and 1990 as a result of structural violence. This means that systems of oppression, of racism, of exploitation, of sexism are intrinsically systems also of violence that impacts finally on the lives, bodies and minds of vast numbers of people.

Galtung later (1990) introduces a further category, that of *cultural violence*. Cultural violence refers to the ways in which language and culture provide legitimation for either direct or indirect violence. Atack (2009, p. 43) writes that it 'includes the norms or values, attitudes and

beliefs within a society that allow or facilitate the use of direct violence or the perpetuation of structural violence.’ For example, as a youngster, the language used around me for black people would range from the patronisingly essentialist (‘your Zulu’ being one, spoken with an air of anthropological authority), to the brutally hostile. The latter could be used directly as a form of violent hostility but served also amongst white people to provide a sense of complacent superiority and contempt that distanced us from those to whom such terms were applied. It served also to communicate that we, like the speaker, were part of a community that would *naturally* feel in a position to judge and adjudicate – and, for some, to use or justify violence. Another example of cultural violence in this context was the use of religious texts – and the name Christian National Education – to provide a semblance of Christian justification for a system that was regarded by most critical observers as deeply immoral.

Cultural violence does not refer to judgements as to the violence of any specific culture. It serves rather to identify the role of cultural expression in the structures of violence. ‘A violent structure leaves marks not only on the human body but on the mind and the spirit’ (Galtung, 1969, p. 294). Cultural violence functions with different components that make up such a structure; Galtung identifies *penetration*, the process whereby the mindset that devalues the target of violence is accepted by them; *segmentation*, the ways in which reality is constantly obscured from people who have little access to fuller information; *marginalization*, excluding people from participation in the mainstream of social and economic activity and *fragmentation*, ways in which people who experience disadvantage are set against each other (Galtung, *ibid.*).

I would make three points on this. These ways of categorising violence are simply perspectives, not separate systems, so one phenomenon may be recognised as representing two categories at the same time. Secondly, even if we can find ways of distinguishing them clearly, as Collins and Plüg (2020, p. 159) point out, “The structural violence of poverty, inequality, and socio-economic stress is strongly correlated with interpersonal violence across many societies.” Thirdly, though Galtung does not reference Fanon here or use the same language, this echoes the systematic process of subjugation that includes such concepts as Fanon’s (1952/1986, p. 4) *internalisation* (or *epidermalization*) – see also Freire (1972/2005) on the oppressor within. Cultural violence does more than proceed at the level of cognitive ideas; it shapes people in ways that do lasting damage, evoking shame or anger or disappointment, impairing one’s sense of hope and imagination.

Thus, in the South African context, the movement of Black Consciousness required not simply the critique of false ideas but the confrontation of how black people had come to understand and to feel about themselves: ‘At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realisation by blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed’ (Biko, 2005, p. 92).

2.2.2 Negative and positive peace

Early in his development, Galtung (1964) developed further an existing distinction (Los Dialogos Panamericanos, n.d.) between what he termed *negative peace* and *positive peace*. ‘...there are two aspects of peace as conceived of here: negative peace which is the absence of violence, absence of war – and positive peace which is the integration of human society.’ The distinction is helpful in that the absence of war and obvious violence – generally, the lack of evident direct violence – may simply cover underlying relationships that are highly violent. I recall well how the apartheid government claimed to be maintaining peace and order – and, in reality, there was an almost complete absence of public violence until resistance exploded. In every other way, though, this was a society in which violence was constant, if largely hidden.

This understanding of peace shifted as Galtung developed his concept of structural violence, which involved a shift away from a focus on the actor to a focus on the structures of violence (Grewal, 2003). In the same way by which violence flows from cultural to structural and then direct violence, Galtung saw the use of peaceful means (and here he draws on Gandhi) as flowing into a society that is experienced as free and peaceful. Grewal (2003, p. 4) presents the distinction thus:

Negative Peace: Absence of violence, pessimistic, curative, peace not always by peaceful means.

Positive Peace: Structural integration, optimistic, preventive, peace by peaceful means.

Grewal describes this as a move away from the prevailing North American emphasis on conflict resolution within peace research towards an affirmation of a constructivist understanding of peace, which may be best described as *peace building* (Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, n.d.).

The implications for this study, of including this within the theoretical framework, are major; ‘educating educators for peace’ then entails shifting the focus away from how educators

respond to or manage specific conflicts as they arise and towards their capacity to create a space or zone within which there is an experience of peace. Identifying what that consists of and how we can know of its presence or absence, will not be simple – this is a major task for this study.

Galtung's contribution to our understanding of violence and peace has been highly significant, but it needs further exploration.

2.2.3 Education, violence and peace

While Galtung does not engage in depth with pedagogical theory, he applies his categorisation to the education system, focusing in this excerpt on the form of education:

Only rarely is education nowadays packaged with direct violence; the days of colonialism and corporal punishment are more or less gone. But structural violence remains and takes the usual forms: a highly vertical division of labor manifesting itself in one-way communication; the fragmentation of those on the receiving end preventing them from developing horizontal interaction that will allow them to organize and eventually turn the communication flow the other way; and the absence of true multilateralism in the education endeavor. (Galtung, 2008, p. 51)

The context in which I write is in reality one in which direct violence in various forms persists, with a schooling system in which corporal punishment persists in many schools. Our higher education system, as noted in chapter 1, is also shot through with episodes of direct violence.

However, what Galtung writes here does not address how education has been shaped like this and what the limitations to agency may be in bringing change. For that analysis, we will need Bourdieu and Freire.

2.2.4 Limitations of Galtung's categorisation

Galtung's work has resonated with many in that it provides a conceptual basis for linking violence with injustice and inequality. There are various criticisms, and I identify here three that are helpful to take into account.

The first difficulty is in how strongly Galtung links peace with justice. 'Ultimately it does seem that it is impossible to separate peace from justice and thus it is unavoidable that one must deal with some form of an integrated concept of peace.' (Page, 2008, p. 11).

The first difficulty may lie in how people interpret such a categorisation. Some may assume, for example, that direct violence is unrelated to structural violence, as if separating them out conceptually means that they operate as separate processes. This difficulty was readily apparent in a webinar with students about violence within the university, around 2021, when a participant stated that issues like gender-based violence could not be resolved until structural violence was ended. The troubling implication was that he focused on the structures of violence as if they are separate from the day-to-day operation of gender relations, with the implication that we need not address the mundane while grander struggles over political or economic power are being addressed.

Potentially, people may read into the categorisation an agency-structure dichotomy, as if societal structures may exist separately from human agency. Growing up under apartheid, I came to realise that this was a system that had been systematically built up through human agency; I knew that the constant refrain of ‘there is nothing we can do about it’ was inherently incorrect. The continuity between direct and indirect violence was evident in that the system of apartheid would itself be categorised as structural violence, but the maintenance of that system relied ultimately (and frequently) in acts of direct violence.

A specific criticism of the concept of structural violence by Boulding (1977, p. 83), is that ‘processes which create and sustain poverty are not at all like the processes which create and sustain violence’. Further, that ‘...the dynamics of poverty and the success or failure to rise out of it are of a complexity far beyond anything which the metaphor of structural violence can offer.’ (ibid., p. 84). However, what permeates Boulding’s arguments is a sense that, while he presents direct violence as an immediate threat, he presents, say, poverty, as something rather lost in a complex system, not as something that confronts one immediately and ultimately physically. To revert to the examples from apartheid, if an outsider with resources were to be present with a black person who experienced poverty, the connections between this structure and the agency of people who put it in place would soon become evident, even if that agency is hidden behind laws and history, such as the dispossession of land.

However, if we understand that much direct violence is mistakenly undertaken with the idea that this is doing good in some way, or at least necessary for some greater purpose, then the differences do not seem so great. A counterargument is that we develop systems with the idea that these are workable and necessary, or at least inevitable, and that in reality people carry out direct violence with the idea that this is workable, necessary and inevitable (Collins & Plüg,

2020) – if so, the processes start to look more similar. In both cases, people may fail to think through the consequences, including unintended consequences, and the ethical implications of what they are doing.

A third and more cogent criticism is the normative nature of Galtung's category of structural violence. Hirschfeld (2017, p. 147) criticises the sweeping description of epidemics in the Third World as structural violence, describing the use of the concept as 'moralistic storytelling' rather than critical analysis. She writes (ibid., pp. 160-161), 'This approach makes Galtung's model unfalsifiable and substitutes a moral argument against imperialism in place of objective historical or ethnographic research exploring how macro level structures configure patterns of disease'. She demonstrates how, concurrently with violent practices in colonialism, there were also medical programmes that reduced the burden of disease and how, after the end of colonialism, conditions became worse. In my view, this criticism has validity with regards to those researchers who focus on only one structural feature, such as colonialism, as a grand narrative that ignores the complexity of structures in post-colonial societies. Such simplistic explanations are indeed common at a popular level in a South African context, where apartheid and its legacy are referred to in a sweeping way, without clarifying how those relationships continue. However, when Hirschfeld states (ibid., p. 161) that scholars are failing to conduct 'grounded empirical research exploring how the unique political economy of fragile states facilitates resurgent epidemics of preventable disease', she is arguing for greater conceptual sharpness and supporting evidence for the relationship between structures and violence in specific contexts, rather than denying the relationship between structure and destructive outcomes. Galtung's principal assertion that structures may themselves be inherently violent remains unchallenged, while Hirschfeld's criticism alerts us to the need to demonstrate in specific contexts what the structures are that enact violence and how they operate. Thus, we may, with Fanon (1963), focus not simply on the grand narrative of colonialism but also on the capacity of other structures – such as the post-colonial class structure in which new elites took on a role similar to that of colonial rulers – to foster inequality and exclusion:

What are the forces which in the colonial period open up new outlets and engender new aims for the violence of colonized peoples? In the first place there are the political parties and the intellectual or commercial elites. (Fanon, 1963, p. 59)

This criticism points to the need for more fine-tuned analysis of contexts to ensure that we identify clearly which specific features of structures generate harmful outcomes, and how such

processes operate. Apartheid was indeed an inherently violent system, but the idea of people as having deep cultural differences had some positive consequences; for example, it allowed areas in which black people might handle their lives differently. Listening to white South Africans speaking of African people, I note that, while comments will at times be racist, the emphasis on ‘culture’ does allow for and acknowledge ‘difference’; people are not expected to assimilate into one national identity of culture and customs, as in France (Berdah, 2006). In my experience, I noticed how a young African man wearing a woman’s sunhat in the street, or two young men, friends, holding each other’s hands in class, attracted no attention or opprobrium at all. There is no way that this would have been tolerated amongst white people.

Further, ending apartheid also allowed – and possibly accelerated – the growing hegemony of English to the further disadvantage of African languages (Prah, 2018). Nor did the end of apartheid mean that its associated violence ended uniformly. For example, Stephens and Boonzaier (2018), point out that, in relation to black lesbian women, ‘One of the ironic effects of constitutional recognition of sexual diversity has been the creation of conditions of possibilities that enable the emergence of the “othered” citizen and the continued fixation on the sexuality of the “other”.’ This argument provides a necessary caution in how one uses the term *structural violence*. Not all social structures are as violent as each other and not all the operations of a specific structure are uniformly violent.

However, while some may criticise the sweeping concept of structural violence as woolly and all-encompassing, reducing its conceptual clarity, a strength of his approach is that it brings to theory an ethical dimension. While some would question this, perhaps from a positivist approach, Galtung is working within a critical paradigm that foregrounds the need to change unjust structures:

The explicit recognition of the ethical and the normative in this fundamental sense can be one of the strengths of peace studies, rather than a point of weakness. (Atack, 2009, p. 49)

Galtung will thus provide the conceptual foundations on which this study bases discussions of violence and peace.

2.3 PIERRE BOURDIEU’S SOCIOLOGY

A fundamental point is that this study concerns the capacity of educators to develop a sense of themselves as agents for peace; it is not focused in a more limited way on the development of specific skills and methods. Such development suggests dispositions, ways of thinking and of

feeling, and habits of responding to situations in ways that promote peace – and this in the context of education.

Bourdieu (1977) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) provide a way of exploring both violence and pedagogy through the concepts of habitus, field of practice and cultural capital. A strength of their work is the unrelenting perspective of how violence is embedded in social structures, though embedded through the ongoing agency of individuals who learn and reproduce the relationships that sustain violence.

I will here outline the key concepts of this theory and relate to the purposes of this study.

2.3.1 Habitus and symbolic violence

One important conceptual development is Bourdieu's notion of habitus and the related issues of violence and peace. Bourdieu describes habitus thus: "a subjective but not individual system of internalised structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86). Goldthorpe (2010, p. 2) sets out a fuller description of Bourdieu's understanding of habitus as 'a set of socially constituted dispositions and competencies which (i) are acquired by individuals in early life, primarily through the families into which they are born; (ii) reflect the 'class conditions' under which their families live; and (iii) subsequently determine individuals' orientations to the world and modes of conduct within it in ways of which they may not be fully aware and that are highly resistant to change - whether through individuals' own efforts or those of other agencies.'

What makes the habitus attractive as a concept is that it provides a way of reconciling structure and agency. Habitus is where individual and society interact; the structures of society shape the habitus, as do the individual experiences of the subject. In turn, individuals act on the basis of habitus to reproduce the social structures that shaped them. Goldthorpe (2010) here identifies a central problem for education generally and for the aims of this study, that this habitus, which shapes the ways in which people conduct their lives, is 'highly resistant to change.' What then do we make of the prospects for changing both the individual who has been raised in a violent society, of necessity absorbing its ways, and of changing the social structures?

Habitus is developed through what is termed *pedagogical work*, 'the prolonged action of inculcation through which the basic function of every educational system is accomplished' (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1975, p. 102) to refer to the development of the habitus. Pedagogical work begins within the family and continues within the school; this is a process of inculcation that is not spelt out in official curricula – indeed the term 'educational system' here is not

sharply defined, as if it may include elements beyond the formal system. It is further a process of naturalisation of ideas and dispositions.

For a fuller understanding of this, it is necessary to draw in the concept of *symbolic violence*. Bourdieu (2004) refers to *symbolic violence* as ‘a form of power that is exerted on bodies, directly and as if by magic, without any physical constraint’ (Bourdieu 2004, p. 340). It refers to the ways in which relationships between dominant and subordinated groups operate even without direct coercion or force; often in the unquestioning assumption of power by the one and subordination by the other.

According to Thapar-Björkert, Samelius and Sanghera (2016, p. 145):

Symbolic violence is produced, reproduced and deemed legitimate through ‘schemes’ that are ‘immanent in everyone’s habitus’ (Bourdieu, 2001a, p. 53). Indeed, schemes, which are ‘shaped by similar conditions, and therefore objectively harmonised, function as matrices of the perceptions, thoughts and actions of all members of the society’, are inscribed onto bodies in the form of ‘dispositions’, and they can ultimately survive long after the disappearance of the social conditions of production (ibid., p. 33). Thus, dispositions (habitus) are inseparable from the relations and structures of power that produce them.

Such ‘schemes’ are both practical and cognitive, and may consist of patterns of thought or language, or even body posture. This concept, in its focus on legitimisation and normalisation of violence, is very similar to Galtung’s concept of cultural violence, but the emphasis is less on the language of justification and more on the absorption into the habitus of patterns that secure the consent of all, dominator and dominated, to relationships of inequality and abuse. A good example from my childhood and youth was the experience of racial signs in public places, something that would have seemed bizarre to someone from a democratic society. Growing up in such contexts meant that, even if you seldom gave any conscious attention to the signs or not, they served constantly to direct your conduct – almost always people simply followed the directions, which entailed access to cleaner, more spacious and safer facilities (and of greater number) if you were white and the opposite if you were of another group. Quite possibly, had significant numbers of black people simply ignored the signs and marched into toilets or onto beaches zoned for whites, the system would rapidly have become unworkable. However, this started to happen only late in the struggle against apartheid, when signs were already starting to disappear. This is a comment on how the signs had become so normalised.

One aspect of symbolic violence is *misrecognition*, seeing something that is in reality violent and abusive as something else, perhaps as ordinary or necessary, or as inevitable. This aspect brings the concept of symbolic violence very close to that of Galtung's cultural violence (1990). For this study, a particular relevance of this concept is the need for educators who work for peace to develop sufficient critical awareness for them to recognise violence for what it is, and not to perpetuate the violence through silence over it. However, Burawoy (2012, p. 12) identifies an alternative to misrecognition within Bourdieu's thought: 'Instead of individuals *misrecognizing* domination as a result of socialization and the creation of an unconscious habitus, social relations *mystify* the conditions of their own effectivity. In the latter case, symbolic domination is not the result of elaborate socialization but comes about through participation in semi-autonomous fields – participation that is viewed as a social game.'

This arises from participation in the field, as participants in a game; it comes with the territory. I recall a comment made to me by the renowned academic, Rick Turner, before his death at the hands of the agents of apartheid, when one of the people in his household and I began teaching at a local school, that, with time, we would become like all the other teachers. Neither of us did, but it was only at the cost of considerable stress and risk. His point was about participation in a field leading to unaware adoption of the habitus that arises from it. The comment by Burawoy (2012, p. 12) directs attention to the present interaction more than to the earlier socialisation, pointing to the need, in this study, to foreground how violence or peace is present in relationships within education.

2.3.2 *Field of practice*

Modern society, according to Bourdieu, consists of different *fields of practice* that have a relative degree of autonomy from each other. Apart from the habitus that develops in each person as a result of their participation generally in society, there is a habitus that is adopted within each field. Thus, whether or not it is somehow encoded (like the rules that govern cricket), there are often implicit rules of the game that apply and to which participants are expected to adhere.

A good description of a field of practice is this, quoted in Smith (2020):

...a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field. It contains people who dominate and people who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the

individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies. (Bourdieu 1998b: 40–41)

In this sense, education can be seen as a field of practice. However, rather than applying it as a clearly defined context, the concept should rather be applied as a means of analysing relationships. It does not attempt, in the case of education, to define what the boundaries of ‘education’ are (which would have been very helpful for this study!).

There are some similarities here to what is described below in terms of Freire’s concept of banking education – that relations within what is generally seen as education follow a typical pattern of domination and subordination.

Bourdieu (1984) sees the field of practice as a place of competition for resources. Here his concept of *capital* becomes relevant, and his idea that, in this competition, it is possible to exchange one form of capital – social (for example, networks that can assist you) or cultural (for example, having the cultural traits of the dominant classes) – for another, such as economic capital. This clearly extends the Marxian notion of capital; while not discounting the possibility that those oppressed in society could, through their agency, struggle their way through, it sets out more fully the nature of the obstacles they face.

The dominant forms of practices emerge from the combination of habitus and capital within a field (Smith, 2020). Fields of practice such as education or sport or religion are also part of the broader field of power and class in society but have their specific characteristics.

Von Holdt (2022) provides an important extension to the concept of fields of practice. Speaking of case studies of conflicts in South Africa, he reports how one can only understand fully what is happening if we think of actors as occupying multiple fields of practice, all occupying the same social site. Thus, there is no stable set of rules; people play according to different rules at the same time. For example, there is no single field of practice of education, though one can choose to act as if there is, with formal policies and typical organisation. It is constantly invaded by other fields, such as politics or business, which bring in different sets of rules. The underlying reason for this Von Holdt (2022) sees as the intense struggle for resources in a context where the opportunities to join the new elites (in a context where the white elite still holds so much power) are so limited.

One implication is that there is, as Von Holdt (2022) puts it, a ‘surfeit of agency’. While Bourdieu is criticised often for presenting the social order as all-powerful and the scope for independent agency as so limited, contexts such as South Africa call out for order. Von Holdt (ibid.) further states that ‘order-making and order-breaking are such a constant dynamic’.

Both Bourdieu’s concept of field of practice and Von Holdt’s extension of it provide a useful perspective for this study. Typically, writings in the area of peace education tend to assume a context where institutions such as schools are what they are meant to be, where the tasks of teaching and learning are undertaken in predictable ways, though often ways that are problematic. What does it mean to advance peace within and through education, if education is itself a site of extreme violence? Further, is the intention to develop educators as actors who advance peace across the different fields they occupy? Is a central responsibility of such educators the task of order-making, of bringing benign order to the field of education?

This sense of instability is not something that emerges elsewhere in this framework; often the writers give a sense of the intransigence of oppressive systems and the limited scope for agency. In Von Holdt’s understanding of this context, oppression continues but there are multiple opportunities for agency. This poses both threats and opportunities for those who seek to build peace; for example, what one is opposing is often hard to identify. Who is on which side of an issue becomes more difficult to identify – in his account (ibid.), conflicts in trade unions may seem to be about differences in strategy but may also be about competition for resources, often taking a violent form. Those who are ostensibly pushing for radical change may in fact act constantly to advance corrupt business interests.

On the positive side, there is an openness to those who can provide a sense of an order established less by law than by negotiated agreements that advance nonviolence in a specific context. A case study of how people take such opportunities to bring peace is described in Langa (2011), an example that Von Holdt describes in his lecture (2023).

This extension to Bourdieu’s concept of field of practice is thus productive in generating an increased sense of both the risks and of the possibilities for positive change in a context of violence.

2.3.3 Cultural capital

Cultural capital was developed by Bourdieu in response to a problem that was increasingly understood, that regarding the academic performance of children from working class families. As educational access widened in the 20th century, with such children gaining the benefit of

better facilities, often on a par with middle-class children, it became evident that these material resources were insufficient in enabling these children to succeed (Goldthorpe, 2007). This drew attention to the ways in which the culture of middle-class families was much closer than that of working-class families to the ways of the school – for example, in the way language is spoken. This point was made very strongly by Bernstein (1971), who mapped out the language ‘codes’ adopted by working and middle-class families; the ‘elaborated code’ of the middle-class is far closer to the language usage of schools. In the context of this study, this distinction is more obviously marked in that the home language of the majority is IsiZulu, which has never been developed as an academic language, while the language of schooling has become overwhelmingly English.

This connection had been prefigured by Gramsci:

In a whole series of families, especially in the intellectual strata, the children find in their family life a preparation, a prolongation and a completion of school life; they “breathe in”, as the expression goes, a whole quantity of notions and attitudes which facilitate the educational process properly speaking. (Gramsci, 1971, p. 120)

In education one is dealing with children in whom one has to inculcate certain habits of diligence, precision, poise (even physical poise), ability to concentrate on specific subjects, which cannot be acquired without the mechanical repetition of disciplined and methodical acts. (ibid., p. 182)

Similarly, Bourdieu traces the connections from family to school; he extends it further from school to vocation. The school both embodies and legitimates the dominant cultural forms of expression. It thus privileges those whose family culture happens to be most closely compatible and subordinates those from another cultural arbitrary, while communicating to both the ‘naturalness’ of this ordering. Those who proceed into the higher echelons of society can do so affirmed that this is a natural result of their success in education, and those excluded can see in their exclusion the logical outcome of their deficiencies.

Bernstein (1971) similarly demonstrated the differences between what he termed the ‘restricted’ linguistic codes of the working class and the ‘elaborated’ codes of the middle class, the latter being also the dominant form of language in schools. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) proposed the term cultural capital for those features of culture that have currency in the field of education. They described these resources as essentially arbitrary.

This is a view of formal education as shaped by its essential requirement to communicate insistently hierarchy and compliance:

The whole logic of an academic institution based on pedagogic work of the traditional type and ultimately guaranteeing the 'infallibility' of the 'master', finds expression in the professorial ideology of student incapacity, a mixture of tyrannical stringency and disillusioned indulgence which inclines the teacher to regard all communication failures, however unforeseen, as integral to a relationship which inherently implies poor reception of the best messages by the worst receivers. If the student fails to be what he ought to be, which is none other than his 'being-for-the-teacher', then all the faults - whether of error or ill-will – are on his side. (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, pp. 111-112)

This is strikingly similar to Freire's analysis of 'banking education' (see below). What then are the possibilities for education beyond this, education that is not of 'the traditional type'? At this point, the discussion shifts to the criticisms and debates that then arise.

2.3.4 Limitations and debates

Understanding Bourdieu is at times difficult; where his thinking is understood it is often strongly contested. This section deals with the debates that then arise. This section addresses three major areas of criticism and challenge:

- Determinism
- What educational alternative is there?
- Other forms of habitus in education.

2.3.4.1 Determinism

First, the way Bourdieu thinks of the habitus has come under sustained attack, generally because of its perceived determinism (Jenkins, 1972; Goldthorpe, 2010; Aktivou & Di San Giorgio, 2014). On the face of it, and even after carefully scrutiny, it seems to hold the view that the social system will succeed in ensuring social reproduction and forestalling significant change. Thus, habitus provides an explanatory power for failures to change social and economic relationships but denies the possibility and hope for any fundamental change, at individual and social level. Goldthorpe (2010, pp. 2-3) traces the concept of habitus to Aquinas, who made a distinction between habitus corporis (physiologically ingrained learning like swimming) and habitus animae (of the mind; dispositions and thought processes subject to

conscious awareness and change). Where Aquinas would see the latter as potentially subject to change, Goldthorpe (ibid. p. 3) writes that Bourdieu ‘treats habitus as expressed in social dispositions and competencies as having something like the same deterministic force and fixity as when it is embedded in neurology and physiology.’

However, Faber (2017) argues that this is too rigid an interpretation and that Bourdieu rather sees habitus as setting the limits of what is possible, with opportunities for rational choices arising from time to time, for example, at times of crisis (Faber, 2017, p. 450). One element for possible change is the disjuncture between social relations and habitus that arises from *hysteresis*, the delay before the habitus responds to changes in social relations. Faber argues further that knowing more fully the determining force of social factors is inherently liberating as it clarifies the areas for realistic action. One identifies the concept of hysteresis readily in the ways in which white South Africans yearn nostalgically for a past that is no longer possible, even if we continue to enjoy significant advantages in the present.

I would add a further comment on the limitation of the determined character of habitus – that is, that social forces are never fully triumphant. I think of the many times during teaching when exploring our life experiences reveals, for example, that in a rural Zulu context where girls are meant to work within the home and boys out herding cattle, the reality of the situation is that some households have only boys or girls, and girls may herd cattle and boys wash dishes, giving them access to the social experiences of another gender, opening up the possibilities of learning that are at odds with the social prescripts of gender.

Foucault’s concept of power offers an alternative approach; while recognising how society shapes people, he recognises the capacity that people have to resist and obstruct the smooth exercise of social institutions. ‘A key point about Foucault’s approach to power is that it transcends politics and sees power as an everyday, socialised and embodied phenomenon’. (Powercube, n.d.). Foucault stresses the capacity for agency through people’s capacity for shifting discourses:

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it... We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby a discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart. (Foucault 1998: 100-1)

This does not deny the capacity of institutions of society to form people as subjects; however, it recognises how individuals may use power either to reproduce the ‘truth’ of how they have been shaped or to resist it by refusing to fit in with the categories of society. I recall in the final years of apartheid that people opposing the system began the use of the word ‘alternative’ to refer forming a society not based on race. The appearance of this term would trouble the authorities greatly (we knew how it troubled them because the security police interrogating people under detention would constantly probe what people had in mind with this term). Even the use of this language was sufficient to unsettle the entire discourse of ‘separate development’ because the latter was intended to convey the sense that it was both natural and inevitable. Foucault’s sense that power circulates in society and that the nature and direction of its flow can never be predetermined is a useful corrective to the determinism that habitus seem prone to.

Thus, while what makes habitus a useful concept is its ability to bring structure and agency together, our use of it needs to hold onto a sense that it has some possibilities of change; the question is then whether, in this study, we see the task of ‘educating educators for peace’ as extending beyond the typical formulation that education involves acquiring skills and knowledge. While Bourdieu sees the task as difficult and unlikely to succeed, I would assert that such an education in the pursuit of peace, in a context where violence has been normalised, must aim to achieve some reworking of fundamental dispositions. Without it, we may achieve the pretence of change and fall prey to misrecognition.

2.3.4.2 What educational alternative is there?

Bourdieu allows almost nothing as a positive role of an educational system, other than as an inevitably failing (because education cannot transform the whole society) attempt to induct the dominated classes into a culture that is alien to them, but nonetheless the culture of the ruling classes:

Blindness to what the legitimate culture and the dominated culture owe to the structure of their symbolic relations, i.e. to the structure of the relation of domination between the classes, inspires on the one hand the ‘culture for the masses’ programme of ‘liberating the dominated classes by giving them the means of appropriating legitimate culture as such, with all it owes to its functions of distinction and legitimation (e.g. the curricula of the Universites populaires or the Jacobin defence of the teaching of Latin); and on the other hand the populist project of decreeing the legitimacy of the

cultural arbitrary of the dominated classes as constituted in and by the fact of its dominated position, canonizing it as 'popular culture. (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, pp. 23-24)

The greatest contempt is directed against the 'populist project', one he sees as a dead-end, of treating education as the place to celebrate the culture of the dominated. By contemplating these as the only two options for education, the question must arise as to what scope there is for educators who wish to achieve something of greater value for their students. This is thus a challenge to what has become known as *critical pedagogy* (see for example Darder, Baldonado & Torres, 2003). In the following passage, Burawoy (2011) sets out the debate:

*Rather than challenging domination they [populist projects] effectively consolidate symbolic domination. Their [i.e. Bourdieu and Passeron's] own solution, to which they refer in the conclusion to their earlier book *The Inheritors* (1979 [1964]) but all but abandon in *Reproduction*, is "rational pedagogy" – the attempt to counteract inequalities in the cultural preparation of different classes, not by making concessions to subjugated cultures but by inculcating dominant culture into disadvantaged groups. They freely admit this to be a utopian project in the context of class domination, but the attempt to realize it would have the benefit of unmasking the inequity of cultural preconditioning. (Burawoy, 2012a, pp. 1-2)*

Teaching the subjugated the language, cultural practices and approaches to knowledge typically held by the dominant classes is thus put forward as a way, at least, of demonstrating the assumptions and ways of working of the dominant culture, as against those in the tradition of Freire who claim that education even in oppressive societies can be used for liberatory purposes:

Here then are two antithetical approaches to the same problem – the way education reproduces domination. Where Bourdieu can only conceive of a countering of domination by creating universal access to the cultural achievements of bourgeois society, that is, by extending bourgeois civilization to all, Freire, on the other hand, sees in this the perfection of domination. He seeks an alternative pedagogy that extricates and cultivates the good sense that remains within the oppressed despite internalized oppression – a pedagogy that starts out from lived experience. (Burawoy, 2012a, p. 2)

For most educators, this is a dismal prospect. First, there may be some who see some intrinsic value in adopting at least some of the dominant culture, in terms of its access to specialised knowledge. However, what Bourdieu proposes falls clearly into what has become known as “Knowledge of the Powerful” (KOTP). “In KOTP, power is not transferable from the power holder to those subjected to the power, unless the subjected actors manage to negotiate its transfer or wrest it back by force” (Muller & Young, 2019, pp. 197-198). Muller and Young (2019) develop a more complex argument about the relationship of knowledge and power. Generally, educators are likely to recoil from initiating students into such elements as the language, accents and lifestyle of that culture. Others would contend more strongly that defining the curriculum and pedagogy around the dominant culture silences major questions around the purpose of education.

While Bourdieu’s theory is rich and developed, there are elements that have come under sustained criticism; in addition, some scholars have proposed ways in which concepts could be modified or reworked to more positive ends.

2.3.4.3 Other forms of habitus?

Various authors challenge Bourdieu’s insistence that educational inequality – the under-performance of working-class children that have access to the resources of schooling – is the result of their lack of cultural capital. While the focus of this study is not primarily on educational inequality, it is necessary to address this point as it goes to whether our educational systems are inherently violent. Goldthorpe (2007, 2010) challenges Bourdieu’s understanding of habitus and its relation to cultural capital on the basis of empirical evidence. There is ample evidence that goes beyond a few individual children who are able to use the resources of schooling to advance themselves to the heights of their professions (Bourdieu himself is frequently referred to as such an example by his critics). Goldthorpe argues further that, in the UK and France, for example, significant proportions of children from both skilled and unskilled working-class backgrounds achieved both educational and professional success (Goldthorpe, 2010) despite their lack of access to the cultural resources such as accent, linguistic codes, ways of deportment and clothing, etc., that Bourdieu describes as cultural capital. He acknowledges though that class inequalities in attainment continue to be major and persistent, arguing that elements are educational choices, the lack of information as how best to direct your studies and insufficient funds to pursue studies.

Nash (2005) addresses the same debate on the explanation of educational inequality by arguing for a cognitive habitus. He thus challenges Bourdieu's narrow formulation and argues instead for an understanding of 'the cognitive habitus as those active dispositions, the skills dedicated to classifying, remembering, concept formation, problem-solving, and so on, that at the heart of a productive sociology of cognitive development.' (ibid., p. 604). He argues that these aspects of the habitus can be developed and are not simply a reflection of the dispositions developed through socialisation. This approach is not narrowly cognitive, as Nash (ibid., p. 603) states: 'The concept of cognitive habitus is not intended to suggest that a sharp distinction can be maintained between cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions of thought.'

From a similar vantage point, Watkins (2018, p. 47) takes on what she refers to as 'Bourdieu's framing of pedagogy as symbolic violence'. Bourdieu insistently (Goldthorpe, 2007, p. 7) treats pedagogy purely as the transmission of a 'cultural arbitrary', which reproduces class relationships; pedagogy being seen as a process within family settings and not only within formal education. She argues (ibid., p. 48) that 'His concept of pedagogic action leaves little room for capacitation wherein, rather than the imposition of a cultural arbitrary, it could instead have the potential to equip individuals with the means for social access and transformation.' Like Nash, she argues that education has a significant role to play in developing the capacity of children from all backgrounds.

Watkins further identifies the major influence on educational theory (in particular within critical pedagogy) of Bourdieu's approach, which places the onus for educational inequality firmly on the school (though it could equally be argued that Bourdieu places the onus on working class families, given that the pedagogy within such settings also transmits a cultural arbitrary of its own, a point I return to below). She notes that attempts to locate part of the problem in what working-class children have not learnt has come to be seen purely as a 'deficit' approach; yet what of the responsibility of the school to provide what she (and Nash) would refer to as 'powerful knowledge' (Watkins, p. 49), knowledge that would enable social mobility and possibly even collective social action?

A very different line of attack comes from Yosso (2005), who writes from the perspective of critical race theory. She takes the view that I have just noted, that Bourdieu can be read as belittling the intellectual capabilities of working-class and black families (she does not refer to Bernstein, but one can assume that his work would be subject to similar ferocity). Specifically, she states (ibid., p. 76) that 'his theory of cultural capital has been used to assert that some

communities are culturally wealthy while others are culturally poor'. I am sure that Bourdieu would reject that as a representation of his own views, though possibly conceding that others may have misused his theory to do that and would indeed concur with Yosso that schools are functioning largely to reproduce social and educational inequality. Nor would he necessarily deny that there are other forms of cultural resources such as those that Yosso includes as forms of 'community cultural wealth' found in working class and black communities, such as aspirational capital, familial capital, social capital, navigational capital, resistant capital and linguistic capital (Yosso, 2005, p. 78). Bourdieu's argument would no doubt be that they are not included in his term 'cultural capital' because they are not the forms valued by the schools, those that serve to advance social and personal mobility. A stronger challenge from Yosso could be to demonstrate that, even if these resources are not valued by formal education, they do indeed serve to strengthen educational and professional achievement.

Yosso's argument against Bourdieu is that his description of cultural capital serves to advance a deficit view of marginalised communities. By identifying the assets that people bring to educational settings (whether or not they meet Bourdieu's criterion for inclusion in cultural capital), she makes a point that I think is valid about the recognition of resources and the significance and indeed complexity of what people bring to education. It has constantly struck me of how seldom black students speak of their linguistic resources within a formal education that relies almost exclusively on English; when I ask, I find that some students are proficient in four or five languages, and one could identify his familiarity with 11 languages.

Indeed, here a point made by Goldthorpe, (2007, p. 4) is relevant: 'What is here of central interest for Bourdieu is not just the factual distribution within society of resources of differing kinds but, further, the processes through which dominant classes effectively appropriate and monopolise these resources and use them to their own exclusive benefit – above all, in preserving their position of dominance in regard to subordinate classes.' One can argue, with him (ibid., p. 14) that 'even within more disadvantaged classes, with little access to high culture, values favouring education may still prevail and perhaps some relevant cultural resources exist.'

I would thus not use the term *cultural capital* in the way it is used by Bourdieu, because it imposes such a narrow view of 'what counts' in education. With Goldthorpe, I would rather use 'cultural resources', recognising that some count more than others for social mobility, some more than others in enabling social action, and some more than others in advancing peace.

2.4 VIOLENCE AS AN IMPACT ON CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT – DRAWING ON BRONFENBRENNER

In this section, I draw on the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979) to explore how violence may permeate different systems of society, thereby impacting on the lives and development of children and youth. His work, despite some specific limitations, provides a helpful resource for accounting for the different contexts impacted by violence. In the context of this chapter, its perspective brings together Galtung and Bourdieu’s very different theories.

Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) *ecological systems theory* sets out different interlocking systems. The aim is to account for the full range of impacts on an individual child’s development, from those in the immediate environment, such as family members, to those at the greatest level, such as climate change or major economic systems. In summary, these are the systems in the theory, with a brief description of each:

Micro-system	Immediate, intimate relationships, such as family and peer relationships
Meso-system	This is where different micro-systems interconnect on development of child
Exo-system	More indirect influences, such as the ways in which institutions affect development.
Macro-system	Overarching sphere including culture, political life, economy.
Time [chronosystem]	Changing dynamics over time in these systems

Table 2.1 Elements of ecological systems theory based on Bronfenbrenner (1979)

Below is how the model has been presented visually, as a set of nested systems; they are not discrete, as one system may directly affect others. For example, a child growing up in a context of war may experience disruption of the microsystem, mesosystem and exosystem.

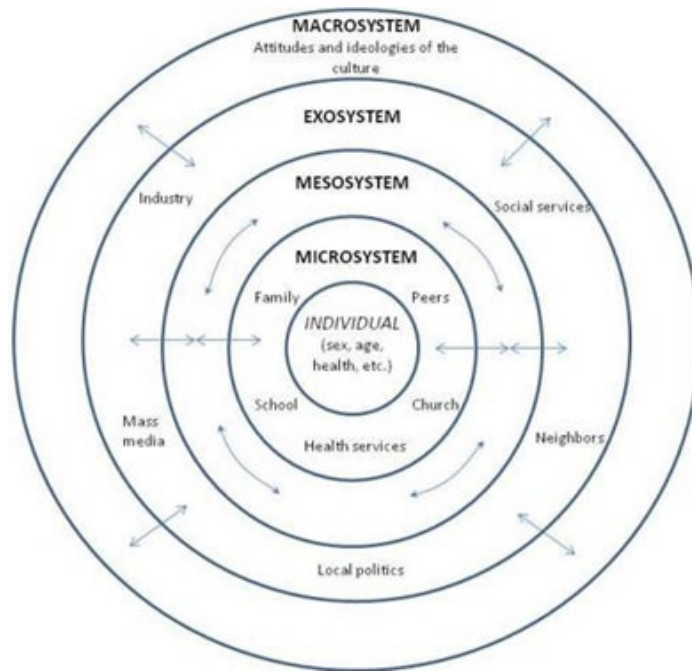


Figure 2.1 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Human Development (taken from Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017, p. 902) in Antony (2022)

In addition, Bronfenbrenner (1979) identifies three kinds of characteristics that the child presents to the social world. The first are demand characteristics – markers that tell others who we are, such as age, gender, and so on. The second are resource characteristics, such as cognitive, emotional and mental abilities, as well as the ability to draw on social and material resources. Thirdly, there are force characteristics, such as the child's drive, resilience and sense of self-efficacy.

Bronfenbrenner's model does not focus primarily on power or specifically on violence, though his description of each level gives ample examples of where the impacts of the exercise of power or of violence make a difference.

Recent work has drawn link between this model and the work of theorists of power such as Bourdieu (Houston, 2017) and of theorists of violence such as Galtung (Flynn & Matthias, 2023). These approaches are not so much critical of Bronfenbrenner as drawing attention to what his theory does **not** address. For example, Houston points out that, while Bronfenbrenner acknowledges the impact of relations of power, he does not, unlike Bourdieu, explain how power is exercised through these levels. 'it is not clear how power, ideology and socialization shape a person's consciousness, nor is there a consideration of the mechanisms that allow this to happen' (Houston, 2017, p. 60).

Houston (2017) argues that it is possible to make a practical alignment between Bronfenbrenner's theory and the work of Bourdieu. Their aims and starting points differ, but they are not fundamentally incompatible. He identifies four key points of comparison: first, both Bourdieu and Bronfenbrenner are concerned with the individual's cognitive world, though the former focuses more on how that world is shaped through relations of power. Both focus on the role of resources, with Bourdieu again more intent on delineating how differences in resources relate to differences in power. Bronfenbrenner's force characteristics are closely related to Bourdieu's understanding of agency, but Bourdieu sees this as either constrained by habitus or potentially impacting on habitus. Finally, Bourdieu's concept of field is similar to the meso- and macro-systems in Bronfenbrenner's theory.

Taken together, we can see how relationships within each system and between the systems may be characterised by violence or by peace. Flynn and Matthias (2023) extend these comparisons by drawing explicit links between the ecological systems theory and theorists of violence. Drawing on Galtung and Bourdieu, they identify three forms of violence – interpersonal (what Galtung would refer to as direct), structural and symbolic. Symbolic violence, as Bourdieu uses it, is very close to Galtung's concept of cultural violence (Galtung, 1990); both relate to the ways in which relations of power and violence become legitimised in the eyes not only of those who exercise them but in the eyes of those against whom power and violence are used.

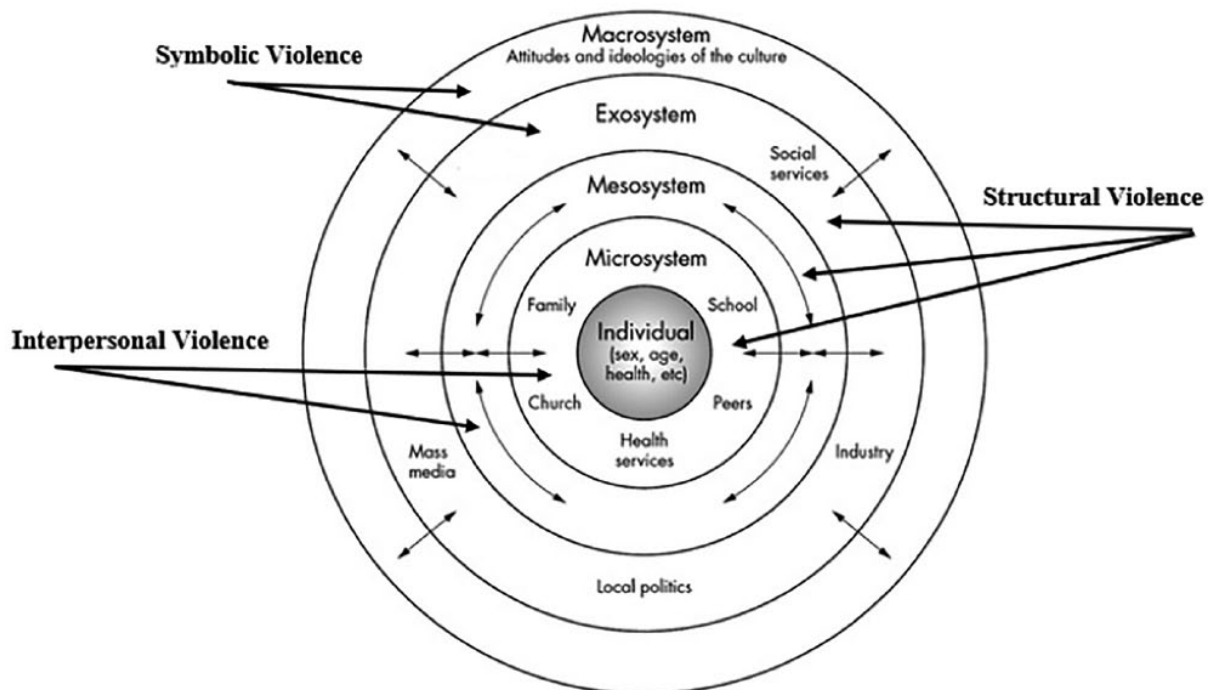


Figure 2.2 Revised Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. (Flynn & Matthias, 2023, p. 3)

They thus modify the familiar diagram by identifying those points where these three forms of violence appear. This modification draws on an empirical study of adolescents and young adults in deprived areas of Philadelphia, USA (Flynn and Matthias, 2023). The authors analyse the accounts of the participants to demonstrate how these young people experience and conceptualise violence. What emerges is a sense not only of the high levels of interpersonal violence but the continuity from one form of violence to another. The respondents' lives are shaped as much by cultural forces that privilege 'white' ways of being and acting as they are by gang violence, or by economic forces such as gentrification. Respondents also participate in the symbolic violence by internalising and reproducing society's judgements, for example, by judging themselves harshly for the situations they find themselves in.

In this approach, one has a sense of the constant interactions amongst the systems; for these young people, the interactions serve mainly to perpetuate violence. It is not as though they lack agency and resilience, but realistically their chances of impacting significantly on the institutions of the exosystem or on the economic and cultural working of the macrosystem are very constrained indeed, given the ways in which these systems interact to reinforce their subordination and exclusion. Flynn and Matthias (2023, p. 29) write, 'This adapted model not only illustrates how multiple forms of violence impact development but also shows how restricting the definition of violence to interpersonal, physical acts limits the impact of developed interventions and policies.' This is a significant point; our ways of addressing violence focus so strongly on curtailing direct violence, without giving significant attention to cultural norms, symbolic relations and systematic social and economic structures.

Similarly, with peace. Initiatives that make peace may permeate from one level to another. One attractive feature of the model is that it is not deterministic; we may imagine initiatives within one or other level that have impacts beyond that level.

2.4.1 Implications for education

In a society of chronic violence, such theorisation alerts us not only to how severe violence is but how thoroughly pervasive it is. We need education to provide a sense of alternatives for young people whose socialisation may have communicated that violence is inevitable, inherent and natural.

As with the discussion in Chapter 2 on Bourdieu, this discussion provides a sobering sense of the difficulties of thoroughgoing change and the ending of violence. However, the wide scope

of Bronfenbrenner's theory points also to the multiple points for potential action, at policy, institutional and group levels.

2.5 ZEMBYLAS AND THE CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL CAPITAL

Zembylas (2007) takes Bourdieu's work further in a way that is very relevant to pedagogies that advance peace. He adopts the key concepts of the theory but develops the idea of *emotional capital*: 'The concept of emotional capital offers a tool for thinking about the ways in which emotion practices are regulated within an educational context, based on emotion norms that may change but are also reproduced' (ibid., p. 444). As with other forms of capital in Bourdieu's theory, emotional capital can be exchanged for other forms of capital. Thus, access to the 'right' emotions can translate into access to social networks or to economic opportunity.

Zembylas adopts the view that 'affect is defined as something first experienced in the body and then named and re-experienced through social relations and culture.' (ibid. p. 445). These embodied responses are linked through social relations of meaning to form what we recognise as emotions, which are both within and between people. '...emotions are not *In* either the individual or the social, but produce the very surfaces and boundaries that allow the 'individual' and the 'social' to be delineated as such' (Ahmed, 2004, in Zembylas, 2007b, p. 446). Zembylas describes how the habitus brings together emotions, affect and embodiment to produce the 'embodied norms of everyday life.' (ibid., p. 446). Thus, habitus provides a way of understanding the social implications of emotions.

As Zembylas (ibid., p. 456) points out, one needs to distinguish his concept of emotional capital from such ideas as *emotional intelligence*, which he sees as a way of promoting certain emotional norms for functionalist purposes, stripping the concept of emotional capital of its critical significance. Indeed, he criticises the concept of emotional intelligence, which he describes as 'successful management through learning the appropriate emotional competencies – that is, controlling undesirable emotions and acquiring the desirable ones' (ibid., p. 456).

This approach raises further questions about the emotional elements within the habitus. For example, during apartheid, what emotions arose? And what emotion norms were in place? How were white people expected (and made) to feel? How were black people expected (and made) to feel? What emotions were not meant to be expressed? And what emotion norms were expected once the idea of the 'rainbow nation' was promoted?

Within education, Zembylas (ibid., p. 447) writes that emotion norms 'delineate a zone within which certain emotions are permitted and others are not permitted, and can be obeyed or

broken, at varying costs; they reflect power relations and thus are techniques for the discipline of habitus in the emotional expression and communication between teachers and students.’ In addition, the concept raises questions as to how teachers’ and students’ emotional practices may resist those of the prevailing norms.

Zembylas brings two important aspects into our thinking about habitus and capital. The first is that it provides a way of thinking critically through the ways in which emotions are evoked and normalised within an educational setting. The son of a friend, placed in a township school, phoned me surreptitiously from his high school classroom about some problem with money that he whispered to me. In the background I could hear the teacher’s voice and immediately recognised the tone of disapproval, disappointment and hopelessness that said so much about the expectations that permeate such contexts. I sensed the way in which the prevailing emotion norms of such contexts confirm the habitus of youngsters from the working class and the corresponding but not identical habitus of the teacher. As Zembylas (2007, p. 459) writes, ‘it seems that teachers’ and students’ emotional practices are profoundly influenced by their participation in particular affective economies in schools.’

Secondly, although he does not identify this, he breaks with what I refer to above as Bourdieu’s determinism. Learning is possible beyond the limitations of power relations, and education is restored as having some capacity for transformation, if not of the broader society, at least of its own context. The concept of emotional capital as he uses it helps to focus on such issues as how educators can work with resistance.

We thus emerge with Bourdieu modified. Bringing emotional capital into the framework directs attention to the ways in which the literature handles – or sidesteps – the issues of emotions and the evidence of the ways in which the researcher and the participants in the study work with emotion. For example, in the intervention phase of the study, where staff and students on the programme are exploring dialogues, emotions will inevitably be present in the relationships – recognising whether their role is productive or not of learning becomes an important element of the study.

2.6 PAULO FREIRE AND THE PEDAGOGY OF LIBERATION

The Brazilian educator Paulo Freire may be regarded as the initiator of what has come to be called critical pedagogy (Darder, Baldonado & Torres, 2009). From the outset, like Bourdieu, he focused on the role of education in social reproduction of an unjust society. However, against that, and in sharp distinction to Bourdieu, he held out a hopeful vision of education as

a weapon for social transformation (Freire, 1972/2005). His work provides an essential element in the theoretical framework on which I draw, though, as with Bourdieu, there are some significant limitations that need to be addressed.

2.6.1 *Oppression and violence*

While Freire's language constantly addresses oppression, he understands it as essentially caught up in violence. Thus, the roles of oppressed and oppressor are creations of violence; the implication is that peace would require the ending of oppression:

Any situation in which "A" objectively exploits "B" or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence, even when sweetened by false generosity, because it interferes with the individual's ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human. With the establishment of a relationship of oppression, violence has already begun. (Freire, 1972/2005, p. 53)

...dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed. (Freire, 1972/2005, p. 42)

Whether urbane or harsh, cultural invasion is thus always an act of violence against the persons of the invaded culture, who lose their originality or face the threat of losing it. (Freire, 1972/2005, p. 152)

Such a locating of violence within and in relation to systems of oppression brings Freire close to Galtung's portrayal of violence. Without using these specific terms, Freire invokes direct, cultural and structural elements in his conceptualisation of oppression. Correspondingly, then *liberation* assumes a link to an active sense of peace and nonviolence, though how this emerges in reality needs to be explored; it is not a task undertaken by Freire. He thus theorises oppression more directly than he theorises violence.

2.6.2 *Banking education*

Bourdieu's insistence on the role of education as a major vehicle for reproduction of the dominant social order is echoed by Freire's characterisation of educational systems as banking education, in which "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (Freire Institute, n.d.). The metaphor captures the central idea that knowledge generated by others is then bestowed or

deposited into the recipients, who are expected to be grateful for this act of charity. At some point, the student is called upon to present the knowledge back through assessment.

Crucially, even if the knowledge has some utility, the process normalises and confirms the relationships of power within the society. In a process that is inherently mystifying, the teacher is allocated the task of presenting ‘knowledge’ generated somewhere else to the student (Freire, 1972/2005). While for the oppressed this replicates their assumed powerlessness in relation to knowledge, a point seldom explored in relation to Freire’s work is how the schooling of the oppressor complements this, perhaps by inculcating a sense that you should be in charge and maybe that you will join the limited ranks of those who produce knowledge. This would be consistent with the notion of *internalised domination*.

Banking education thus does not exist in isolation from other sectors of society. The continuity between schooling and society starts with the internalised norms and practices of the family:

The parent-child relationship in the home usually reflects the objective cultural conditions of the surrounding social structure. If the conditions which penetrate the home are authoritarian, rigid, and dominating, the home will increase the climate of oppression. As these authoritarian relations between parents and children intensify, children in their infancy increasingly internalize the paternal authority... The atmosphere of the home is prolonged in the school, where the students soon discover that (as in the home) in order to achieve some satisfaction they must adapt to the precepts which have been set from above. One of these precepts is not to think. (Freire, 1972/2005, pp. 154-155)

This parallels Bourdieu’s description of *pedagogic work* (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 32). The authors refer to ‘the traditionalism of family PA [pedagogic work] which, entrusted with the earliest phase of upbringing, tends to realize more fully the tendencies of all PA...’

Here we find a strong intersection in the analysis by Gramsci (1971), Bourdieu (1977) and Freire (1972/2005). All three theorists concur regarding the significance of the dispositions developed in the family context; however, Freire focuses less on the specific advantages bestowed by membership of the dominant classes.

2.6.3 Freire’s radical humanism

In contrast to the structural pessimism of Bourdieu, who wrote somewhat later, Freire holds to the commitment that education has the potential to become a vehicle for humanity to achieve

a revolutionary self-realisation, using such terms as “transcendence,” “liberation” and “emancipation” (Aronowitz, 2012). “Man” (which is how he referred in his earlier work to humanity in general, despite its gendered limitations) has the opportunity to engage in self-transformation through *praxis*, which involves the combination of action with critical reflection (Freire Institute, n.d.), prefiguring the development of participatory action research.

While the major emphasis is on the possibility for the transformation of the lives and consciousness of the oppressed, those marginalised by society, this is an inclusive vision, as it holds out the possibility also for the oppressors to restore their humanity (Aronowitz, 2012). The oppressed can be mobilised through *conscientisation*, a process that may be initiated from outside but must be sustained through one’s own processes of critical reflection. Freire argued that the role of a vanguard group of activists – in this case, school or community educators – is limited (Aronowitz, 2012, p. 264). For Freire, the endpoint of a process of critical pedagogy could not be easily defined, as developments would emerge from an ongoing process of action and reflection by the oppressed themselves.

The ontology that underlies Freire’s thought is captured in the idea that humans are capable of ‘authentic humanity’. Oppression has both blighted lives and hidden our view of how humans could be. Freire’s pedagogy is thus a process of restoring in people a sense of their full humanity. He writes (Freire, 1990, p. 74), ‘The solution is not to “integrate” them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become “beings for themselves.”’

Where Bourdieu’s version of habitus makes so little space for an intrinsic and independent sense of one’s intellectual worth, Freire sees it demonstrated in the ‘good sense’ of people (Gramsci, p. 626), the understanding of life that comes a basic understanding of society from the experience of oppression. There is, it is asserted, a fundamental capacity for reasoning and communicating that is there, even though not fully expressed or organised.

However, the full expression of authentic humanity is denied the oppressed because the oppressor has seized control of their psyche. Here Freire is drawing on Fanon’s (1963) depiction of the colonised: ‘The counterpart to symbolic violence is *internal oppression* – the introjection of the oppressor into the psyche’ (Burawoy, 2012b, p. 6).

This is a process of dehumanisation afflicting both oppressed and oppressor (Freire, 2005, p. 44). Humanity thus fails to reveal its potential because of the ways in which relations of power

are inscribed into the psyche. The concept of *internalisation* is developed from Fanon and Freire in the approach of social justice education:

Oppression not only resides in external social institutions and norms but lodges in the human psyche as well (Fanon, 1968; Freire, 1970; Miller, 1976). Oppressive beliefs are internalized by victims as well as perpetrators. The idea that poor people somehow deserve and are responsible for poverty, rather than the economic system that structures and requires it, is learned by poor and affluent alike. Homophobia, the deep fear and hatred of homosexuality, is internalized by both straight and gay people. (Bell, 2007, p. 4)

Here there are strong similarities to Bourdieu's habitus:

... at first blush this is no different from Bourdieu's notion of social structure being inscribed on the body or internalized in the habitus. Yet, of course, whereas Bourdieu does not see how education could ever liberate the dominated, for Freire this is exactly the purpose of critical pedagogy. (Burawoy, 2012, p. 101)

At this point Freire diverges sharply from Bourdieu, as he makes far greater allowance for the transformative potential of education. Change is indeed possible, and Freire sets out the possibilities of an education for liberation.

2.6.4 Education for liberation

There are many points at which one could enter a discussion of the rationale for Freire's pedagogy, but here is one such point: 'When people lack a critical understanding of their reality, apprehending it in fragments which they do not perceive as interacting constituent elements of the whole, they cannot truly know that reality' (Freire, 1972/2005, p. 104).

Here Freire argues that his pedagogy enables students to reflect deeply on their social reality and thus to discern the systematic patterns that shape that reality, creating the basis for informed action. This requires engagement in a dialogical process: '...to present significant dimensions of an individual's contextual reality, the analysis of which will make it possible for him to recognize the interaction of the various components' (Freire, 1972/2005, p. 102).

This presentation though is not done through the teacher's direction. It relies on what Freire describes as a mutual and dialogical process between teacher and student. First, the teacher will with students identify a *generative theme* (Freire Institute, n.d.), such as problems with credit and debt. Starting with a 'code', a photograph or sketch showing a typical situation related to

this, students report experiences and generate questions with the teachers. In this exploration, there is movement between the concrete experiences and the abstract. Through this dialogue, students form new understandings – and in the process the teacher learns.

This approach has been largely relied upon within what came to be known as Freirean literacy classes; students would identify a key word (such as *favela* in Brazil) and then break it into its component syllables (a method better suited to Portuguese than to English), to construct new combinations. This process of exploring and recreating language communicated also the message of transformation; however, this is not a specific area of work I will explore further.

Freire emphasises that the students and teacher learn from each other: ‘The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach’ (Freire, 1972/2005, p. 80). This captures a dialogical relationship, in which knowledge is produced in mutuality. However, this does not deny the authority of the teacher. Rather, it distinguishes the authority of knowledge from the role of the teacher in banking education that assumes power over their students: ‘...the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students’ (Freire, 1972/ 2005, p. 73).

The teacher has a degree of authority over the content; however, there is an inherent limit to this in that the dialogical process may generate new understandings; at this point the teacher maintains the authority of holding the process but is also one who learns.

A central element in this approach is that it is ‘problem posing’:

...the practice of problem-posing education entails at the outset that the teacher-student contradiction to be resolved. Dialogical relations—indispensable to the capacity of cognitive actors to cooperate in perceiving the same cognizable object—are otherwise impossible. (Freire, 1972/2005, pp. 79-80)

A challenge in applying Freire in this study is perhaps that he does not specify sufficiently how this process connects to content. What is the role of the knowledge of the teacher – how are issues of content and disciplinary structures engaged with (Muller & Young, 2019)?

2.6.5 Freire and dialogue

For Freire, ‘Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world.’ (Freire, 1972/2005, p. 88). He expands further on this by showing how his concept extends beyond conversation towards a way of mutually constituting one another; in this,

dialogue is fully compatible with the African concept of ubuntu. Eze (2000, p. 190) refers to the relevant aspect of *ubuntu* as follows, ‘...my humanity is co-substantively bestowed upon the other and me,’ and Freire’s thinking is consistent:

If it is in speaking their word that people, by naming the world, transform it, dialogue imposes itself as the way by which they achieve significance as human beings. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity. And since dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized, this dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one persons "depositing" ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be "consumed" by the discussants. (Freire, 1972/2005, pp. 88-89)

The perspective informs the notion of dialogue within this study and gives greater clarity to what we understand by ‘facilitator’ as the person enabling this process. It is a process both of communicating openly across the inevitable differences between people and of affirming their humanity:

For Freire, dialogue is not just a descriptive category but also an ethical, axiological and ontological one. Dialogue is something that characterizes authentic human beings and their relationships as they strive to become, as they engage in their ontological vocation of being human. (Rule 2011, p. 9)

Central to this study is the concept of dialogue as a means of building peace and as a means to learning at a deep level. Rule (2004) has drawn on Freire and Bakhtin to develop the ‘notion of a “dialogic space.” He writes (2004, p. 320) ‘The notion of dialogic space has generative possibilities for understanding the role of an emancipatory adult education that seeks to empower marginalised groups.’ This concept is relevant to the consideration of the space within which the work of this proceeded.

2.6.6 Limitations and qualifications

One of the difficulties in being critical about Freire is that his language is often so sweeping and evocative, rather than carefully defined. Thus, I find it hard to locate a sustained criticism of his approach because, as authors often write, it encompasses too much in its imprecision.

One of the recurring criticisms comes from both those sympathetic to his critical stance and those who question it; it is that the apparent egalitarianism is at odds with the implicit superiority of knowledge of the educator, who understands society better than the ‘oppressed’ who are being taught. He thus becomes accused of a veiled authoritarianism, as his method

seems designed to bring students to the analysis that the educator had in mind all along. A cogent criticism of this form of critical pedagogy comes from Ellsworth (1993, p. 308), who writes that “‘emancipatory authority’ also implies, according to Shor and Freire, a teacher who knows the object of study ‘better’ than do the students...’ She argues that students may understand issues like racism far better than teachers who come from relatively privileged backgrounds. She notes that ‘oppressive formations and power relations... refuse to be theorized away or fully transcended in a utopian resolution.’ (ibid., p. 308), a reference to how such educators may exhibit a misplaced confidence in their authority.

A criticism that has similarities, in that it points to what may be seen as Freire’s blind spots, comes from hooks (2014, p.49), “There has never been a moment when reading Freire that I have not remained aware of not only the sexism of the language but the way he (like other progressive Third World political leaders) constructs a phallogocentric paradigm of liberation wherein freedom and the experience of patriarchal manhood are always linked as though they are one and the same. For me this is always a source of anguish for it represents a blind spot in the vision of men who have profound insight.” Indeed, what ‘liberation’ consists of is insufficiently explored, apart from the sense, that I believe is truly there, of the free-flowing intellectual engagement with the world – a sense that is perhaps equally captured in educational philosophers like Dewey (2008).

Indeed, in the 1970s and 1980s, Freire’s influence swept through those in radical opposition to apartheid, as indicated clearly in Biko’s testimony in court (Biko, 2005). The difficulty of maintaining clarity on this point was well illustrated in the language of activists whom I encountered at this time who, influenced by Freire as a prophet of revolution, spoke of ‘conscientising people’, which I observed as consisting of telling the oppressed what oppression and the true path of liberation consisted of. It is a reasonable criticism to make that the theory arrived in ways that did not promote critical self-awareness.

Further criticisms are that Freire’s work is self-contradictory, veering between materialism and idealism. For example, Elias and Merriam (1980, p. 153) write that ‘Freire has valiantly attempted to avoid the idealist position, but it appears that he does not succeed. His theory of conscientization depends on some sort of transcendent view of reality through which individuals come to see what is real and authentic.’

Bourdieu would argue vehemently about the ease with which Freire writes of transformation. Burawoy (2012, p. 115) points out, ‘Bourdieu and Passeron are contemptuous of those who

harbor the illusion that schooling can be a “mechanism of change” capable of “creating discontinuities” and “building a new world”. Indeed, Freire elides revolution and education without bringing into critical focus how education is intended to change society. Burawoy, however, argues that one can find a resolution between the two divergent positions in Gramsci, who ‘would call for the common school as part of a war of position in civil society, forging intellectuals who are equally at home with legitimate culture and the culture of the dominated class.’ (Burawoy, *ibid.*, p. 117). A key element is the creation of an inclusive culture for the school, a collective discipline. At times in the resistance to apartheid, as Burawoy points out, educational institutions were crucibles of opposition to apartheid; I recall how such opposition at times involved deeper engagement with reading and theoretical debate, for example in the role played by Rick Turner at my alma mater.

Such criticisms are reminders to take Freire not always at face value. What I take from Freire though is the spirit of enthusiasm for engagement, the recognition of the thinking and valued experience of students, and the sense that knowledge is created in deep interaction between teacher and student. Though simplistic at times, Freire communicates a sense of hope that is missing in Bourdieu.

Finally, Kester and Cremin (2017, p. 1420) assert the need:

...to move from Galtungian scientific analysis and Freirian first-order reflexivity to second-order (and embodied) reflexivity that draws on Bourdieu. It is only through second-order reflexivity that structural and symbolic violence within, through, and by scholars in the field becomes fully visible.

Their argument is one that is developed further in the next chapter; that educators need to interrogate in greater depth ways in which even projects of peace education may unwittingly reproduce what they have internalised about themselves in ways that unintentionally promote symbolic violence.

2.7 WHAT THE FRAMEWORK MEANS FOR THIS STUDY.

Given the areas of contradiction (or simply differing areas of focus) within these theories, it is necessary to review the framework and consider how they will influence the design and methods of the study. I here identify six salient points.

2.7.1 Critical paradigm

What all four theorists have in common is an understanding that the human society that we currently experience is inherently oppressive and violent, and that our theories should be directed towards recognising the significance of that, identifying how this is held in place and opening the possibilities for action. For Bourdieu, this window of opportunity into ‘possibilities for action’ is barely open, but Zembylas and Freire restore a sense of how change towards a peaceful world may become possible.

A corollary of this is that such a judgement must rest on some vision of a society that is fundamentally at odds with the present, what Freire refers to as ‘revolutionary futurity’ (Aronowitz, 2012, p. 260). We could not as South Africans brought an end to apartheid without visions of an alternative (the visions were not identical, but all contained common elements of a society not organised around race). Adoption of this framework entails that I adopt a critical paradigm in which there are – or that I work towards achieving – implicit or explicit norms for what would constitute liberation and peace. A requirement of a programme to develop educators for peace is that it needs to foster the necessary imagination of such possibilities.

A further corollary is for the ontology and epistemology of the study – while affirming the human capacity for good, we make a fundamental assumption that injustice and violence have impaired both that capacity and our ability to recognise it. In a violent society, we see readily human practices that enact harm against oneself, other humans and the rest of nature; the critical paradigm invites us to question whether such practices have been driven by the experience of violence and the loss of hope. Beyond that there lies a more hopeful vision of how humans can be.

2.7.2 Education as socially located

Inescapably, education is part of society and is shaped by society; both Bourdieu and Freire acknowledge that the process of learning that begins within the family, what Bourdieu calls *pedagogic work*, is crucial to inculcating the dispositions that form the habitus:

Another element of pedagogic action is pedagogic work, which includes a process of inculcation which must last long enough to produce a durable training, i.e. a habitus – ingrained dispositions. (Ağın, 2018, p. 26)

Bourdieu theorises this further by his concept of field of practice; education is a field of practice but situated within and consistent with the broader field of power relations, the stance adopted also by Zembylas (2007). While Galtung is not an educational theorist, he has written about

education as structural violence that follows the ‘usual forms’ of such violence in society (Galtung, 2008, p. 51).

None of these theorists assume that education is a sphere separate from the rest of society; indeed, all recognise the capacity of education to reflect and reproduce the values and practices of the dominant society. Should education for peace simply note this – or are there reasons to create education as a space that has significant differences?

A key area of division is that of the capacity of education to transform society. This is a matter of fundamental importance for the study. Bourdieu, as has been seen, directly denies the transformative potential of education, seeing it primarily as an instrument for social reproduction of existing class relations. In particular, he dismisses the notion of progressive education as delusional. In contrast, Freire holds out a sense of transformation that is almost glib. This divergence pushes the study towards a sceptical view about transformation and a desire not to use the term loosely. We may speak about *transformative education*, but the use of such terms needs to be framed by clarity as to what is being transformed and to what extent.

2.7.3 Recognising how habitus becomes embodied and entrenched

A fundamental problem to be addressed is this: the great difficulty in transforming the habitus. Bourdieu may be guilty of over-emphasising the difficulty, but he provides strong evidence that the habitus is built up systematically over a long period of time and reworking it is slow and potentially tortuous. It is this recognition that enables him to achieve such a strong sense of the continuity of structure and agency. Agency that challenges the structures of society is of course possible, but the inexorable operation of the habitus easily leads one into a belief that you are achieving radical change when you may simply be acting within the constraints of society, misrecognising what is taking place. Here Zembylas is helpful in bringing in the role of emotions in habitus; giving greater insight into where we search for evidence of change.

2.7.4 Recognition of the nature and extent of violence in society

Collectively, the theorists provide a cautionary tale that we may constantly under-recognise the full extent of violence in society. In a society such as that of South Africa, where violence is constantly normalised, it is important to revisit theory that serves to identify points of violence that may otherwise be missed, a point consistent with that set out in 3.6.1.

Violence is always potentially present in educational contexts. This directs attention in the processes of data generation and in analysis to moments of tension, resistance and emotion and the need to question what form/s violence is taking.

2.7.5 The significance of context

A particular point is the need to recognise the role of history and geography in shaping the context in which the study takes place. We cannot fail to notice how Freire's work speaks to the context within which he operated, a context much closer to that of South Africa than to France. Similarly, Galtung's comment (see 2.2.3) about education reflects a context that has become much less violent than the South African context. Burawoy makes this point, in relation to Bourdieu, about how concepts are shaped by geography and history:

That might have led him to discover how symbolic domination operates differently in Algeria and France, even distinguishing domination in the colony from that in the metropolis. (Burawoy, n.d, p. 17)

While these theories all speak ultimately to general issues in violence, peace and pedagogy, it is necessary for the study to provide a clear contextual background to enable informed judgements to be made.

2.7.6 The role of the educator

Both Bourdieu and Freire focus on the educator and the relationship between educator and student. As described above, Freire has been criticised for his lack of sufficient critical engagement with the role of the educator, claiming an emancipatory potential that may well be at odds with the educator's assumed location in the dominant classes – though it is true that he does acknowledge the problem. Much South African educational debate fails to draw attention to the significance of this aspect, a limitation that I should address in this study.

2.8 CONCLUSION

As I work on this chapter, I am aware of how some key assumptions have been brought to the surface in my thinking – for example, what the limitations are to 'transformative education'. The chapter has been an attempt to sharpen the focus of the study and to search for some of the difficulties that confront the project. Reviewing in far greater depth than I have in the past has brought me to a far more critical and nuanced understanding of the work of these four theorists.

What has shifted most for me is in gaining a more critical view of what, exactly, we think is being 'transformed' when we write of transformative teaching. Another is the need to focus on how we create a benign and peaceful order in a context that is both violent and disorganised, a context in which there are in fact ample opportunities for agency but in which people cannot see how to organise themselves for change towards peace.

As indicated at the outset, the theories should cohere to some extent at least; the one sharp divergence has been regarding the potential of education to bring change. It is the task thus of the rest of the study to push against those limits.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: VIOLENCE AND PEACE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature reviewed for this study spans a wide range, drawing on two areas of scholarship that are each inter-disciplinary, relating to violence and peace, and to education. Given the wide scope of this study, these two areas are handled separately, in chapters 3 and 4, with the necessary connections being made where appropriate.

According to Fink (2020), a literature review should do the following:

- Give a new interpretation of old material or combine new with old interpretations,
- Trace the intellectual progression of the field, including major debates,
- Depending on the situation, evaluate the sources and advise the reader on the most pertinent or relevant research, or
- Usually in the conclusion of a literature review, identify where gaps exist in how a problem has been researched to date.

Similarly:

A literature review is a piece of academic writing demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the academic literature on a specific topic placed in context. A literature review also includes a critical evaluation of the material; this is why it is called a literature review rather than a literature report. (University of Edinburgh, 2022)

In accordance with this, these two chapters will seek to set the scholarship around violence and peace that extends the foundations laid in the theoretical framework and applies the understandings to what we know about education for peace. It focuses in particular on theorising violence and peace in the context of the study. The argument developed here will help to inform the intervention that is part of the action research design, the methods for collection of data and its analysis.

The research questions for this study are these:

1 In a context of historical violence and oppression, how should understandings of context, of students and of ourselves inform a pedagogy for teacher education that aims to build peace and forge justice?

2 How should these understandings and pedagogy translate into a specific project for teacher education that aims to build peace and forge justice?

An essential requirement for this chapter must then be to explore how we understand violence and peace. We need theoretical clarity, first, on what we define as violence. The stance I take here is that peace is best thought about after we have analysed the nature of violence (a distinction consistent with Gandhi's use of the terms *himsa* and *ahimsa*; see Rajmohan, 1996), so most of this chapter will address violence before proceeding to explore peace and nonviolence. I will further explore the significance of this issue at that point. Secondly, the chapter will address how violence is reproduced at personal, interpersonal and societal levels, enabling interventions intended to build peace to be more focused and effective. From the outset, I attempt to problematise the common-sense, and, in my view, often dangerous notions of violence. I grew up in the context of apartheid, where resistance to wrongful and oppressive authority was described as violence and even as terrorism; it was also a context in which great violence was being done to people in ways that were not referred to as violent but simply as a necessary process of governance, even benign governance. The ways in which people fashion their understanding of what is violence and what is peace have powerful implications.

The chapter will first consider definitions of violence, then review the concept of chronic violence. It then explores how our understanding of violence and of peace has developed through the work of theorists and activists. It will not attempt an exhaustive review of the full work of each scholar but will rather limit the focus to those aspects of theory that may inform the concerns of this study. It will conclude by setting out those principles related to violence and peace that will be drawn on in the study.

3.2 DEFINING VIOLENCE

For the purposes of this study, it is necessary to explore how violence impacts both on education and on the broader society. As indicated in Chapter 1, our understanding of what constitutes violence has become more nuanced, more complex and more contested through theoretical development in the last century. The WHO definition of violence (WHO, 1996) is as follows:

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.

This definition extends well beyond the conventional image of assault or homicide. First, it includes the idea of threat, with the implication that no-one can claim to be nonviolent when they rely on people's fear of violence. Secondly, it assesses violence in terms of both the *intention* to use physical force and power and the *consequences* of using physical force and power. These consequences extend beyond direct, evident physical harm to include psychological harm. Moreover, they include the lack of capacity of people to achieve certain norms of development and well-being. Thirdly, it emphasises intentionality, which I will argue below is overly restrictive.

Gilligan makes a point in judging what constitutes violence, by including the results of negligence (1996, p. 98):

...whether it is caused by deliberate, conscious intention or by careless disregard and unconcern for the safety of oneself or others.

Here, Gilligan holds responsible those who did not exactly intend violence but should have known the likely effects of their use of violence, a point made similarly below by Ciulla (2004).

Often a distinction is made between physical violence and other forms of violence, such as emotional. This distinction made lead into an idea that certain forms of violence are not embodied, perhaps feeding of the Western dualism between body and mind. However, Harvey (2023), who reviews literature on trauma and literature on pain, writes that "...pain and non-pain somatisation arising from trauma, metabolic disturbance, infection, or non-infective inflammation may persist maladaptively in a fearful environment." If this is correct, then, even if we distinguish structural and cultural violence from direct violence, following Galtung (1969, 1990), then all violence has a somatic impact.

While generally people agree that physical assault, rape and killing of people are acts of violence, there is less consensus over 'resulting in... psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.' What constitutes psychological harm may be interpreted in divergent ways, while maldevelopment and deprivation require some notion of specific norms against which they could be measured. A criticism can be that the process of getting to such norms is unclear (Lawler, 1989), including criticism that these norms may be culturally exclusive. To push to an extreme level, if someone refers to lack of material gifts from a partner as 'deprivation', given the norms of consumerist society, this trivialises the concept of violence.

However, much popular speech does not take into account even the most immediate forms of violence. Collins, in his work on violence in South Africa (Collins, 2013b; Collins & Plüg, 2020), argues that popular, official and even research discourse constructs highly selective understandings of violence that exclude actions that are seen as justifiable, legitimate or even necessary, even though they would clearly be defined as violence, following the WHO definition. In a society in which many forms of violence have been normalised, one encounters terms like ‘discipline’, to avoid the negative connotations of ‘violence’. So, people contend that an adult hitting a child, or a man beating his intimate partner is not ‘violence’; it is ‘discipline’. Such common practice sidesteps the question of what violence is by using the word selectively for those forms of violence the speaker regards as justified. In contrast, those attempting to maintain a consistent and critical view of violence, from Gandhi and Fanon onwards, vary about what constitutes justifiable violence, but still name it as violence.

I take the WHO definition as the starting point for the exploration of the understandings of violence argued by key theorists. From here, I explore the concept of chronic violence and argue that this applies to the context in which I write and that this has further implications for this work.

Next, I turn to two specific theorists whose work was a response to the violence of colonialism in Africa. The first is Mohandas Gandhi. His life and work have towered over our understanding of violence and peace internationally and even more over the context of my work. Gandhi’s development as an activist for nonviolence took place in the context of colonial violence, the specific context into which I was later born. His work can be understood as a comprehensive response to that violence. My brothers and I first visited his family at Gandhi settlement in Phoenix in 1968 and became aware of his significance, captured in what was then still in place, the humble house in what was at the time still a somewhat rural environment. The centre that I have led was established directly within the Gandhian tradition, an initiative led by Ela Gandhi, his granddaughter, herself a campaigner against oppression and violence. His thought and activism have informed much of the resistance to apartheid and current non-violent practice, apart from his global influence.

The second theorist with whom I engage is Frantz Fanon, whose thought developed in the context of a violent war of anti-colonial resistance and colonial repression. Through his influence on Paulo Freire (1972/2005) and also on Steve Biko, his perspectives have been a powerful influence on those working both violently and non-violently for change. Of particular

value is how he used the concept of internalisation to provide a description of how people come to accept or reject relationships of violence.

I deal more briefly with the implications for violence of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979), which was presented more fully in the last chapter, then the social learning approach of Bandura (1971), draw in the perspective provided by James Gilligan (1997), and end my review by exploring the theorisation of the nature of violence in South African society provided by Collins (2013b) and by Collins and Plüg (2020).

3.2.1 Chronic violence

A fundamental point for this study is that the context in which this work takes place is one that can be described as being of *chronic violence*. Writing of the ways in which violence is present in war-related, state, neighbourhood, school and family contexts within countries in Latin America, Pearce (2007, p. 7) states:

The persistent and recurring character of these violences, measured across three dimensions of time, space and levels of intensity, suggest that they could be called 'chronic'.

Pearce's analysis of chronic violence is consistent with the work of both Galtung and Bourdieu; in particular she relies on Bourdieu.

The definition Pearce (2007, p. 54) provides is as follows:

Chronic violence is present where rates of violent death are at least twice the average for high and low income countries respectively; where these levels are sustained for five years or more and where frequent acts of violence not necessarily resulting in death, are recorded across several socialisation spaces, including the household, the neighbourhood, the school, inter community and the nation state public space (which brings in disproportionate, sanctioned and non-sanctioned acts of violence attributed to state security forces). (Pearce, 2007, p. 54)

There is ample evidence that the South African context is one of chronic violence, according to the criteria set out by Pearce. Homicide rates, including those related to gender, continue to be very high. Acts of violence are common in all sectors. Responses by security services are often inadequate and sometimes brutal.

Specifically, as reported in chapter 1, rates of violent deaths are indeed very high for low-income countries and sustained over a long period of time. The extent of violence in our context is demonstrated by the Numbeo (2023) crime index, which ranks Durban as the third most crime-ridden city in the world. Crime pervades different sectors. “In a 2007 review of violent crime in South Africa compared with elsewhere in the world, Altbeker concluded that ‘South Africa ranks at the very top of the world’s league tables for violent crime.’” (Kaminer & Eagle, 2010, p. 6).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2019) reports the femicide rate of 2.2 per thousand, five times higher than the international average. Similarly, in education there is ample evidence of the extent of direct violence. Two major studies on violence in schools set out the prevalence of violence in schools. Leoschut and Burton (2013), in a major study, report that 12.2% of learners had been threatened with violence, 6.3% had been assaulted, 4.7% had been sexually assaulted or raped and 4.5% had been robbed at school. A different study (Mncube & Harber, 2013), using different questions (such as including corporal punishment) reported that 55% of learners had experienced one or other form of violence at schools. As reported in chapter 1, there is ample evidence also of violence within higher education.

The forms that violence can take in a South African school is illustrated by the experiences of someone I had worked with – an experience that became a central element in one of our sessions. At our university, I was asked to assist two male students in dealing with experiences of homophobia. One of them, Mthokozisi Lembethe (he wishes me to use his actual name) offered to assist ICON with various project, including filming interviews, and even volunteered to work with me on visits to rural schools to work with young people in schools on the issues of violence. He then studied an education qualification and secured a post in a rural primary school. At this school, he clearly worked hard and was well regarded by learners and parents, as well as the then school principal. On day two male colleagues with whom he seldom interacted suggested they go out together on the Friday evening, in his car. Mthokozisi agreed. Early in the evening the two got into his car and he went into the driver’s seat. At that moment the car door opened, and a gunman fired four bullets into him, hitting his mouth, abdomen and legs. The two men jumped out and ran off; fortunately, community members heard the commotion and raced to get him to the nearest hospital, as an ambulance would have taken too long. His life was saved. I heard nothing of this for a long time; he was not able to speak for some time and gradually regained his ability to walk. A cell phone video of him returning to the school for the first time shows the learners coming out of their classrooms, clapping and

singing to him. In contrast, one of the two teachers left the area the day after the shooting and the other would not speak to him. What led to the shooting, in his view, was that a promotion post was becoming available, and he would have been well placed to secure it and was thus a threat to some teachers. The police made a wholly inadequate investigation, not even interviewing the two teachers who had arranged the evening.

Traumatised by these events, Mthokozisi felt unable to continue at that school and managed to get a transfer to a township high school in the Durban area. He was allocated a class to teach that included the youngsters with the greatest behavioural problems – those involved in drugs and crime, for example. He told me that his job was to make them feel that education was of benefit even to them and made his lessons as productive as possible. He has though been undermined by his line manager at the school, who tells others that he is soft because he is gay and refuses to use corporal punishment (which is illegal in South Africa but continues in some areas). Other teachers walk around with a plastic pipe that they use to hit learners.

This account illustrates the various ways in which violence plagues much South African education – homophobia (Bhana, 2012, 2014; Morrissey, 2013; Shabane, 2023), corporal punishment (Burton & Leoschut, 2013; Mncube & Harber, 2013), even assassination (news24.com, 2022; South African Government, 2023). There are further media reports of how violence permeates other sectors. One striking example was from a course I taught on social justice issues with adults. I had asked them to identify different social groups in terms of which are granted privilege or are discriminated against. In terms of race, class, gender and sexuality, etc., there were no surprises. However, the assertion was made that Christians were discriminated against. This was a bit bewildering; despite a rigorously egalitarian South African Constitution, in reality the only religious holidays that are public holidays are Christian, as just one example. The class then clarified that Christians are subject to greater violence, as churches are sometimes places of open physical violence between competing groups.

Recent work by Von Holdt (2022), in an inaugural lecture, takes ahead the theorisation of violence in the South African context, though one that he sees as characteristic of violence in other parts of the global South and even in the global North. He draws on Bourdieu but challenges his emphasis on social order, pointing to the chaotic and disordered nature of South African violence, as against Bourdieu's insistence on the durability of the social order (Bourdieu, 1977). Von Holdt ascribes violence to the process of elite formation underway with

new forces compete for places; in the process, people try to capture whatever resources they can commandeer. Instead of playing by the rules of the game for that particular field (education, religion, politics, business, and so on), in one social site, people may well be playing on different fields and thus with different sets of rules simultaneously. Thus, what purports to be religion or higher education may in fact be occupied by multiple fields of practice such as patriarchy, politics and business. This unpredictability is unnerving, as instead of well-understood adjacent fields of practice, horizontally organised, there are vertical layers that interpenetrate each other. Von Holdt (2022) refers to the contrast between the singular logic of a field of practice in Bourdieu's theory with the 'multiple, contradictory logics' of different fields simultaneously. He argues that 'violence is intrinsic to order making and order breaking in society'; new orders are being constructed and both old and new orders are being demolished.

There is, though, a striking exception that he cites, a case he calls Bokfontein, fully described in Langa (2011). An impoverished community with a history of violence was supported in moving into ways of dialogue, leading into an explicit ethic of nonviolence. Conflicts or potential conflicts are resolved through inclusive ways of discussion. Von Holdt (2022) refers to this as an 'alternative order from below that offers some idea, some notion of what a different future might look like' He draws comparisons with other initiatives in South Africa, such as Fees Must Fall, or black feminism, or working with notions of intersectionality.

The implications of this for addressing violence and promoting peace need further exploration. Von Holdt makes explicit connections with scholarship in Latin America. One example would be that of Adams (2012), who draws on her work in Central America. She (Adams, 2012, p. 1) sets out a series of propositions regarding chronic violence. She argues that:

Chronic violence is

Provoked and reproduced by multiple factors, from social inequality to disjunctive democratisation

Becomes embedded in multiple social spaces, undermines social relations and provokes destructive behaviours that become perverse norms among vulnerable populations, some of which can be transmitted intergenerationally and

Obstructs and undermines public engagement, citizenship and social support for democracy.

The term ‘disjunctive democratisation’ rings true; in our context where we have all the formal processes of government protected by law, but also major failings in the democratic process, with practices clearly driven by corruption and gross mismanagement. People pay for services that are not provided. Further, social inequality is extremely high; South Africa has the world’s highest Gini coefficient, at 0.63 (World Bank, 2020).

The term ‘social spaces’ needs further comment. Pearce, (2007, p. 7) writes of ‘socialisation spaces, including the household, the neighbourhood, the school, inter community and the nation state public space.’ As explored in chapter 2, with Bourdieu’s notion of pedagogic work (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1975, p. 102), education works with and further influences the ways that young people have been socialised. Yet if education is itself a site for violence, the challenge this study faces needs further thought; how does one develop educators for peace in an *immediate* context that is not free from violence?

Adams (2012) explores further the ways in which chronic violence operates. For the purposes of this study, her recommendations for change are significant. She sets out two such propositions:

Chronic violence must be addressed through intersectoral and interdisciplinary approaches.

Chronic violence obliges stakeholders to engage in an unprecedented process of interdisciplinary and intersectoral learning, exchange and experimentation in order to construct effective approaches (Adams, 2012, p. 7).

It is readily possible to demonstrate how South Africa qualifies as a society of chronic violence, given the data set out in chapter 1 and above. The origins of that violence are seen by Mamdani (2021) as critically intertwined with its colonial and subsequent apartheid history. He refers to South Africa as the site for ethnic cleansing, “where white settlers forced blacks into tribal homelands known as Bantustans’ (Mamdani, 2021, p. 4), through the creation of reserves in what was then 19th Century Natal predated the later apartheid description of ‘Bantustans’. This violence is not unique to South Africa, but is an element of those societies that followed the path of colonisation, from the United States onwards:

I seek to understand colonization as the making of permanent minorities and their maintenance through the politicization of identity, which leads to political violence—in some cases extreme violence (Mamdani, 2020, p. 18).

The purpose of this section, though, is not to focus so much on the *why*, the prior causes of violence, as on the *how* of the present reproduction of violence. Mamdani argues that the undoing of the violence of conquest and of the subsequent attempts to continue the subjugation of people is the *unmaking* of the identities that were essentialised in the colonial project – white, Indian, Coloured, Zulu, Xhosa, etc. He writes approvingly of the way in which South Africa in its constitution-making process sought to recognise inhabitants not as perpetrators and victims, but as survivors, ready to forge a new and more inclusive society. Possibly this account is too optimistic for the South African context – we need explanations for how, despite the evident strengths of the society, violence remains so intense – but it points to an important point: the need to forge new processes and new identities, prefigured by Fanon: ‘For Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man[sic]’ (Fanon, 1963, p. 316).

How we develop such ‘new concepts’ within education is at the heart of this thesis. Suffice it here, though, to state that we are not expecting educators to take on all the chronic violence of the society. What Adams (2012) proposes indicates the approach to learning that is necessary within an education system in this context – collaborative, open-ended and one that promotes effective agency towards peace.

A high priority must be that the space of engagement should itself be free of violence, both to enable participants to attend without tension to the issues being dealt with and as a model of how humans can interact – a model that may be lacking elsewhere.

Coady (1999) is critical of what he terms ‘wide’ approaches to violence, ‘those which “include[e] within the extension of the term ‘violence’ a great range of social injustices and inequalities”’ (Wyckoff, 2006). He argues that the strategy for addressing direct violence may not be the same as those used for indirect or structural violence. The need for there to be no threats to physical safety in an educational environment may seem so obvious as not to need attention, but, in reality, we know that some educational environments do not guarantee that. A further need is to address cultural violence, which poses its own challenges, as those participating are not likely to be familiar with such a concept.

3.3 NORMALISATION OF VIOLENCE

To understand what the significance of violence is – and to try to clarify what then constitutes peace – we have to engage critically with the ways in which violence is popularly understood in a society of chronic violence such as South Africa. What is it that we understand that *we* are

dealing with – and, when we communicate, as in education, about violence and peace, what is it that *others* understand that we are dealing with?

Here the work of Collins (2013b) is salient. He points out that what bedevils South African thinking about violence, across various strata of society, is that ‘There are many forms of violence that are socially accepted and are commonly understood as benign, necessary, justifiable, below the threshold of criminality, or not recognised as violence at all.’ (Collins, 2013b, p. 2). While the popular understanding of violence is that it is a subset of ‘crime’, this is shaped through the focus on images of spectacular violence. He argues that popular anxieties about crime are themselves related to hidden forms of victimisation:

Violence is... widely seen as an appropriate and effective way of regulating interpersonal relationships. It is understood as an essential tool for raising children, a useful disciplinary technique in educational institutions, an acceptable strategy in pursuing sexual encounters, an indispensable resource in intimate relationships, and an effective way of establishing social status... [There is an assumed] ...imagined clear boundary between the non-violence of decent law-abiding citizens and the violence of antisocial criminals. (Collins, 2013b, p. 3)

Collins thus (2013b) argues for a focus on how socially acceptable forms of violence connect with what people regard as criminal violence. It would require addressing such issues as corporal punishment, for example.

In subsequent work (Collins & Plüg, 2020), the authors explore the ways in which social discourse shapes *meanings* of violence, as they review a case in which two entirely innocent men were beaten to death by a vengeful group of apparently normal citizens under the immediate and untested misapprehension that one was up to some vile crime. Thus, there are multiple ways in which violence is interwoven into the lives of South Africans; in addition, its use is constantly rationalised and made to seem necessary and inevitable. They conclude as follows:

...the problem outlined here is not one of criminality, but of the construction of ‘good subjects’ of violence: ordinary people whose social worlds have produced conditions of violence and normalised it as an everyday strategy in many different ways, and who have come to accept as routine the use of ‘good’ violence in their lives, only to be horrified when it inevitably escalates into exactly the kind of violence they are trying to avoid. (Collins & Plüg, 2020, p. 160)

This account fits well with the notion of chronic violence. We are confronted with the immediacy of violence in which Enlightenment ideas of rational, autonomous citizens using violence only under conditions of threat to their life fade into irrelevance. However, this understanding points to the possibilities for educational processes that shift from opportunities for punishment towards self-awareness and responsibility.

An impulse towards peace is thus not enough; under conditions of trauma, stress and misinformation, it can become part of the enactment of violence. It needs to engage with a critical awareness of self and society.

This section has addressed the definitions and context of violence and the implications for this study. The colonial history of the area and how its violence has been theorised has shaped the work of two theorists, even though both were born elsewhere. I address, first, Gandhi's analysis of violence, the conditions under which he believe any form of violence was justifiable and the strengths and limitations of his work.

3.4 TANGLING WITH VIOLENCE: THE THOUGHT AND ACTIONS OF MOHANDAS GANDHI

While Gandhi is typically seen in reductionist fashion as an apostle of nonviolence, to see him thus is to ignore the complexity of his thought. A key difficulty in exploring these issues is that he does not provide a single coherent definition of violence. Rather, he writes about violence often and with differing purposes, and from this an understanding can be built up of his thinking. Clarifying his understanding of violence and peace is helpful in clarifying the distinctions we need to make between these concepts.

Gandhi frequently used the Sanskrit terms *himsa*, violence, and *ahimsa*, nonviolence or non-harming. These terms are found within Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism and he used these as central to his understanding of what constituted violence and what constituted possible alternatives to violence (Ponnu, n.d.). However, Tidrick (2006) makes a convincing case that his thinking was very strongly influenced by that of Western thinkers linked to vegetarianism and a little-known movement known as esoteric Christianity – many of whose adherents had also been influenced by Indian thought. During his studies in London, Gandhi spent considerable time in these groups.

Thus, the meaning Gandhi gave to *himsa* and *ahimsa* must be sought in his own explanations rather than in earlier religious writings. For Gandhi, there is no absolute opposition to violence; he was not a pacifist. Rather, he had a determined opposition to avoidable violence (Rajmohan,

1996). Thus, violence in the sense of killing for food, for one's basic necessities, he regarded as acceptable violence, but the same killing for the sake of indulging one's greed is unacceptable:

Gandhi's writings convey the notion of a moral continuum onto which he places four categories of violence. At one end is unavoidable violence, which receives no moral condemnation from Gandhi. At the other end is objectionable violence based purely on aggression and wrongdoing, violence which Gandhi consistently and unhesitatingly condemns. This is the least problematic category and hence is given the least attention in this paper. In the middle, requiring more explanation, are justifiable and excusable cases of violence. (Rajmohan, 1996, p. 29)

Thus, the issue of the ends of violence is crucial. Walking on the ground and killing insects without intending to harm is unavoidable and acceptable. Killing animals for essential food is acceptable if you are a hunter-gatherer; killing animals for sport is unacceptable. In a more complex case, a woman who uses violence to defend herself against rape is acting morally, as would one who chooses to resist without giving into fear, even if it means her being killed (Gandhi, n.d., v.82:42). The implications of this are that courage in a just cause is given a higher priority than nonviolence; to pursue nonviolence rigidly, as the refusal ever to use one's violence, would lead to unjust situations.

Applied to practical situations, such as his resistance in South Africa, his programme of action was remarkably nonviolent (Tidrick, 2006, p. 90) and succeeded also in not provoking violence against its participants. What permeates much of Gandhi's writings is the issue of a morality higher than mere preservation of life. To attain a state of moral purity was for Gandhi a higher value than ending human suffering and death:

To Gandhi, divine punishment for sin and divine reward for virtue were equally aspects of the divine law... The victory itself could be in the actual performance of satyagraha, which was a good in itself. (Tidrick, pp. 85-86)

One advantage of Gandhi is that he attempts to be consistent in his use of the word 'violence' and in his commitment to reduce his own exercise of violence to its necessary minimum. In a South African context, where, as pointed out above, much violence is casually regarded as insignificant or necessary, in contrast, Gandhi kept questioning and challenging himself on what he saw as violent or not (I set out below the extent to which I would argue against his judgements).

Further, he does not situate himself outside of it as the distanced observer. He writes fully aware of his own capacity for violence. In fact, to what may be seen as an extreme extent he took on a sense of his own implication in acts of violence far distant from himself – thus fasting in response to an act of violence carried out by his supporters, as if his own purification could expiate for the failings of others.

3.4.1 Gandhi's understanding of ahimsa

The term 'peace' is relatively seldom used by Gandhi; his use of 'nonviolence' in English parallels his use of ahimsa. For Gandhi, the pursuit of ahimsa is, like the renunciation of himsa, never an absolute. Because himsa is inherent in the world, 'a votary of ahimsa always prays for ultimate deliverance from the bondage of flesh' (Gandhi, 1928, quoted in Rajmohan, 1996, p. 29). Ahimsa is always a matter for deliberation rather than certainty, as what is nonviolent to one person (such as vegetarianism) may not apply to another (such as someone who grew up in a meat-eating culture) (Rajmohan, 1996, p.29).

According to Sihra (2006, p. 42), "Ahimsa in its purist and most positive form is a mental behaviour, a consciousness, therefore, the way one knows and carries out relationships is what is essentially important." This brings one to a state of freedom for oneself and peace with the other. To connect fully with the other thus requires attention to oneself, freeing oneself from the rule of desires and seeking instead *hind swaraj* (self-rule), and taking action in the world.

The term *hind swaraj* was deliberately ambiguous, referring to both one's control of oneself and, in the context of India, to political self-rule (Gandhi, 1938). Unless people pursued their own *swaraj*, independence would be pointless. In a state of conflict with another, one should look first to yourself and then to aim to win over the other, to convert them to your position, rather than to destroy them. Thus, ahimsa required the use of *satyagraha*, holding on to truth, in a context of conflict, which entailed the use of passive resistance rather than seeking one's own desire to punish:

Satyagraha is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul force. It excludes the use of violence because man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and, therefore, not competent to punish. The word was coined in South Africa to distinguish the non-violent resistance of the Indians of South Africa from the contemporary 'passive resistance' of the suffragettes and others. It is not conceived as a weapon of the weak. (Gandhi, 1921, quoted in MKGandhi.org, n.d.)

What Gandhi thus does is to locate ahimsa or nonviolence primarily as a state of consciousness that flows through into consistent action. Potentially and indeed frequently, people use nonviolent methods for purely strategic reasons, whether or not their commitment is to societal nonviolence – one thinks of far-right groups that protest peacefully to advance violent agendas.

The implication is that, for Gandhi, nonviolence is far more than not carrying some form of harm to a living thing:

Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of ahimsa. But it is its least expression. The principle of ahimsa is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody. It is also violated by our holding on to what the world needs. (Kamala, 2022).

This focus on the self as a necessary element for building peace in society is often captured in the slogan ‘be the change you want to see’ that is often ascribed to him (there is no evidence that it appears in his writings). What he did write (Gandhi, 1913) was this: ‘If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him... We need not wait to see what others do.’ Such a perspective is a precursor to later scholarly work that attempted to reconcile agency and structure, such as Bourdieu’s, as is explored in the theoretical framework for this study.

The strength of such an approach is the scrupulous sense of responsibility; one thinks deeply about one’s own thinking and actions and how these may create the possibilities of advancing nonviolence. There is a strong connection between this thinking and how we may understand the aims of the thesis. It moves the focus away from instrumental attempts to manage conflict or to understand the task of reducing violence to a matter of criminal justice, identifying and punishing bad members of society. According to Gandhi, we are inevitably caught up in violence and confronted with the choice of either reproducing it or reducing it. From the outset, he understood that the systems of human organisation are potentially vehicles for violence. In Gandhian perspective, there is continuity from our attempts to manage violence in ourselves and in the immediate environment to the capacity of society to manage and reduce violence.

The idea of peace as a mental state that informs our actions over-rides an instrumental notion of peace as a set of techniques that avoid responsibility for oneself. It connects the individual directly to a universal soul force. This gives a fuller meaning to peace than the avoidance of violence. It is rather on the attainment of moral purity and renunciation of the desires of the body:

Nonviolence is an active force of the highest order. It is soul force or the power of Godhead within us. Imperfect man cannot grasp the whole of that essence - he would not be able to bear its full blaze, but even an infinitesimal fraction of it, when it becomes active within us, can work wonders. (MKGandhi.org, n.d.)

Towards the end of this chapter, I explore further the implications of this concept for my current understanding of peace and nonviolence.

3.4.2 *Nonviolence and ecological awareness*

In Western traditions, much thinking has created a divide between humanity and other forms of life. ‘There is a difference in outlook between a civilization or a culture that sees this gulf [between humans and all other life] as great and unbridgeable, and one that tends to see a blending, a fusion of life forms’ (Glacken, 1992, p. 104). In contrast, the philosophies on which Gandhi drew located humanity within nature. Thus, *himsa* could be practised not only against other humans but against other forms of life in the natural world; similarly, the concept of *ahimsa* or nonviolence could be applied to the relationships between humanity and other life.

Gandhi was acutely aware of the damage done to the natural world by Western industrial society, a sentiment expressed in *Hind Swaraj*, which was written in 1909. There is continuity from his thought to the environmental movements of the present. Satgar (n.d., p. 2) writes of three critical themes that permeate his thought on this issue: the unity of all living things, our indebtedness to society and nature, and Gandhi’s challenge to modernity’s promise of progress and to modernisation.

Gandhi’s understanding of violence is thus more extensive than Galtung’s (1969, 1990) categorisation, which does not directly apply to non-human life. Galtung’s concept of structural violence has though been influential in helping people think through the nature of what Nixon (2011, p. 2) terms *slow violence*, a term used largely to describe the ongoing destruction of ecosystems – ‘a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all’. Yet, even earlier, Gandhi had long before provided a holistic (ironically, a term coined by his antagonist Jan Smuts) understanding of both violence and nonviolence.

3.4.3 *Limitations in Gandhi’s thinking*

It is essential to identify the limitations in Gandhi’s thought that led into contradictions and into recent criticism that has overshadowed his contribution. I argue that there are two inter-related

problems – the limits to self-awareness in his focus on himself and the focus on means and ends, to the exclusion of analysis of consequences.

Gandhi described his advocacy of nonviolence in these terms, ‘I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence...But I believe that nonviolence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment.’ (MKGandhi.org, n.d.). There are two problematic elements here, in my view.

The first is that, despite the phrase ‘infinitely superior to violence’, Gandhi’s focus on his own sense of peace coexisted with a willingness to accept extremes of violence. Indeed, to a remarkable extent, as Devji (2012) points out, Gandhi was prepared to accept calmly the possibility of sacrificial death on a major scale, believing that this was worthwhile if it was based on a higher truth. Some contemporaries criticised him for being as prepared as militaristic leaders (such as Mao Tse-Tung) to provoke violence against their own people for the sake of making a moral or political stand. Gandhi also actively contemplated situations of violence with equanimity. He would not mind, he said, if ‘the whole of Calcutta swims in blood’; for it would be ‘willing offering of innocent blood.’ Then he would ‘rush barefoot in the midst of the flames’ until peace was restored or he died: ‘This is my conception of a peace mission – not a mealy-mouthed, milk-and-water business.’ (Tidrick, 2006, p. 335)

It is at times hard to discern the consistency in Gandhi’s thinking about violence and war; early in his career he had such a high regard for the British Empire that he wished Indian South Africans to be allowed to enlist to put down the Zulu uprising in 1906 known as the Bambatha Rebellion (Indian Opinion, 31 March 1906, p. 189). However, it also needs to be acknowledged that he came to see the conflict as a British ‘man-hunt’ (Tidrick, 2006, p. 72).

The second element I find problematic is the term ‘more manly’. It is not simply an archaic term. Indeed, Gandhi’s thinking took a strongly gendered form, in that he admired women in particular for their capacity to suffer; suffering he regarded as the inevitable accompaniment to satyagraha (passive resistance). In short, there is considerable evidence of how deeply sexist his attitudes could be, despite his assertions that women had intelligence similar to those of men (Mookerjee-Leonard, 2010). For example, he argued that it was virtually impossible for a woman to be raped against her will (ibid., pp. 50-51), the implication being that she was in part responsible for what would happen after an attack. He also asserted that women taken by force during Partition had to be returned whatever their own wishes. Such attitudes led him into morally repugnant positions even within his family setting; for example, when his wife

Kasturba was imprisoned during the passive resistance campaign in South Africa, he was hoping that she would die in prison so that her martyrdom could be celebrated (Tidrick, 2006, p. 101). To connect the endorsement of suffering – and in these cases the suffering of subordinated groups – to ahimsa limits, in my view, the strength of the concept as a vehicle for peace. It does not help that the suffering being advocated here is the suffering of the least powerful and most marginalised.

At the heart of the problem is what I regard as his failure to direct attention to his inconsistency over those whom he held in respect and those he did not.

3.4.3.1 An argument for critical self-awareness

Gandhian thought sets out a high standard of person responsibility. Where it fails, in my view, is a corresponding focus on self-awareness. Here, Bourdieu's concept of misrecognition is relevant:

...misrecognition refers to an everyday and dynamic social process where one thing (say, a situation, process, or action) is not recognised for what it is because it was not previously 'cognised' within the range of dispositions and propensities of the habitus of the person(s) confronting it. (James, 2015, p. 100)

Gandhi seemed not to entertain seriously questions about his own socialisation and the forces that had shaped his habitus. This has often led to accusations of inconsistency and even hypocrisy, despite his earnest willingness to hold himself responsible (Desai & Vahed, 2015). On the one hand he offered respect towards white leaders in South Africa and admiration to the ruling gentlemen of England; on the other hand his treatment verbally and physically of the young was what we would now consider abusive, such as cutting the hair of a girl in the ashram because she and his son showed signs of attraction (Tidrick, 2006, p. 93). His rare references to African people were cavalier, racially stereotyping and sometimes completely demeaning (Desai & Vahed, 2015). His autobiography (Gandhi, 1927) hardly mentions African people at all, except in the context of the 1906 uprising. His leadership of the ashram at Phoenix was highly controlling and punitive; "Life at Phoenix was minutely organized, even for the children. There was no unauthorized play or roaming about. Right and wrong were rigorously defined" (Tidrick, 2006, p. 93). Further, his treatment of women was high-handed, at best; in his later years, his sleeping with young women was done explicitly for the sake of demonstrating his chastity, as if they were simply instruments towards that end, subjecting them to unwelcome

scrutiny (Tidrick, 2006, p. 304). Whatever other criticisms one might make of Gandhi, his treatment of others did too often reproduce the prevailing societal norms, however oppressive.

This is then an argument for critical self-awareness, reflexivity, as an essential element in developing educators for peace. Bearing a sense of personal responsibility and scrutinising oneself with a view to doing the right thing need to be linked to awareness of how our understanding of responsibility and of the right thing has itself been socially produced.

Possibly this lack of attention to social forces leads Gandhi into a remarkably expansionist sense of the significance of his agency and thus into a completely unrealistic assessment of his personal capacities for bringing peace. He believed that an entirely personal action, such as fasting or sleeping with an attractive person without giving in to desire, could translate into a major change elsewhere in society, such as preventing the partition of the subcontinent into Pakistan and India (Tidrick, 2006, p. 311).

3.4.3.2 Means, ends and consequences

While ‘be the change you want to see’ was not coined by Gandhi, the idea that one acts in ways that are completely consistent with the intended outcome is core to his thinking. Sihra (2006) sees this as the interchangeability of means and ends, with regard to truth and nonviolence; in other words, the pursuit of the one will lead towards the other. ‘Using the end as a guide for the means without diminishing its role as the ultimate end is the truest expression of ahimsa’ (Sihra, 2006, p. 48).

Relating to the concerns of this study, there should be awareness of whether each action is itself imbued with a spirit of nonviolence and not based on some purely instrumental logic. Such an awareness would need to permeate the educational process of the educator. It should from the outset feel as an exercise in peace building.

While I would endorse this approach, where I would diverge from Gandhi is his strong emphasis on intentionality. His judgement of what was moral and nonviolent relied on the intention behind the act: ‘The final test as to its violence or non-violence is after all the intent underlying the act.’ (Gandhi 1986, 273). An alternative view would be that we need more than intention, that without an analysis of the likely effects of our act we may bring harm. We need to consider the actual situation and the consequences that would follow from our actions, whatever our intentions. For example, apparently high-minded legislation (such as prohibition of alcohol or of abortion) may have highly adverse effects in reality, the realisation of which is captured in the WHO definition above as ‘that results in’. Without getting into this area of

moral philosophy in depth, we could take the argument by Ciulla (2004), that good leadership requires both ethical behaviour and a degree of effectiveness, ‘effectiveness’ here referring to the achievement of positive ends. Focusing only on the intention of the action relieves the actor from the moral necessity of applying one’s mind to what will be effective; as Ciulla (2004, p. 121) writes, “The line between being incompetent and unethical is often very thin”. Similarly, not all good things flow from good intentions; a leader may do the right thing, but for self-serving reasons that they are not fully aware of. My criticism is in line with what Page (2004) refers to as consequentialist ethics, ‘the ethical doctrine that the morality of any action is to be assessed by the consequences of that action.’ (Page, 2004, p. 4). In fact, Page argues that a consequentialist approach is possibly the more prevalent rationale for having peace education.

Thus, I consider that Gandhi did not sufficiently recognise the need to analyse the consequences of actions. For example, the controversy over his use of racist language during his time in what was then Natal or of his treatment of women may demonstrate the limitations of focusing on one’s own intentions and not sufficiently seeking to understand the experiences and lives of others. Such a criticism has implications for our work in peace education. It is not enough to cultivate an attitude of acceptance and desire not to harm. It requires awareness of the different perspectives, responses and thinking brought by ourselves and others. Our own thoughts and intentions may have been shaped by society in ways that our individual thinking may not recognise. This requires that peace education, in particular the education of those who promote peace, recognises the degree to which we do not know and do not understand fully those whose situation in society is very different to ours.

3.4.4 *Gandhi now*

Whatever the criticisms of Gandhi, his thought and actions set out a deeply thought-out challenge to colonial society, a challenge that should still resonate in the postcolonial context in which I write. He was indeed a man with a coherent vision of what needed to be addressed in humanity, even if his own responses were not so clear to people or understandable. He succeeded in confronting the violence of colonialism without resorting to violence, except the violence freely chosen against oneself through sacrifice. During the final years of apartheid, I witnessed violent resistance; without over-simplifying the debates over violence, my view is that the costs of that violence are still being paid.

What then are Gandhi’s contributions to a concept of peace? I argue that they are his sense of personal commitment, his understanding that the self needs to be fully present if we are to

advance peace, his understanding of the significance of all life forms and their interconnectedness with ours. His conviction that peace comes from a spiritual commitment is a challenge to the rationalist, even calculating rationales for peace. What he lacked was a critical sense of how he had himself been shaped; he lacked a way of interrogating the rigidities of his dispositions and of his resulting ways of working.

I turn now to another deeply committed opponent of colonialism whose responses was very different, Frantz Fanon. Both Gandhi and Fanon wrote in the context of opposition against colonialism, and both described fully the violence involved in colonialism, including the ways in which ‘civilised’ countries with laws against violence readily accepted their own use of violence in the colonies (Srivastava 2010, p. 306). ‘...both of them identified European imperialism and colonialism with violence in a very strong sense’ (Fraser & Hitchings, 2015). Both address the same problem, though in different ways: “In their thinking, violence is first and foremost the courage to act against the colonizer, which ensures a form of re-humanization. In Gandhi, it is a violence directed against the self, because the act of resistance does not include returning blows” (Srivastava 2010, p. 305). For both, the decision to resist oppression would necessitate accepting one or other form of violence. This is akin to Freire’s comment (Freire 1972/2005, p. 89) that ‘true revolutionaries must perceive the revolution, because of its creative and liberating nature, as an act of love.’

3.5 FRANTZ FANON

Fanon, born in Martinique, worked as a psychiatrist in Algeria with both colonists and colonized at the height of the struggle against colonialism. Fanon did not set out to theorise violence in general terms; his understanding is caught up in his analysis of colonial oppression and resistance. He understood the violence of colonial power as pervading all levels, from direct violence such as torture to the systems of colonial power, which Galtung (1967) would describe as structural violence.

“Fanon... had much more to say about the everyday realities which compelled him and the downtrodden to violence... What the affective empirics of Fanon... provide is an understanding of the materiality of the political situation.” (Saldanha 2424). In other words, violence comes with the territory of colonial oppression.

Such violence is inherently dehumanising of the colonised, but leads also to resistance:

[The logic of colonisation] ...dehumanizes the native, or to speak plainly, it turns him into an animal... he knows that he is not an animal; and it is precisely at the moment

he realizes his humanity that he begins to sharpen the weapons with which he will secure its victory. (Fanon 1963, p. 42)

Here, of course, Gandhi would have paused, but Fanon did not. In such a context, he saw counter-violence as a necessary element of popular resistance, a violence compelled by the circumstances of life. Violence would be an essential part of liberation from colonialism.

In response to that oppression, “the violent overthrow of colonialism could unleash collective energies for social transformation” (Burawoy 2021, p. 1). Such violence has a cathartic force: ‘[i]n every society, in every collectivity, exists – must exist – a channel, an outlet through which the forces accumulated in the forms of aggression can be released’ (Fanon, 1986, p. 112). Fanon argued that the overwhelming violence of settler colonialism necessitated a violent assertion that redeemed the humanity of the colonised. A recurrent image is that of the man who redeems himself as a man through acts of revolutionary violence, with its ability to challenge passivity and rupture the internalised subjugation. Here Fanon’s language parallels Gandhi’s use of the word ‘manly’ (Fraser & Kimberley, 2015), suggesting that the masculinity of the colonised had been emasculated through colonialism.

3.5.1 Internalisation

A central problem Fanon refers to is that violence is not eliminated with the ending of colonial oppression, as the new elites reproduce the same structures of those they opposed. A key element in explaining this is Fanon’s concept of *internalisation*. ‘If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process: – primarily, economic; – subsequently, the internalization – or, better, the epidermalization – of this inferiority.’ (Fanon 1952, p. 4). The dehumanisation of the colonised is not simply suffering imposed on one by the coloniser; it demands that the colonised accept it for themselves. Thus, a central rationale for anti-colonial violence is to overcome the passivity, to turn anger not against oneself but against the oppressor: “The violence is the intervening event which is able to remove their feelings of self-loathing which have been internalised after constant repetition from the colonial power” (Pallas, 2016).

That internalisation (this term was later more widely adopted than ‘epidermalization’) persisted after liberation is one indication, in fact, of the limits of violent resistance. The concept influenced critical theory largely through Fanon, and was a key element in the thinking, in our context, of Biko, who wrote, ‘the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed’ (Biko, 2005, p. 69). In a rather similar way, Galtung refers to the

internalisation of a culture of peace or internalisation of a culture of violence (Galtung 1990, pp. 291-2). However, he queries whether it is a contradiction to internalise peace, as this seems to be a process of imposing a particular culture on people. He describes attempts to establish a peace culture as ‘problematic, because of the temptation to institutionalize that culture, making it obligatory with the hope of internalizing it everywhere. And that would already be direct violence, imposing a culture.’ (Galtung, 1990, p. 291).

Internalisation appears as a central element within social justice education (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007), where the concepts of internalised oppression became recognised as major elements that any education that seeks to end injustice and violence needs to address. A short book by Lipsky (1987) on internalised racism sets out in popular language the ways in which black people direct anger and mistrust at those closest to them and devalue themselves, as a result of the internalisation of negative views of themselves and others like them. Even though this was written in a US context, I have found many people in the South African context identifying with its message, possibly because of the reassurance it provides that people should first be compassionate about themselves (Munjee & MacPherson, 2023).

There are strong similarities here, surely, to Bourdieu’s (2004) concept of symbolic violence, reviewed in the previous chapter, even if Fanon approaches internalisation more from a psychological perspective while Bourdieu’s perspective is more sociological.

Fanon’s analysis of the new postcolonial elite was that they would internalise the mindset of the colonists and reproduce them in the social structures. Given that he died in 1961, his understanding of how the new elites would behave across Africa, in terms of money, aspirations and entitlement, as well as the finding of foreign scapegoats for their economic failures, was remarkably prescient.

A graphic example of the process of internalisation can be found in my research into lifeguards in Durban (Hemson, 2015). Two employees led a campaign of black lifeguards to oust a manager who was known to be a white racist, a member of the extreme Afrikaans Weerstandsbeweging (AWB). This campaign was effective, and the evidence of his racism led to his leaving municipal employment. One of the two employees was himself appointed to the position. The way he handled the position – for example, taking bribes to award jobs, taking money monthly from those appointed, requiring sex from women who wanted work – was such that, a year later, the other leader spoke to him and told him that he was now the same as the oppressive white manager, as he was treating black workers with the same contempt and

exploitation. The change in management had simply reproduced patterns of exploitation in a slightly different form. The confrontation led to a plot to kill the second leader, who felt he had to leave the region for his safety (he reported that the person who had been offered money for the hit instead chose to warn him). A few years later the first leader was gunned down at the entrance to his house. Processes of internalisation enable the perpetuation of such relationships of exploitation; such patterns of abuse and violence typify many contexts within South Africa. How to end internalisation of such relations of exploitation and abuse poses a challenge to peace educators.

A key point concerning internalisation, in Fanon and in those who have adopted this concept more recently, is that it is seen as a process of alienation, of introjecting into oneself something foreign. It is an inherently violent process. This phenomenon thus impedes the learning of peace.

3.5.2 Fanon's contradictory view of violence

On the one hand, Fanon asserted the need for the oppressed to rise up against their colonial oppressors, using whatever violence was necessary to remove them. This was both a political and a psychological necessity. It would disrupt the internalised sense of subjugation, leading to a sense of power and efficacy:

For Fanon, violence has a cathartic and unifying effect. (Burawoy, 2012, p. 87)

The native who decides to put the program into practice, and to become its moving force, is ready for violence at all times. From birth it is clear to him that this narrow world, strewn with prohibitions, can only be called in question by absolute violence. (Fanon, 1963, p. 37)

This stance has been subject to considerable criticism, as condemning the society to ongoing violence, with ample evidence since Fanon's death of how violent post-colonial societies can be:

The generation that grew up before the Rwandan genocide thought of violence in Fanonist terms—as the midwife of revolution, social change, and progress. On this view, the revolution supplied political independence, which was itself the end of political struggle and the beginning of a social struggle destined to be won. (Mamdani, 2021, p. 243)

On the other hand, Fanon did understand the problems that flowed from anger and violence; violence by the colonized made sense only in contexts of extreme colonial violence, and in other contexts he envisaged other forms of resistance (Gibson, 2003, p. 124). Like Gandhi, he readily recognised the problem of violence let loose in this way, even though Gandhi gave this recognition a much more central place:

Racialism and hatred and resentment – “a legitimate desire for revenge” – cannot sustain a war of liberation. Those lightning flashes of consciousness which fling the body into stormy paths or which throw it into an almost pathological trance where the face of the other beckons me on to giddiness, where my blood calls for the blood of the other, where by sheer inertia my death calls for the death of the other--that intense emotion of the first few hours falls to pieces if it is left to feed on its substance. (Fanon 1963, p. 138)

Another cautionary word from Fanon concerns the structures that emerge from the ashes of colonialism:

The militant who faces the colonialist war machine with the bare minimum of arms realizes that while he is breaking down colonial oppression he is building up yet another system of exploitation. This discovery is unpleasant, bitter, and sickening: and yet everything seemed so simple before. (Fanon 1963, p. 145)

The problem that Fanon identifies here is the nature of postcolonial society that comes into being once the coloniser is ousted. Burawoy (2021) distinguishes two possibilities – the national bourgeois revolution (NBR) and the national liberation struggle (NLS). The NBR focuses on the intense competition to enter an elite that replaces the colonial elite; the securely employed working class are co-opted into a reformist agenda. This is what Fanon would be referring to above. In contrast, according to Burawoy (2021), the NLS involves a mass mobilisation that includes rural peasantry and marginalised urban dwellers in alliance with dissident intellectuals.

While Fanon refers to the term only briefly, our understanding now is that trauma (discussed below) would be a major consequence of the violence of both colonialism and of the anti-colonial conflict. Violence does not disappear; its damage will extend over the years – yet few societies have developed ways of acknowledging trauma and of assisting people to recover.

Ironically, the word ‘transformation’ in our context is usually taken to mean just that; that white people are moved out of jobs that go to black people (increasingly to African rather than other black groups), while the structures of society remain remarkably untroubled. For the purposes of this study, the key point is that this society requires ongoing violence to keep the majority in their place.

On violence, Fanon is articulate. How does he contribute to our understanding of peace? Perhaps it is only in his recognition that justice would be an essential element if there is to be peace. As a psychiatrist, he recognised that his ability to bring healing – and thus, a sense of peace – to his patients was constrained by the reality of violence in society (Gibson, 2004, p. 96).

3.6 PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA AS A MAJOR EFFECT OF VIOLENCE

If Galtung and other theorists have extended our understanding of the *nature* of violence, then the developing field of trauma studies has extended our understanding of the *effects* of violence and the challenges posed by these effects for the possibility of peace.

This is a highly significant area for those working in the area of peace and education for peace; however, it is striking how the academic fields of violence and peace on one hand and trauma studies on the other have developed, to a large extent, separately. Traumatic events are surely events of violence, but if one reads Herman (1992/2015), the pioneer in this field, it becomes clear that the relevant theory was developed without an explicit connection to developments in the area of violence. For example, Herman (1992/2015) does not draw directly on major theories around violence, though her work explores many aspects of violent experiences. Similarly, studies of peace and violence have largely not explored the psychological issues such as trauma and emotions. Recently, work has been done to explore ways to develop an integrated approach that bridges the divide between psychosocial and mental health and peacebuilding (Eagle & Kaminer, 2013; Tankink, Bubenzer & Van der Walt, 2017).

Kaminer and Eagle (2010, p. 2) refer to traumas as the ‘psychological wounding and the penetration of unwanted thoughts, emotions and experiences into the psyche or being of the person.’ They comment that the term ‘trauma’ has a dual meaning as it gets used for both the original event and the effects of it; ‘trauma is characterised by the coupling of a dreadful experience with a subjective experience of dread – the outcome and its cause are inextricably intertwined’ (ibid.)

The developing understanding of trauma extends our awareness of the impacts of violence – such impacts may last much longer than people assume. Herman (1992/2015) highlights that in her title, *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence – from domestic abuse to political terror*. This is not totally new – such ideas are present in much traditional cultures; for example, in the context of this study, there are traditional practices for cleansing communities after participation in or experiencing violence (Shozi, 2023, p. 144). This is one way in which cultures have recognised that the long shadow cast by violence needs addressing.

The concept of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has entered daily discourse as the most readily understood manifestation of trauma. A brief explanation of what it entails is given by Kaminer and Eagle (2010): ‘...the person must have experienced a traumatic event (either as a direct victim or as a witness) that involved some form of physical threat’ (ibid., p. 29) and this ‘physically threatening event must have elicited a reaction of intense fear, helplessness or horror’ (ibid., p. 31), with intrusive thoughts and feelings, avoidance reactions and hyperarousal.

Because of the growing awareness of PTSD in such countries as the USA, there has been a corresponding move within education to identify within schools those students who may be suffering from PTSD and the development of strategies to address their problems, leading to the term *trauma-informed teaching* (Minahan, 2019). Much of this work involves the educator focusing on individual cases. At this point, though, there is a need to consider a basic point made by Eagle and Kaminer (2015), that the prevailing theoretical development has been in contexts where trauma is seen more as an individual rather than collective experience:

...contributions to the international traumatic stress literature from low- and middle-income countries have largely been contextualized against the backdrop of theorization from the global north and therefore have been read as adjunctive rather than central to framing the phenomenon. This is ironic in many respects as it is in under-developed contexts that traumatic events are most commonly experienced across populations, often inter-linked with deprivation and marginalization (Fodor et al., 2014). (Eagle & Kaminer, 2015, p. 23)

The limitation in theoretical development thus results from its location in contexts where trauma is seen primarily in individual terms, as against those contexts in which whole populations have experienced common and repeated traumatic conditions:

Authors thus caution against the limitations of the ‘trauma paradigm’ – its problematic Western assumptions and focus on pathology, symptoms and curative, therapeutic processes. Using that paradigm runs the risk of decontextualising human suffering by reducing it to individual terms, when many of the greatest sources of suffering are collective and are grounded in a socio-historical context of human rights violations. (Tankink, Bubenzer & Van der Walt, 2017)

Despite this, there has been a recognition amongst many Western theorists of the social dimensions of the work. For example, Herman (1992/2015, p 9) writes about trauma as a social justice issue, ‘In the absence of strong political movements for human rights, the active process of bearing witness inevitably gives way to the active process of forgetting.’ She argues that social struggles are essential to make it possible to speak publicly and openly of these issues.

However, the term PTSD is inadequate to describe the widespread patterns resulting from chronic conditions of deprivation and violence. South African psychologists have thus been amongst those who developed a term to address the forms of trauma that arise from the constant and prolonged conditions of stress that afflict countries with violent histories and long-lasting deprivation. One term that has been coined is *continuous traumatic stress* (CTS) (Eagle & Kaminer, 2013), a concept that resonates with the more extended understanding of violence held by theorists of violence such as Galtung (1969, 1990), as it would be a response to direct, structural and cultural violence.

Eagle and Kaminer (2013, p. 85) use the term ‘to describe the experience and impact of living in contexts of realistic current and ongoing danger, such as protracted political or civil conflict or pervasive community violence.’ Here the emphasis is not on the situation ‘post’ trauma but rather on the connection from the past through to the present and to the future. They apply the concept, in South Africa, to both the apartheid period and the present situation, which has arisen from that history. Unlike trauma based on group identity, such as the term ‘collective trauma’, it is not specific to one social group, but to whatever population are in the context of prolonged violence:

CTS attempts to characterize prolonged and ongoing threat that occurs outside the exclusive context of attachment relationships or other dyads (such as prisoner and captor) ... [It] is focused primarily on present and future trauma exposure, rather than on that which has already taken place... can be prevalent across communities who

share little in common with regard to their group identity other than their geographical location or economic status. (Eagle & Kaminer, 2013, pp. 96-97)

CTS is, in my view, helpful in accounting for the forms of trauma that typify situations of chronic violence (Adams 2012) and structural violence (Galtung 1969) – not to suggest that PTSD and other framing of trauma are not present in such contexts. From this perspective, we can see the ways in which whole populations may be affected by a common experience of violence, even though individual experiences will differ, as will the experiences of social groups that differ in terms of privilege or subordination.

A further element of trauma is the anticipation of violence. Brown (1995) refers to insidious trauma; groups subject to relentless violence carry the additional weight of having to give constant attention to the threat. For example, Ncwane (2024) provides evidence of the burden on women attempting to run small businesses in the context of this study, as they feel compelled to go to major lengths to avoid the possibility of experiencing violence.

3.6.1 *The role of vicarious trauma*

Vicarious trauma, known as also secondary trauma or secondary traumatic stress (Routledge, 2023), refers to the reactions when one is exposed to the traumatic events of others, by witnessing them or learning about them. Initially the term was used in relation to the effects on health professionals, first as *traumatic countertransference* (Herman, 1992/1997/2015, p. 140). Herman (ibid.) refers to it thus: ‘She experiences, to a lesser extent, the same terror, rage and despair as the patient.’ Much of the literature focuses on the trauma experienced by professional helpers in the course of their work; ‘Vicarious trauma is the emotional residue of exposure that counselors have from working with people as they are hearing their trauma stories’ (American Counseling Association, n.d.). However, it is increasingly recognised as applying to anyone who witnesses in some way the trauma of another.

I had a graphic demonstration of vicarious trauma when teaching a class of about 50 adults, all municipal employees. I had asked for a volunteer to speak of the experience of getting a job at the municipality. One young woman readily volunteered. She spoke briefly of her history: experiencing when young the death of her mother, having to move to from a higher to a lower status school in a township, then securing a degree at university. She had finally applied for a job online. To her surprise, she got a call to tell her she had secured the job and must come in to sign up. She told her grandmother that she thought it was a scam, and she would not go in. The next day a second call came, asking why she had not come in. She said that she had got

lost; the caller said she must come in the next morning. In the morning, she again told her grandmother that she didn't think she would go in. (At this point, I picked up the murmurs of incomprehension and indignation from other students; a municipal post is seen as a major advantage in a context of very high unemployment. I was though feeling anxious that she was about to reveal some unhappy incident in the process.) A further call then came; her last chance was to be at work by 08:00 on the Monday. She woke late, but went in. Everything was right; she was signed on as an employee. Then she told us that the way she had handled this situation resulted from a shocking attack on her and her close friend when they were very young.

At that point, the level of emotion in the class became palpable. I thanked her, then asked people immediately to move into a pair to speak simply of how they felt about what they had heard. We did not take discussion on the events but reviewed the process. One comment made was that, when we do not understand people's behaviour, we should find ways to listen more effectively. At the end of the class I spoke to the young woman, who said that she was not disturbed by speaking in class of the traumatic event; she had chosen to speak.

What strikes me as I review this account is first the range of emotions elicited in those present, me included. I think people sensed there was a disturbing element in her story. It had been right to move to focus purely on the feelings the story had evoked, as those present needed to acknowledge their own feelings thoughtfully. This is an example of what Routledge (2023) refers to as secondary trauma, which 'may occur due to one specific account.' The feeling of irritation that emerged is one of the symptoms of vicarious trauma identified by the American Counseling Association (n.d.).

Secondly, I am struck by the typical way vicarious trauma is seen as uniformly problematic. Clearly, it threatens the peace of mind of those who hear the trauma of others, and we need means of recovery; however, recognising that one feels for and is affected by the pain of others has the potential to draw people together. Such potential may be lost if there is no self-awareness of the emotions involved but, with support, the witness may take significant value from hearing and from greater understanding and awareness. The term *vicarious resilience* has developed for the ways in which therapists may grow from hearing of their clients' resilience (Hernandez-Wolfe, 2018). However, as with vicarious trauma, such resilience may equally apply to lay people. I think that a sense of mutual recognition of pain, the open acknowledgement of experiences of oppression may affirm joyful solidarity, in the African sense of *ubuntu*. Eze (2000, p. 190) explains *ubuntu* as follows, '...humanity is not embedded

in my person solely as an individual; my humanity is co-substantively bestowed upon the other and me. Humanity is a quality we owe to each other. We create each other and need to sustain this *otherness* creation.’ I recall a situation where I had asked for people to speak on their experience of racism, in a class made up entirely of adult African and Indian students. All African people came forward enthusiastically. I had a sense of their delight in being able to have these experiences acknowledged. While there is literature on resilience at an individual level (Bonanno, 2004), I think the sense of solidarity evoked by the acknowledgement of shared experiences of oppression – and thus of the shared experience of continuous traumatic stress (Eagle & Kaminer, 2013) – can be a powerful source of resilience. We find a similar understanding of the strength of solidarity in the work of Freire (1972/2005).

3.6.2 Recovery from trauma

Herman (1998) addresses also the processes of recovery from trauma. In short, she characterises it as follows: ‘The recovery process may be conceptualized in three stages: establishing safety, retelling the story of the traumatic event, and reconnecting with others’ (Herman, 1998, p. S98). She writes within an assumed formally therapeutic relationship and not within education, of course. Harvey (2023) focuses on the somatic processes involved in trauma and thus on the somatic processes that would lead to recovery, presenting evidence that physical activities combined with education and therapy enable recovery.

3.6.3 Implications for theory and for education

The implications of this work for those in a context of chronic violence is that peace is possible only if we face directly the reality of violence and its trauma. The developing theory on trauma holds out the possibilities of recovery, and it is through recovery that it becomes possible to speak of peace. When the young woman spoke in my class of her experiences, stirring up such intense emotions, there was also her presence, her resolve and her demonstration that, despite her vulnerability, she was alive and had integrity. Processes of recovery need to be an essential part of our understanding of peace, a point to which I will return.

What then are the implications for educators and for those they teach? Educators are not therapists; they do not have the capacity to diagnose trauma or the responsibility to provide remedial care. However, approaching education with a keen awareness of the pervasiveness of trauma in such contexts is very helpful, as is a sense of the possibilities for recovery. It is also helpful to see certain parallels between the processes of recovery set out above and the processes necessary across the social context of this study.

The implication for education is that it has both to provide a safe space in which peace is a felt reality and, at some point, to deal with those issues more directly. What that entails is addressed in the next chapter.

3.7 BANDURA, SOCIAL LEARNING AND VIOLENCE

An influential theorist on how violence is reproduced has been Albert Bandura, through his theory on social learning. He advanced the hypothesis that behaviour is learnt through observation, through a process of modelling. He argues (Bandura, 1971, p. 2) that ‘psychological functioning is best understood in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction between behavior and its controlling conditions.’

He described in general these statement that sets out his core hypothesis:

In actuality, virtually all learning phenomena resulting from direct experiences can occur on a vicarious basis through observation of other people’s behaviour and its consequences for them. Man’s capacity to learn by observation enables him to acquire large, integrated units of behaviour by example, without having to build up the patterns gradually by tedious trial and error. (Bandura, 1971, p. 2)

Such processes of modelling are regulated by four interrelated subprocesses. (Bandura, 1971, pp. 6-7):

Attention

Various factors influence which behaviour a child attends to (and which the child does not attend to) and how it relates to the model – for example, some behaviours are typical only in certain contexts. An example would be of a youngster’s focus on those seen as attractive or compelling, such as sports stars.

Retention

Effective modelling requires the involvement of verbal and visual memory, forming codes that guide future behaviour. Children may pick up the sequence of actions and try to reproduce actions in the same sequence, for example, drawing on their visual memory of what they observed, possibly supported by verbal elements.

Motoric reproduction processes

A learner has to put together the components of the learning response to be able to reproduce it and practise them to develop a skill. This may require overcoming physical limitations and

the difficulties that arise in those contexts where you cannot see yourself in action (especially when developing a physical skill).

Reinforcement and motivational processes

Learning may not translate into the specific action unless there is a sense that it is being approved. If there are negative incentives, that behaviour is unlikely to be produced.

Bandura's approach differs from that of traditional behaviourist theorists, of a simple conditioned stimulus-response model (Cherry, 2022). For one thing, there is ample evidence that people can initiate new behaviour without having built up that behaviour step by step, as in traditional reinforcement theory. Social learning involves issues of cognition, of emotion and of language. For example, he included verbal explanation within the concept of 'observation.' There is thus a complex interaction between the environment and the person whose behaviour is being considered.

Applied to violence, one can argue that children who witness violence, even in fictional form such as on television, may well enact that violence in real life. However, while there is evidence for a role for observation in the learning of violence, that role may well be less than Bandura theorises. According to Anderson (2022):

Drawing on the available evidence which includes prospective studies conducted in the United States, researchers estimate that 25%–35% of maltreated children will abuse their own children. Although these rates suggest that a history of abuse is an important risk factor for future child or partner abuse, many childhood victims do not abuse their own children and some nonabused adults initiate abusive practices.

This would suggest that, while the processes that Bandura identifies may indeed be a partial explanation, they are not sufficient for explaining all forms of enacting violence. This would suggest that other internal processes, such as forms of trauma, may lead to violent actions. Anthony Collins (2013b) argues that violence is both socially learned and an expression of intense emotions when traumatic memories are evoked:

Psychodynamic theory argues that people do not simply learn violence as a social behaviour, but that they use psychological defences to deal with overwhelming traumatic emotions, such as terror and helplessness, which arise when they are victimised. This is especially true if they are young or emotionally vulnerable (Collins, 2013b, p. 4).

The implication of both forms of learning of violence is, however, similar – children should not be exposed to violence, whether they imitate it or are traumatised through the experience, or both.

More positively, the theory holds out the possibility that observing ways of dealing with difficult situations peacefully may also teach ways of peace.

3.8 EPISTEMIC VIOLENCE

In contexts riven by histories of domination, direct, structural and even cultural violence may seem easy to identify. However, these terms may be employed in ways that do not draw attention to what happens to meaning making, to the production of knowledge. Colonial conquest, for example, typically erases or subordinates the ways in which the Other has created knowledge. Spivak (1994, p. 80) writes of the ‘violence of imperialistic epistemic, social and disciplinary inscription’ that renders invisible and silent the understandings and knowledge of colonial subjects. Similarly, Perez (2019, p. 2.) refers to violence as ‘not... an action or an event, but rather as “a form of social relationships characterized by the denial of the other”, that is, the historically and socially located denial of the subjectivity, legitimacy or existence of another individual or community.’

Within this broader framing, Perez (2019, p. 2) writes that:

The notion of epistemic violence refers to the different ways in which violence is exercised in relation to the production, circulation and recognition of knowledge: the denial of epistemic agency for certain subjects, the unacknowledged exploitation of their epistemic resources, their objectification, among many others.

Perez relates this specifically to the concept of *slow violence* (Nixon, 2011); it is typically a silent and often hidden process. In the context of this study, the erasure of systems of meaning of the colonized ‘Other’ means that our epistemic understandings are impoverished by the narrowness of perspectives. For example, Zulu understandings of health and religion (Ngubane, 1977), which encouraged a unified understanding of psychological, physical and spiritual factors, were little engaged with outside Zulu communities and still seldom discussed, even though it is now widely accepted that the mind-body dualism of western approaches carries significant limitations (Mehta, 2011). This goes beyond the question of *voice*; what is silenced is not simply the voices of the subjugated but the disappearance of the conceptual categories from the awareness of the Other. Drawing on Fricker, Perez (2019, p. 7) refers to this as *hermeneutical injustice*, ‘the lack of adequate categories to make sense of the

experiences of non-hegemonic communities, due to their hermeneutical marginalization, that is, to their exclusion from the processes and spaces where social senses about various phenomena are produced.’ Part of the problem is that those thus subjugated feel that they are compelled to make use of the epistemic categories of the dominant culture. While researchers may attempt to overcome this by changing epistemic practices, such as asking respondents their own understandings, ending hermeneutical injustice requires a deeper level of inter-subjective engagement (Dotson, 2008).

A closely related area is that of the suppression of languages – in our context, the previous formally privileged position of English and Afrikaans and the current continued privileging of English over African languages. Such exclusion or subordination of languages can in some cases be seen as part of a programme of *ethnocide* (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, p. 10).

A strong implication for this study is need for any intervention to ensure that the ways in which issues are framed and spoken of is not exclusively driven by the Western categories that generally inform higher education. Perez (2019, p. 10) writes of how ‘critical epistemologies, when posed from a truly intersectional standpoint, can offer valuable resources to think about how to put our biases on the table, to understand in what sense they make us participate in epistemic violence, and to imagine how we can begin to dismantle them.’ The implication is that we slow down sufficiently to attend to and to question the way things are done, and how they may serve to include some and exclude others.

3.9 VIOLENCE AS EITHER RATIONAL OR MEANINGFUL

Gilligan (1996) developed a theoretical perspective on violence based largely on his work in prisons in the United States and his familiarity with the behaviour of violent offenders. He sees it as similar to a public health issue that requires intervention, “...as a problem of public health and preventative medicine, thinking of violence as a symptom of life-threatening (and often lethal) pathology, which like all forms of illness, has an aetiology or cause, a pathogen”.

He argues against the ‘rational self-interest’ theory of crime that, he asserts, provides the rationale for much of the criminal justice system (pp. 94-95). This theory leads into a preoccupation in policy and practice with punitive responses to crime, despite the lack of evidence that this works. Gilligan would argue that, if you knew sufficiently their history, you would understand that behaviour. In particular, he focuses on how the roots of psychopathological shame drive people to violence that may be obviously against their self-interest:

I am convinced that violent behaviour, even at its most apparently senseless, incomprehensible, and psychotic, is an understandable response to an identifiable, specifiable set of conditions; and that even when it seems motivated by “rational” self-interest, it is the end product of a series of irrational, self-destructive and unconscious motives that can be studied, identified, and understood. (Gilligan, 1996, p. 102)

This is thus not ‘rational’ in the sense of an analytic mind weighing up the likely consequences of actions before pursuing the most efficacious; it is, however, meaningful once one understands the forces at work. For example, it is no exaggeration to state that many violent offenders are so driven with a need to be respected that they would rather die than suffer disrespect. What people perceive as their needs may differ markedly. Gilligan points to the obsessive focus with punishment as a response to violence, leading to the use of immense resources that restrain violence only to a limited extent, instead of developing programmes for prevention.

3.10 REVIEWING VIOLENCE

What then are the understandings of violence that have been developed in this chapter and that need to inform the work of the study?

3.10.1 Violence as individual and social, as agency and structure

Following on the discussion of Galtung’s categories in the theoretical framework, this chapter has provided an argument for understanding violence as simultaneously acts of individual agency and processes of social structure. Without such a perspective, we miss some critical element that may inform our work for peace. This approach requires a critical view of society and a critical awareness of the self and how we recognise our potential for violence and for peace.

Here are eight central points that emerge from the argument developed in this chapter:

3.10.2 Violence is shaped through rigid and harsh processes

In societies generally – culture, the economy, families and institutions – to a greater or lesser extent, violence has through history become part of the way things are done. Crucially, this has shaped the habitus, or dispositions of children and adults, through emotions, embodied reactions, thoughts, languages and habits, thus constraining imagination and agency. These factors have also shaped our understanding of violence and the meanings we give to it.

3.10.3 All violence has somatic consequences

All violence has somatic consequences, affecting our bodies through physical injury, reactions of stress, lack of nutrients or clean water and air, leading to impaired development and of the ability to enjoy life.

3.10.4 Some forms of violence may be inevitable, but this does not relieve us of responsibility

Neither violence nor peace are absolute. Gandhi's distinction between avoidable and unavoidable violence (Rajmohan, 1996) is helpful; one implication is that we use our agency to reduce the need for violence. Gandhi's example of the violence involved in food production is a case in point; we have technologies that now provide alternative ways of producing protein that do not involve slaughter. Self-defence may be another form of unavoidable violence, but it is critical that it goes no further than self-defence.

3.10.5 In a society of chronic violence, violence becomes normalised

Faced with the omnipresence of violence of one form or another, people come to see it as an inevitable and even an essential aspect of daily life. Language often serves to create distinctions between 'violence', as something to be condemned, and a range of socially acceptable practices that are not spoken of as violence but operate in a similar way and with similar consequences.

3.10.6 Violence is learnt and can be unlearnt

Among the mechanisms that reproduce violence are social learning and the ways in which responses to stress become driven by what people think their options are, given the trauma they carry from past experiences of violence and the ways in which possibilities are presented to them. To respond to violence means that we move beyond rational arguments towards engagement with emotions, perceptions and ways of speaking.

3.10.7 Our societies fail to work systematically to forestall violence

We have major programmes that aim to repress and react to violence, such as police and the criminal justice system. Crucially, such systems are primarily systems of retributive rather than restorative justice (European Forum for Restorative Justice, 2021) and they often fail to put the emphasis on what can be done to forestall violence (National Institute of Justice, 2016). We have very few programmes in our society that apply what we know about violence to prevent it, despite the considerable evidence from research.

3.11 REVIEWING PEACE

As I indicated at the outset, I have found the weight of my attention falling more on violence than on peace. However, even in theorising violence, the possibilities of peace may become clearer, even when scholars place greater focus on addressing violence.

In the preceding chapter, I introduced Galtung's distinction between positive peace and negative peace (Galtung, 1964). This section deals with peace primarily as processes of change towards a more hopeful present and future.

In reviewing this chapter, I am struck by the significance of the context and of the ways in which people's understandings of both violence and peace have been constructed. Probing the limitations of such constructions, whether by scholars or more popularly, is a necessary part of developing a critical understanding:

*One useful contribution is that of Groff (2001, in Brantmeier, 2003, p.6), who sets out different concepts that peace **thinking** consists of, moving from peace in response to the most overt forms of violence to peace in response to the least:*

A. War Prevention (Negative Peace)

1. Peace as Absence of War

2. Peace as Balance of Forces in the International System

B. Structural Conditions for Peace (Positive Peace)

3. Peace as no war and no structural violence on macro levels

4. Peace as no war and no structural violence on micro levels (Community, Family, Feminist Peace)

C. Peace Thinking that Stresses Holistic, Complex Systems (Integrated Peace)

5. Intercultural Peace

6. Holistic Gaia Peace (Peace within the human world and with the environment).

7. Holistic Inner and Outer Peace (Includes all 6 types of peace and adds inner peace as essential condition).

Such a categorisation provides a way of thinking about the different dimensions within peace and thus may clarify the degree to which a specific peace education programme addresses one or more levels.

I set out here some key elements and aspects of peace that can inform the education of educators for peace.

3.11.1 Peace requires active processes of recovery

I made this point above in response to the discussion on trauma. This point seems essential in a context of chronic violence. I recall, towards the end of apartheid, the recurrent phrase ‘no peace without justice’. If ‘peace’, though, was based on formal judgements of the criminal justice system, there would then not be peace; restorative justice (Johnstone, 2013) is an essential part of a process of peace. In the case of trauma, we need ways of healing at individual, interpersonal and community levels (at this point it is helpful to consider the possibilities for the permeation of peace through Bronfenbrenner’s levels). I think also of Langa’s (2011) example of Bokfontein, where an explicit over-arching commitment to nonviolence has shaped the ways in which social interactions take place. Without such active processes, under the cover of peace, violence continues to be reproduced. This has significant implications for the aims of peace education and the form it needs to take.

3.11.2 Peace requires acts of imagination

In thinking through Gandhi’s understanding of *ahimsa*, I felt that it requires an act of imagination, of a sense of open-ended possibilities. This led me to the work of Lederach, who wrote *Moral imagination: The art and soul of building peace* (Lederach, 2005). Achieving peace requires that we can play with thinking to conjure peace exactly where it may be presently absent. From a different approach, Walkerdine (2013) brings to this process a focus on spaces, on the creation of new contexts: ‘It is the power of imagination that Guattari evokes in relation to the safe possibility of movement and change into new space, places, and ways of being’ (Walkerdine, 2013, p. 756). This element thus needs to inform the ways in which the education of educators for peace proceeds.

3.11.3 Peace is not shaped in the same way as violence

We can think of inculcating violence, but inculcating peace seems wrong. By the former I would understand the exposing of people constantly to violence in speech and action that lead into rigid reactions of defence, as in Fanon’s concept of internalisation (1952). Broadly, conditions of violence are likely to lead to more violence, conditions of peace to more peace.

However, the processes of learning cannot be the same. We will not get to peace through rigid means; we can rather create conditions that are peaceful, within which a sense of peace can develop. This may entail recognising the violence of our dispositions rather than denying them; paradoxically, moving to peace may in some ways entail accepting the violence that is present.

3.11.4 Peace requires a thoughtful awareness of self

Critical self-awareness is an essential element in achieving conditions of peace; it calls for processes of scrutinising what is just and unjust in economic and social relations and of our own implications in such relations. This requires recognition of our habitus and how that has shaped our sense of who we are, with the limits and limitations set by social forces. Some forms of violence act slowly (Nixon, 2011) and some may operate under conditions of limited awareness (such as epistemic violence); thoughtful awareness is essential.

3.11.5 Peace may arise from individual conviction and commitment

Despite the strong emphasis here on the social processes around violence and peace, the significance of individual conviction and commitment remains. Our social learning (Bandura, 1971) may draw strongly on role models of those individuals who exemplify peace and hold onto it consistently, whatever the conditions.

3.11.6 There are resources for peace in our societies on which we can build

Societies caught in violence, such as South African society, nonetheless maintain certain values, reflected in ceremonies and gatherings, that can be drawn on to build and sustain peace. A key value is that of *ubuntu* (Eze, 2000; Jared Reichbaum, 2007; Kiyala, 2023; Murithi, 2009). The sense in this philosophy, of violence as a disruption of a community that needs processes of acknowledgement and restitution, as well as specific procedures to enable the community to move through these processes, is a coherent and major resource for building peace (Murithi, 2009). Such values are also present in ceremonies and events that recognise community and reconciliation (such as the *umsebenzi*, both a spiritual and social event, or *indaba*), though inevitably these become shaped also through less peaceful forces such as consumption. The reworking of ceremonies to better capture and express these values is a possibility, while the value of *ubuntu* should be drawn upon.

3.11.7 Peace requires harmony with and draws harmony from all life forms

Peace is largely about connection; to create a split between humanity and other life forms violates that connection. It is not simply noting that our lives are dependent on other forms of life in complex ways; it is also about maintaining a sense of that connection. Increasing

evidence (such as Bratman, Hamilton, Hahn & Gross, 2015) points to the directly beneficial role of engaging directly with natural life and how that shapes awareness. While violence is described as having somatic manifestations, so too does peace.

3.12 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have sought to explore in depth the meanings we give violence and peace, in particular within the context of a society caught in chronic violence. These meanings need to inform what we understand as processes of education that promote peace. The following chapter will report on how the pedagogy for what I term ‘education for peace’ has been planned and implemented, and how such education has focused on the development of educators.

CHAPTER 4

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: PEACE EDUCATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focusses on **Educating teachers for peace in a context of violence**. The previous chapter dealt with the concepts of violence and peace; this will explore how education and the education of teachers may foster peace in a context of violence.

I contend that a literature review of this complex area needs to address the scholarship related to these areas: education for peace, education of teachers, and education of teachers for peace. In each case, I address both international contexts and South Africa; I have given fuller attention to the South African context as it is both an example of a violent context and the location for the empirical work in this study.

With regard to the first area, education for peace, I will deal first with the (generally very broad) definitions of this area and relate these to the forms that education for peace consists of in practice. This leads into an exploration of the criticisms of its often uncritical and sometimes positivistic approach. To gain greater clarity, I then give some attention specifically to critical pedagogy (Darder et al., 2003), Mezirow's transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997) and social justice education (Adams et al., 2007), as these pedagogies have strongly influenced the pedagogies of peace education. The strengths and limitations of these approaches have significance for the understanding of the principles that I describe below.

Following this, I give more detailed attention to the relatively limited literature on peace education within South Africa.

There follows a section that deals in general terms with issues of teacher education that need to be taken into account in advancing peace. A short section deals with some specific aspects of teacher education in South Africa and then a review of the very limited literature on teacher education for peace in South Africa.

In this chapter I need to explore the complex process for developing people – existing or prospective teachers – so that they can enable the learning of others in ways that build peace. This clearly includes a discussion of 'peace education' as it is commonly used in the literature but requires attention to the educational process more broadly. Because the term 'peace education' is well established, I will need to use it a great deal, but it is important to recognise

that I am working with an ‘expanded’ view of peace education as something that includes but extends beyond what is typically understood as falling into this area. Thus, much of this chapter involves literature on peace education that assumes it appears in one specific area of a curriculum. However, there are problems in limiting peace education to a single segment of the curriculum. As Harber (2022) points out, the distinct possibility is that this becomes an oasis of peaceful practice within the desert of a hidden school curriculum that is often violent in various ways (which potentially applies also to the contexts of nonformal education as well as higher education).

Writing about teacher education, Chisholm (2019) refers to Biesta’s notion, ‘that education functions in at least three overlapping domains: qualifications, socialisation and subjectification, or the creation of human subjectivity.’ She (Chisholm, 2019, p. 9) quotes Biesta (2013) that:

...subjectification has an orientation toward emancipation, that is, toward ways of doing and being that do not simply accept the given order but have an orientation toward the change of the existing order so that different ways of doing and being become possible.

Because its focus extends beyond formal education, the first domain is relevant only when peace education becomes a formal part of the curriculum. The second domain, that of socialisation, is an area that need not be but typically is in conflict with effective peace education, as in the point made by Harber (2022). The third domain, that of subjectification or human subjectivity, is closely aligned to the aims of this study because of its critical sense of possibility. Much of this chapter concerns exactly that; we cannot imagine education for peace without exploring how ‘different ways of doing and being become possible.’

Surveying peace education has been very difficult. My reading of Harris and Morrison (2003), which attempts to deal comprehensively with peace education, is that programmes that in some way claim to be, or could be seen to be, programmes of peace education cover an extremely wide and diffuse field, from those that focus quite narrowly on disarmament to environmental education or those that are termed ‘empowerment education’ (Harris & Morrison, 2003). This takes me immediately into contestations around the theorisation of peace education.

A significant issue to be addressed is the extent to which teacher education for peace takes into account a context of high levels of violence. Bekerman and Zembylas (2014, p. 53) address this point directly:

Is there something unique to be said about the relationship between peace education and teacher education in conflict and post-conflict societies such as the ones we come from? Or is the issue simply about ‘adding’ the dimension of peace education to what is already known about teacher education theories and practices?

The basic argument that I will be developing here is this: first, that peace education is inadequately theorised in much of the literature because of the failure to attend to fundamental assumptions that underlie much ‘peace education’. Secondly, that peace education can helpfully draw on developments in related areas of theory, such as trauma studies, critical pedagogy and social justice education. Thirdly, that a more coherent formulation of peace education requires a clear understanding of what the problem is that is being addressed, in other words, of violence and how it operates, in particular within education. In this regard, the context of violence makes the challenges more intense and makes more immediate the difficulties in a ‘business as usual’ approach to teacher education. Fourthly, that the role of the teacher is a vital element – though not the only element – in change, and that systematic and sustained development of teachers is necessary for them to be able to do justice to the demands of effective peace education.

4.2 EDUCATION FOR PEACE: DEFINING AND IDENTIFYING ITS SCOPE

The existing scholarship generally uses the term *peace education*, so a practical first step will be to explore how this term is used, and to clarify how this relates to the concerns of this study.

A question that arises is whether we are referring to a broad process that informs educational work or referring to a specific area of a formal or nonformal curriculum. Bjerstedt (1992, p. 6) draws a distinction between explicit and implicit peace education:

In peace education literature a distinction is sometimes made between explicit and implicit peace education, or between peace education as text and as context. Explicit peace education or peace education as text then refers to direct information on or discussion of issues of war and peace. Implicit peace education or peace education as context are expressions used instead when one thinks about the kind of education towards peaceful values and behavior that may result from experiencing and being a

member of an open, gentle and dialogue-oriented school society (a school characterized by cooperation and freedom from authoritarianism).

This distinction seems to underlie very different ways in which peace education is written of, even though the distinction is seldom noted. Harris and Morrison (2003, p. 9), whose work on peace education is frequently referred to in the literature, define the work in terms of a process and philosophy:

The process involves empowering people with the skills, attitudes and knowledge to create a safe world and build a sustainable environment. The philosophy teaches non-violence, love, compassion and reverence for all life.

While the language of ‘empowerment’ is one that I will explore critically below, the emphasis on process and philosophy takes the focus away from the formal elements of a curriculum. At this point, though, a second issue arises; the description is very wide-ranging indeed. For example, some would argue that learning how to develop renewable energy is part of building a ‘sustainable environment.’ Possibly elements of this do indeed take the form of peace education, but some is surely better understood in terms such as education in engineering, architecture or life sciences.

The UNICEF definition is rather more focused and clearly defined:

Peace education in UNICEF refers to the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. (Fountain, 1999, p. 1)

The language of ‘behaviour change’ sits somewhat oddly here, as if people do not already practise certain behaviours that would promote peace. This raises the question as to who do the ‘promoting’ and what kind of ‘behaviour change’ they have been through. The definition acknowledges that peace can be understood as applying at different levels (as with Bronfenbrenner, 2005) and further that violence (including Galtung’s (1969) concept of structural violence) is identified as a problem that peace education must address. However, the definition may give too confident an assertion of the endpoint, as if we can all agree on what the outcomes of peace education can be; I explore this point further below.

The following four definitions and descriptions are set out to indicate how broadly described peace education is. First is that of Page (2008, p. 189), who writes that peace education should be thought of:

...as encouraging a commitment to peace as a settled disposition and enhancing the confidence of the individual as an individual agent of peace; as informing the student on the consequence of war and social injustice; as informing the student on the value of peaceful and just social structures and working to uphold or develop such social structures; as encouraging the student to love the world and to imagine a peaceful future; and as caring for the student and encouraging the student to care for others.

Bar-Tal (2002, p. 28) argues that:

...within the wide range of different peace education programs, a common general objective can be found. They all aim to foster changes that will make the world a better, more humane place.

Peace Direct (n.d.) describes peace education thus:

Peace education activities promote the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help people either to prevent the occurrence of conflict, resolve conflicts peacefully, or create social conditions conducive to peace.

These definitions cover a very wide range of aims and activities, such as social action, that would not be typically recognised as education. Peace Direct (n.d.) describes the forms that peace education takes:

...peace education programmes across the world address a wide range of themes. These include nonviolence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, disarmament, gender equality, human rights, environmental responsibility, history, communication skills, coexistence, and international understanding and tolerance of diversity.

Similarly, Harris and Morrison (2003) identify as major variants the following: human rights education, environmental education, international education, conflict resolution education, development education, the role of the United Nations in peace education, and peace education for adults.

The lack of a clear central core is something that one must feel from a review of the various approaches and definitions. Further, some of the definitions and descriptions are rather

directive ('informing the student', 'empowering', 'bring about behaviour changes'), which raises a question – may the pedagogy used by peace educators conflict in some ways with a central aim, which for me is best expressed as something like 'enabling learning that creates the conditions for peace'? Such learning may involve both understanding how violence arises and is promoted through social structure and recognising our capacity for creating conditions for peace in the immediate presence. It may surely also entail responding to existing or potential conflict in a way that turns such situations towards peace rather than towards violence.

Reardon (1999) acknowledges the lack of a clear focus: 'The lack of definition... is most likely because peace education has sprung up in many parts of the world, often independently of efforts in other countries, and has been developed in various subject areas' (Reardon, 1999, p. 4). Bar-Tal (2002) provides additional reasoning: he argues that the 'elusive' nature of peace education, as he terms it, is because peace education consists of a response to context, and the great variety of forms peace education takes is driven by the great variety of contexts in which it takes place. He argues that '...peace objectives often contain a direct challenge to the present state of a society' (Bar-Tal, 2002, p. 28) – though whether this is as systematic or thorough enough is explored further below. Williams (2010) similarly argues that the development of symbiotic relationships between peace movements, peace research and peace education has been critical in informing the different forms that peace education has taken internationally.

Snauwaert (2012) builds explicitly on Reardon's (1999) work in distinguishing different forms of peace education. He distinguishes between reform, reconstructivist and transformational approaches. Snauwaert (2012) draws a distinction amongst three broad philosophical approaches behind the ways in which peace is understood, with implications for what peace education then consists of. He distinguishes between different traditions of international relations theory. The first is realism; an approach that does not raise issues of ethics and assumes the inevitability of conflict and war; the approach for those seeking peace is to achieve a balance of power that limits the possibilities of war. The second is that of international relations theory; both people and states need to follow principles of mutual respect, and non-intervention. This is thus a normative approach based on international agreements. The third approach 'finds its moral grounding in a basic commitment to equal respect for persons, a respect that transcends cultural and political boundaries' and provides a global perspective of peace grounded in the full realization of human rights.' Elsewhere, Snauwaert (2011) draws on authors like Sen and Nussbaum, aligning this approach to the capabilities approach. The table below, based on his article, sets out the basic distinctions.

Approaches	Form of peace	Philosophical	Aims	Pedagogy
Reform	Negative peace		Prevention of war, balance of power	Transmission of information and skills
Reconstructivist	Positive peace	Transcendental institutionalism	Organise international institutions, mechanisms for peace	Transmission of information and skills
Critical transformation	Positive peace	Realization-focused orientation to justice	Rejection of violence of all forms	One that elicits learning and develops the capacity of critical, ethical, and contemplative reflective inquiry

Table 4.1 Distinguishing between three approaches to peace education, following Snauwaert (2012)

This provides a useful framework for thinking through different approaches to peace education. This study has been aligned to a critical paradigm and thus connects best with the third approach.

4.2.1 Education for a culture of peace

A particular emphasis that has developed in this area is that of the need to develop a ‘culture of peace’. In 1992, UNESCO adopted this as a key principle for its work (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 125). In supporting this approach, Reardon (1999, pp. 30-31) points out the limitations of much of the typical programmes of peace education. She writes:

Few challenged any of the fundamental cultural assumptions of education, the organization of the school and the specific processes of the dominant form of pedagogy, and even fewer probed the role of education in the development of consciousness... Given the particular nature of the current problems of violence... A culture of peace perspective promises the possibility to probe these depths, the “heart”, the self concept and identity of the human species and the cosmologies from which these concepts and the dominant modes of thinking as a culture of violence arises.

This brings a closer connection to the work of both Bourdieu (1977) in terms of ‘dispositions’ and of Freire (1972, 2005) in terms of the latter’s challenge to the processes of pedagogy. This

takes Reardon (1999) to argue for an approach that she describes as ‘transformational’. She sets out key values that she sees as central to a culture of peace: ‘environmental sustainability, cultural diversity, human solidarity, social responsibility, and gender equality’ (Reardon, 1999, p. 3). For these values to be achieved through education, she argues, teacher education needs to develop the corresponding capacities: ‘ecological awareness; cultural competency; global agency; conflict proficiency and gender sensitivity’ (Reardon, 1999, p. 37). Snauwaert (2012) perceives her approach as fundamentally aligned to the critical transformation approach.

What makes this approach helpful is that it directs attention to the ways in which education can communicate and build peace even without a formal presence in the curriculum (which links to the point about explicit and implicit peace education made above by Bjerstedt, 1994a). We need our institutions (schools, universities, non-profit organisations, etc.) to exemplify a culture of peace (Harris & Morrison, 2005, p. 125), whether people are learning mathematics, languages or peace education. This distinction can help inform the strategy of peace education – and the strategy for relevant teacher education.

Horner et al. (2015, p. 30) emphasise that effective peace education needs a simultaneous focus on content and pedagogy:

Educating for peace is concerned with both content and pedagogy, with pedagogy recognised to be central to peace education. Content would include knowledge, skills and attitudes. For example, knowledge would include knowledge about the conflict, human rights treaties, other religious beliefs etc.; skills would include collaboration, critical thinking, mediation etc; while attitudes would incorporate justice, equity, fairness, care etc. All of these attributes need to be taught using methods that reflect them, so authoritarian pedagogies that suppress critical thinking are replaced with participatory pedagogies, skills such as collaboration and mediation are honed through group work and justice and fairness are reflected in the inclusion of all learners in an equitable classroom and relevant lesson content.

As with Snauwaert (2011, 2012), these authors stress the necessity for transformative peace education to ensure an alignment between content and pedagogy – an alignment that may in reality be difficult to achieve given the constraints of habitus and our socialisation, as explored in the previous chapter. This literature would seem to be sufficient in describing peace education that is aligned to the critical orientation of this study. However, there are some strong

challenges in the literature that identify, even in the critical and transformative approaches, ways in which peace education indirectly contributes to violence. I will turn to these next.

4.2.2 Critical views of peace education

Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a, p. 199) contend that any attempt to provide one integrated understanding of peace education is counter-productive, as ‘it would undermine local understandings of how participants can cultivate a sense of transformative agency on the basis of contextual values and truth claims.’ Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a, p. 204) argue against the idea that peace education should be a formal segment of a curriculum:

We believe that peace education is neither productive nor relevant, if it is considered as a subject-matter area similar to mathematics or science. This is so because: first, peace education is not a ‘thing’ (a reified knowledge which can be transmitted – similarly, mathematics or science are not reified knowledge either); second, peace education is a set of activities and not a set of abstract ideas – activities in the world and not ideas in the head; and, third, if we overlook the previous two points, we fall into the same epistemological mistakes of the West which has idealized, conceptualized (as fix), and psychologized (focusing on the head) that which is human and its education... We seem to fear that if we do not speak about ‘peace education’ as such, we will lose an area of specialization and thus go unrecognized or perhaps delegitimized in the academy.

Underlying these differences are different approaches within theory on how we think of and design curricula (Smith, 1996, 2000). Smith identifies four approaches, two of which are these: curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted and as product, as an attempt to achieve certain ends in students. These two approaches are typical of positivist Western approaches to education and training that still dominate much of school and higher education. It is these that Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a) are challenging. In contrast, Smith (1996, 2000) identifies two further approaches, curriculum as process and as praxis. These are more open-ended and uncertain; the latter in particular is close to the Freirean ideal of a dialogue between educator and student.

What Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a, 2013b) direct our attention to is the need for some conceptual clarification that is often lacking. For example, Reardon (1999, p. 6) proposes a definition of peace education, as follows:

Peace education is the transmission of knowledge about requirements of, the obstacles to and possibilities for achieving and maintaining peace, training in skills for interpreting the knowledge, and the development of reflective and participatory capacities for applying the knowledge to overcoming problems and achieving possibilities.

The problem with such a definition is that it that some elements seem to slip away from a truly critical approach. The idea that teachers ‘transmit’ knowledge is at odds with the language of ‘eliciting’ learning used earlier by Snauwaert (2012) in relation to Reardon’s (1988) work. At times it feels as if theorists of peace education may unknowingly reproduce some elements of the structures that they recognise as violent. Certainly, though, peace education must involve ‘new knowledge’; the questions concern whose knowledge it is, how it is made available, on what terms and under what constraints. This raises questions as to epistemic violence, especially in contexts with histories of colonisation (Hlatshwayo, 2024; Perez, 2019; Spivak, 1994).

As with Zembylas and Bekerman, (2013a, 2013b), Salomon (2002, p. 3) criticises the scope and the lack of a conceptual core of much peace education, pointing out that ‘... too many profoundly different kinds of activities taking place in an exceedingly wide array of contexts are all lumped under the same category label of “peace education” as if they belong together.’ Further strong criticism of peace education comes from those who see it as inherently captive of Western philosophical assumptions, and who reject all three of the approaches identified by Snauwaert (2011). The first point may be simply the assumption in much of the peace education literature that teachers typically promote peace. Save the Children (2006, p. 7) point out the various ways in which teachers may impose assumptions and views that reinforce social division and active discrimination. In addition, they point to the ways in which education can be a tool of exclusion that fosters violence.

Similarly, in a comprehensive review of the role of teachers in peacebuilding, Horner et al. (2015, p. 7) note that, ‘Teachers are sometimes positioned as perpetrators of violence, including political violence and found engaged with armed groups, and in acts of Gender Based Violence (GBV) on their students’ – which raises the question as to the extent to which teacher education addresses such issues through its curriculum and pedagogy. This is evidence against the assumption that Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a, p. 201) identify, that peace can be promoted,

‘through reforms in the educational system that focus on instilling the ‘appropriate’ knowledge to students and... with proper training, teachers can foster the implementation of peace, tolerance, justice, equality, and recognition values for all,’

Perhaps the most forceful of the critics is Gur Ze’ev (2001), who writes:

Many versions of peace education work within the framework of modernist technical reason, manifested through various positivist, pragmatic, and functionalist views of knowledge, which pay scant attention to the social and cultural context and the violence that produces their yardsticks and conceptions of knowledge, values, aims, and imagination, as well as their own identity (Gur Ze’ev, 2001, p. 336).

The criticism is that advocates of peace education do not question the rationalist origins and the implicit assumptions of ‘civilization’. In other words, the same philosophical traditions that led into modern peace education also led us into the Holocaust and colonialism. Gur Ze’ev (2005, p. 337) adds that ‘Even peace education within the framework of current critical pedagogy has sometimes had an essentialist conception of human rights and a positivistic conception of “true” critical knowledge in the service of peace education.’ Although Gur Ze’ev (2005, p.323) also targets Freire, the latter (Freire, 1988) had himself warned of the dangers of pursuing a peace education that fails to recognise fully the violence of its context: ‘Peace is created and developed in the never-ending construction of social justice. This is why I do not believe in so-called peace education that, instead of bringing to light the world of injustice, obscures it and has the effect of oppressing its victims even more’ (Freire, 1988, p. 27).

Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a, p. 198) similarly argue for peace educators to interrogate critically the ‘taken for granted assumptions about peace and peace education.’ They contend that these assumptions – for example, the ways in which societies allocate specific identities to people – become a straitjacket that limit possibilities and even reproduce social divisions. While they write in the context of Cyprus and Israel, it is noticeable how readily South African educators and educational researchers work with the racial categories of apartheid as if these are self-evident realities.

A striking example in the South African context was the rhetoric of racial reconciliation and nation building (Chaka, 2014) that leaders promoted in the period after the birth of democracy. In an article on peace education in South Africa, Carl (2011, p. 139) lists the many diverse expectations of peace education, including reconciliation and nation building. Yet we have experienced a rapid growth in xenophobic violence (Masiko-Mpaka, 2023) and there is

evidence that this violence is linked to the emphasis on national building. Palmary (2015, p. 64) quotes from a publication of the Department of Arts and Culture (2012) that:

The challenge, therefore, is to enhance social cohesion and foster the development of a shared South African identity which incorporates diversity in a democratic dispensation. This relates directly to the translation of the rights and responsibilities of both the State and its citizens into social reality' (section 5).

Palmary (2015, p. 65) argues that social cohesion is linked with nation building, as if unproblematic, and that 'the cohesive South African nation that is invented through the social cohesion and nation building strategy is gendered and potentially dangerous.' She gives specific evidence (ibid.) as to how a research respondent uses the language of national unity and racial reconciliation to justify the exclusion of African foreigners. This accords with a comment by Bekerman and Zembylas (2014, p. 406), in an article on integrated education, that, 'the full complexity of heterogeneity remains unacknowledged and the emergence of a majoritised view of integration is infused into the societal and educational practices of the everyday.'

Thus, peace education designed to foster areas of common interest to ensure conditions of peace under the umbrella of national unity may well conflict with those that explore difference and diversity. I recall from our schooling as young white children the official emphasis on 'national unity', using the slogan *Eendracht maak macht!* What was being referred to was of course the unity of whites against the implicit threat from black people; the purpose of this unity was of course to separate us more thoroughly from black people (Palmary, 2015, pp. 63-64). The full complexity of heterogeneity remains unacknowledged and the emergence of a majoritised view of integration is infused into the societal and educational practices of the everyday

One of Gur Ze'ev's points is how international organisations promote education as a universal good. In a similar vein, Bush and Saltarelli (2000) review the possibilities for peace education in schools and set out two contrasting findings, the one being the negative impact of schooling on the possibilities for peace, the other being the positive impact. A study by Lauritzen (2013) in Kenya reveals that the introduction of peace education into four primary schools in Kenya ran directly counter to the hierarchical structuring of the school. The findings were that what was possible in peace education was constrained by the underlying rationale of authoritarian control in the schools, including the use of corporal violence. Harber (2022) argues that the

nature of schools in most societies is hierarchical and includes practices such as authoritarian teaching and practices of control systems, including various forms of direct and cultural violence. Thus, he argues that peace education is not possible within such schooling systems.

Kester and Cremin (2017) argue for the need for peace educators to engage in a deeper level of critical reflection, based not only on one’s individual experiences in education but on a critical exploration of where and how the dominant ideas were formed. They draw on Sriprakash and Mukhopadhyay (2015, p. 232), who argue that:

A second-order engagement with reflexivity encourages us to trace the ways in which knowledge about educational development is assembled: how particular ‘truths’ about educational development are produced through empirical studies, how these ‘truths’ circulate, and how they gain an apparent stability and durability.

By ‘second-order’, the authors mean going beyond a reflection by the individual researcher on their engagement with the study; it extends to a critical scrutiny of how knowledge is understood in the research process used by the researcher, whether the assumptions the researcher is making are subject to questioning or not and how the politics of knowledge operates in that work (Sriprakash & Mukhopadhyay, 2015; Kester & Cremin, 2017). The focus on a deeper level of critical scrutiny is relevant, for example, to questions of decolonisation (see below).

As pointed out in Chapter 2, Kester and Cremin (2017) warn of limitations arising from the enthusiastic adoption of the theories of Galtung (1969, 1990) and Freire (1972, 2005); researchers and educators need to ask further and more searching questions about the limitations of these approaches. On this basis, the authors put forward a model for a more reflective approach to peace education (Kester & Cremin, 2017, p. 1421), that is set out here in their own formulation.

	Direct violence	Cultural violence	Structural violence	Poststructural violence
	To address this type of violence, peacekeeping is typically utilized.	To address this type of violence, peacebuilding or peacemaking and/or Freirian reflexivity is typically utilized.	To address this type of violence, peacemaking or peacebuilding and/or Freirian reflexivity is typically utilized.	To address this type of violence, Bourdieusian and Freirian reflexivity is utilized.

Negative peace	Absence of physical harm to self and others.	Absence of attitudinal and cultural normative injustices, such as ethnocentrism, patriarchy or hetero-normativity. E.g., reduced levels of intolerance.	Absence of discrimination in social, economic and political institutions. E.g., non-discrimination clauses within schools, corporations and legal policy.	Absence of second order reflexivity on academic practices that perpetuate structural and cultural violence, despite Freirian first order reflexivity.
Positive peace	Presence of values, behaviours and institutions that prevent physical harm. E.g., reverence for life; peaceful security forces; and conflict resolution education.	Presence of Freirian conscientisation, critical pedagogy, and respect of other cultures and ways of being. E.g., Respecting, embracing, and including diverse perspectives and practices to enrich communities of experience.	Presence of Freirian conscientisation, critical pedagogy, and institutional policies and law that promote diversity, inclusion and reconciliation. E.g., restorative justice mechanisms, community activism, etc.	Presence of second order (i.e., discipline-based) reflexivity in order to moderate the equilibrium between peace theory and practice.

Table 4.2 An integrated theory of peace and violence in education drawing on Galtung, Freire, and Bourdieu. Kester and Cremin (2015, p. 1421)

This provides a useful contrast with the table developed earlier, based on Snauwaert (2012). A further point of criticism comes from Kester and Cremin (2017, p. 1418), who point out the cognitive bias of Western philosophical and educational approaches:

Some of these critics call for greater attention to bodily, aesthetic and historicized dimensions of experience, and to the role of the arts, emotion and spirituality in helping PACS [peace and conflict studies] education to transcend the field's rational limitations (Dietrich, 2012; Zembylas, 2015).

They include approaches that include the emotions and sense of embodiment of peace, such as Gandhi's Satyagraha. This accords with the criticisms of critical pedagogy, below, by scholars such as Ellsworth (1987). It is a reminder that peace educators should be fully aware of

indigenous resources – in our context, for example, the philosophy of ubuntu (Jared Reichbaum, 2007).

4.2.3 Implications for this study

This study does not focus primarily on specific curricular areas of peace education, but rather on the issues of pedagogy. However, there is a particularly close relationship between a culture of peace as described above and a pedagogy of peace. One implication is that there is a need for consistency between the aims of peace education and the pedagogical approaches used by the teacher, whether the focus is on more theoretical areas of study, critical reflection or skills development.

The caution is that such a culture of peace should be subject to critical scrutiny over whether it replicates unawares some of the cultural assumptions of western societies. This has also direct implications for educational practice, such as raising questions as to our emotional responses and the need to bring into discussion existing resources for peace that students bring.

The argument that has been developed here would support a strong process orientation to a curriculum for peace education, the implication of which is that the pedagogy takes a central place in the education that is carried out.

Focusing in greater depth on pedagogy requires exploring the educational movements that have informed the pedagogy of peace education.

4.3 PEDAGOGIES THAT HAVE INFLUENCED PEACE EDUCATION

We cannot understand fully the possibilities for peace education without exploring the influence on it of other movements and scholars who have contributed to forms of pedagogy that are frequently utilized within peace education.

Key movements have been critical pedagogy (Darder, Baldonado & Torres, 2009), the transformative learning of Mezirow (1997), and social justice education (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007). This section thus deals with these in turn.

4.3.1 Critical pedagogy

This movement within education derives primarily from the work of Freire, whose thinking was set out in the theoretical framework chapter, though there is also present the influence of Fanon and of the Frankfurt School of critical theorists.

The key element in this thinking is the problematization of relations within education and between education and society from a perspective that reveals and challenges inequalities within society, amongst which class was perhaps the first identified.

This work has drawn on Marxism but has subject to critique the narrowly structuralist approach of early Marxist theory and the absence of attention to social and psychological issues. Darder, Baltodano and Torres (2003) trace the antecedents of the movement, which draw crucially on Freire (1971) as reported above, and the work of radical adult educators, such as Myles Horton of the Highlander School, who interacted directly with the civil rights movement (Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2003, p. 3). While they identify the role of the Frankfurt Theory scholars in providing the foundational philosophical principles for this thinking on education (*ibid.*, p. 10), they emphasise that ‘no formula or homogeneous representation exists for the universal implementation of any form of critical pedagogy’ and that ‘the multitude of both specific and complex expression of these philosophical ideas have been articulated through a variety of intellectual traditions.’

They rather list areas in which the work of critical pedagogy is demonstrated. These included the following: ‘a culture of schooling that supports the empowerment of culturally marginalized and economically disenfranchised students’ and the recognition that schools ‘thwart or influence the development of a politically emancipatory and humanizing culture of participation, voice, and social action within education’ (Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2003, p. 11).

Secondly, there is a recognition of and challenges to the ways in which ‘public schools serve to position select groups within asymmetrical power relations that serve to replicate the existing values and privileges of the dominant class’ (*ibid.*, p. 11).

A further element of this work is the raising of awareness amongst students of their role in history, seeing themselves both as subject to history and with the agency to enable transformation of society. This includes unravelling the connections between knowledge and the norms and values of the society (*ibid.*, p. 12).

Further, there is in this work a strong emphasis on interrogating the ideologies that have shaped educational practices and to develop ideology as a ‘starting point for asking questions that will help teachers to evaluate critically their practices and to better recognize how the culture of the dominant class becomes embedded in the hidden curriculum...’ (*ibid.*, p. 13) Theorists also

explore how resistance operates and the extent to which it can be developed in counter-hegemonic ways, enabling those voices and experiences on the margins to be made central.

A typical element, introduced by Freire (1971), is the notion of praxis, the interaction of theory and action. A true praxis is impossible in the undialectical vacuum driven by a separation of the individual from the object of their study. This entails critical attention to one's own theorising and attending to the question of power relations within both teaching and research (Darder, Baltodano & Torres, p. 15) – an echo of the point about second-order reflexivity made above (Sriprakash & Mukhopadhyay, 2015; Kester & Cremin, 2017). Thus, this movement places a strong emphasis on questioning and reflecting during and after taking action.

Following Freire (1972/2005), dialogue has been seen as a central element in the relationship between teacher and student, in which each learns from the other, leading to a critical social consciousness. Such elements as these – empowerment of marginalized people, recognition of power relations, locating education within history and society, critique of ideology, praxis and dialogue – are generally understood to inform this approach to education. By implication, we should expect an approach to peace education that takes a critical perspective to adopt the same elements in its exploration of violence and peace.

However, as with peace education, critical pedagogy has drawn sustained criticism from those who share a critical view of society but challenge it on the basis both of its philosophical assumptions and its failure to realise in practice its commitments to such terms as empowerment and voice. A notable early criticism came from Ellsworth (1987). Her indictment was that critical pedagogy has served to privilege middle-class, white men's way of thinking. She argues (Ellsworth, 1987, p. 298) that '...key assumptions, goals, and pedagogical practices fundamental to the literature on critical pedagogy – namely, "empowerment", "student voice", "dialogue", and even the term "critical" – are repressive myths that perpetuate relations of domination'. This, she argues, arises from the experience of trying to follow the precepts of critical pedagogy in the classroom setting. Instead, she argues for the need for classroom practices that 'were context specific and ... responsive to our own understandings of our social identities and situations.' (ibid., p. 299).

Faced with the experiences of those who had been subject to one or other form of oppression – on the basis, for example, of gender, race or sexuality – critical pedagogy focused narrowly on '...the teaching of analytical and critical skills for judging the truth and merit of propositions, and the interrogation and selective appropriation of potentially transformative

moments in the dominant culture' (Ellsworth, 1987, p. 304). This privileging of reason endorses only one of the possible approaches to issues of inequality, that of a specific and Eurocentric philosophical tradition.

A similar challenge comes from Gore (2003), who criticises the concept of empowerment. It presupposes that teachers can somehow empower others, reinforcing a role for teachers that flies in the face of the Freirean notion of dialogue between teacher and student. She points out that the use of this term in critical pedagogy assumes '(1) an agent of empowerment, (2) a notion of power as property, and (3) some kind of vision or desirable end state' (Gore, 2003, p. 333). She takes examples from the literature on critical pedagogy of how empowerment is used in this way and contrasts that with the actual difficulty of implementing a critical approach within a classroom setting.

A key point of criticism is how theorists of critical pedagogy use Foucault's concept of 'regimes of truth' as applying to dominant discourses, contrasting them with the assumed liberatory potential of critical discourses (Gore, 2003, p. 337). She (Gore, 2003) points out that Foucault's use of this concept was a way of interrogating how *any* discourse can serve as a 'regime of truth', whatever its claim to liberation. This leads into a critical discussion of the concept of power.

4.3.1.1 Problematizing 'power'

This line of argument leads into the inescapable position of one's own complicity. Gore (2003, p. 338) comments on the need to see oneself within the regime of truth: '...there is a danger of forgetting to examine one's own (or one's group's) implication in the conditions one seeks to affect' and we need to be 'more humble and reflexive in our claims' (ibid., p. 339). Here Gore applies this directly to the education of teachers, recognising that, whatever our intentions, we cannot ensure that they will teach in the ways we hope. Educators of teachers in reality often get it wrong; attempts to 'empower' may well fail as teachers hit into the harsh realities of schools and other educational contexts.

Rather than empowerment in the sense of handing over power, Gore (2003) takes the stance that we do as teachers inevitably wield power and thus need to use it with responsibility and self-awareness. '...the energies of those of us who advocate critical and feminist pedagogies might be better directed at seeking ways to exercise power toward the fulfilment of our espoused aims, ways that include humility, skepticism and self-criticism' (Gore, 2003, p. 345).

These points must apply equally to any form of peace education that recognises the links between inequality and violence. Put in different terms, critical pedagogy runs the danger of committing epistemic violence through imposing an approach that preaches the ‘truth’, in so doing disrespecting the complex ways in which students have made sense of their experiences, experiences that may diverge sharply from those of their teachers.

This discussion meshes strongly with the approach outlined above by Gur Ze’ev (2001) and other critics of peace education. A critical peace education must proceed with awareness of the possible ways in which its aims are subverted through unreflective and overly confident methods.

Kumashiro (2000) is another theorist of critical pedagogy, who has developed a categorisation of what he terms ‘anti-oppressive education’; it has some creative possibilities for thinking about different perspectives that may be applied to contexts of structural violence. It consists of identifying four approaches that he sees as complementary to each other, though each also has its own limitations: education for the other, education about the other, education that is critical of privileging and othering, and education that changes students and society. The first aims to redress the failures of education for certain oppressed groups; the second educates all about the history and experiences of the oppressed, while the third is close to the more typical forms of critical pedagogy described here. The fourth is seen as moving towards changing students, in the sense of such strategies as altering citational practices (Kumashiro, 2000, p. 42), for example, by challenging the ways in which language operates to normalise oppression or working with student resistance in creative ways. This last approach brings his work closer to the more dialogic and holistic approach to peace education that is emerging from the discussion in this chapter.

4.3.2 Mezirow’s transformative learning and adult education

A particularly influential theorist who drew on critical theory (Brookfield, 2005, pp. 121-122) was Jack Mezirow. Mezirow saw himself as an adult educator and theorised education more broadly than in the school sector alone. He advanced the notion of transformative learning, which he described as ‘the process of effecting change in a *frame of reference*’ (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5). In this approach, we develop a frame of reference to the world based on our experiences that have inevitably been shaped since childhood largely by others. ‘When circumstances permit, transformative learners move toward a frame of reference that is more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience’ (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5).

Crucially, components of a frame of reference are cognitive, conative and emotional. The frame of reference also has two dimensions: habits of mind and a point of view. The concept of habits of mind is very similar to Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus. For example, we may develop a habit of mind that, as men, we are entitled to certain advantages, this habit guiding our relevant beliefs, actions and emotions. A point of view applies such elements to a specific individual or group (African people, a particular colleague, etc.). The point of view is more readily accessible to change; we could use our agency to explore a different point of view.

A point of view may be fairly easily changed, but habits of mind much less so. Mezirow (1997) advances Habermas's (1981) idea of communicative problem solving and learning as key to changing habits of mind. The process of 'communicative learning involves understanding purposes, values, beliefs, and feelings' (Mezirow, 1997, p. 6) and is thus more broadly understood than the more cognitive bias of many theorists of critical pedagogy. Such transformation in the frame of reference may result from a series of changes in point of view that leads to questioning at a deeper level our habit of mind, or through some major experience that requires a more fundamental change of perspective.

Mezirow sees the process of adult learning as leading towards what he refers to as 'a socially responsive autonomous thinker' (ibid., p. 8), though adults typically have a series of short-term learning goals for instrumental purposes. The role of the educator then, as with other critical theorists, is to assist learners to become more aware of their own assumptions and to engage in discourse with other learners:

In fostering self-direction, the emphasis is on creating an environment in which learners become increasingly adept at learning from each other and at helping each other learn in problem-solving groups. The educator functions as a facilitator and provocateur rather than as an authority on subject matter. (Mezirow 1997, p. 11)

As someone who worked in adult education for a long period, I would make the point that methods appropriate to adults are often very helpful also in working with younger people, despite the influence of ideas such as 'andragogy' that I have always regarded with deep scepticism (see Brookfield, 2005, pp. 83-85, for how theorists of adult education spun the idea of 'self-directed learning'). The account I provide in Chapter 2 of Khethokuhle's activity is relevant; he is self-directed to a point, but in a context set up with a person to guide him where needed. Educators need always to take into account the context and the experiences and characteristics of learners; that does not entail treating the desire for learning, the development

of skills and understanding and the sense of accomplishment in learning as elements that change fundamentally when one becomes an adult.

A possible limitation that I see in Mezirow's work is the lack of a strong emphasis on how such transformations can take place within societies constrained by great inequality, violence and trauma. Secondly, while it fully acknowledges the significance of the individual in the group setting, on people interacting thoughtfully with each, learning from the perspectives and experiences of others, and breaking through the limitations of common-sense socialised assumptions, is this process universally relevant, or is there a need to encourage it to shift to accommodate the local context?

Ntseane (2011, p. 309), writing in the context of Botswana, argues that Mezirow's approach to transformational learning is skewed towards individual capacity. She writes that:

In cultural contexts where transformation as a way of knowing is determined by context and other factors such as gender, power, ethnicity, and class, this emphasis ignores culturally accepted collective learning experiences (Johnson-Barley & Alfred, 2006). For example, in Botswana there is an interconnected relationship between the individual, community, and other forces such as nature and ancestral spirits.

What this may mean is extending the focus to include elements that are more emotional, intuitive and subjective, drawing on elements of local culture such as folklore, drama and poetry (Ntseane, 2011, p. 310). This criticism is of general significance; it touches on the problem of the ways that the cultural expectations of the West become assumed by theorists to be universal.

4.3.3 Social justice education

This is a movement that developed from theorists in various fields who recognised the multiplicity of oppressions and sought to theorise ways of addressing them through participatory educational processes. As Adams, Bell and Griffin (2007, p. xvii) write:

We draw upon multiple pedagogies to help participants consider information about various forms of oppression in light of their own personal experiences in ways that we hope foster critique, self-assessment, and more conscious choices about the actions they take in the world.

A central feature that distinguished this from earlier forms of critical pedagogy has been the strong emphasis on working with the experiences of students and encouraging them to theorise

on that basis. Furthermore, it foregrounds the experience not only of those disadvantaged through oppression but also those privileged through oppression, all of which are seen as relevant to understanding how inequality operates structurally and personally.

The concept of oppression is described (Bell, 2007, pp. 3-4) as pervasive, restrictive, hierarchical, and consisting of complex, multiple, cross-cutting relationships. In addition, it acknowledges the significant role of internalisation, as explored in the theoretical framework chapter. Central to this approach to oppression is the concept of intersectionality (Bell, 2007); people simultaneously hold diverse social identities, typically, though not necessarily, including some that are disadvantaged and some that are advantaged in society. There is no hierarchy of oppressions (Hardiman, Jackson & Griffin, 2007, p. 51) and oppressions feed into each other.

A particular strength of the approach is the ways in which it encourages students to trace how they came to be socialised into certain positions that are then normalised (Harro, 2013). This brings into question the assumed reality of how things are by focusing instead on the process of how things came to be seen that way, thus making the process of social construction clearer.

This work emphasises strongly the issue of how theory flows into practice; it states clearly certain principles that inform how teaching should take place (Adams, 2007, pp. 32-33; here the principles are quoted and then further explained:

1. Balance the emotional and cognitive components of the learning process: This entails including developing consensus over how the group operates together and the extent to which students experience a sense of safety.

2. Acknowledge and support the personal (the individual student's experience) while illuminating the systemic (the interactions among social groups). The facilitator needs to encourage connections between the immediate class situation or other real-life events and the systemic and theoretical structure.

3. Attend to social relations within the classroom. This requires addressing the dynamics of class interaction and strengthening communication within the group in an empathetic way.

4. Utilize reflection and experience as tools for student-centered learning. Students' experiences and understanding become the point for developing dialogue and questioning.

5. Value awareness, personal growth, and change as outcomes of the learning process. This requires flexibility in different approaches to learning so that these aspects are free to develop, rather than be specifically taught.

Within this, the creation of a safe space within which emotions can be expressed is a crucial element: ‘Classroom safety is integrally tied to respect and the expression of emotion, especially emotions perceived as negative, such as fear, discomfort, threat, pain, anxiety, hostility, and anger’ (ibid., pp. 29-30). The purpose of such safety is, though, not to achieve comfort but to allow attention to be given to uncomfortable feelings that arise in the process of deeper change. Here the work has been influenced by feminist theory.

A significant element in the theory is the emphasis on the self of the teacher. Bell, Love, Washington and Weinstein (2007, p. 381) write that educators, ‘...often struggle alongside participants in our classes with our own social identities, biases, fears, and prejudices. We, too, need to be willing to examine and deal honestly with our values, assumptions, and emotional reactions to oppression issues.’ This emphasis on self-awareness addresses the criticisms of critical pedagogy made by Ellsworth (1987) and Gore (2003). There is a distinct encouragement to reflect on one’s own complicity with inequality and violence.

The social education theorists thus stress the need to recognise in ourselves the same struggles and uncertainties that our students may experience, a point emphasised also by Hammerness et al. (2005, p. 384). A specific advantage is that this creates a greater possibility of empathy in the process. Given the emphasis on intersectionality, educators are encouraged to reflect on how we handle those aspects of our life where we experience privilege and those where we experience disadvantage, providing some insight into how our students (and colleagues) may experience the specific identities they hold. Extrapolating this to discussions on peace and violence, the significance is in recognising our own complicity as well as our own resistance and commitment. This echoes Gore’s (2003) point about humility in our exercise of power.

What are the key limitations in this approach? There are three aspects to this work that I see as limiting its effectiveness. The first is the concept put forward of social power. This is defined (Hardiman, Jackson & Griffin, p. 58) as ‘access to resources that enhance one’s chances of getting what one needs or influencing others in order to lead a safe, productive, fulfilling life’. While it can readily be acknowledged that structural violence serves to deprive some groups of resources and ensure that others have access to resources, the idea that one may have or may not ‘have’ social power may obscure people’s capacity for power, whatever their social group.

This use of ‘power’ falls into the problem identified by Gore (2003) above. My own experience of teaching using this theory is that students readily latched onto the idea that ‘we have no power’, thus denying their own capacity and thereby relieving them of responsibility. This can lead into blame of one group for ‘having’ more power, drawing attention away from the possibilities that arise when issues of power are salient. The concept of power in this theory is challenged by Foucault’s understanding of power (1982, p. 220), when he asserts that ‘faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions may open up.’

A second criticism, based on my experience, is that the theory provides a compelling explanation that is readily taken up by teachers as an orthodoxy. They may attempt to fit student experience into the theory, not encouraging students to theorise for themselves. In such a context, assessment runs the danger of seeking the ‘right answers’ within the theory presented. Thirdly, there are important criticisms of the ways in which this work essentialises binaries. Bekerman and Zembylas (2014, p. 57) call for teachers to be ‘critical design experts’, who would encourage students:

...to act as critical ontologists and epistemologists, to look at a social construction within its historicized context rather than taking an idea for granted and treating it as a normative epistemological position. The payoff of doing so has important advantages, because teaching and learning are not grounded any more in essentialist binary pairings such as oppressor/oppressed, perpetrator/victim, and power/freedom that perpetuate normative divisions. Rather, teachers as critical design experts promote the critical examination of how these constructs come to be what they are in the world, and explore what consequences these constructs have for peace education in conflict and post-conflict areas.

This draws attention to a contradiction in the pedagogy of social justice education – the emphasis on process, exemplified by the Cycle of Socialization (Harro, 2013) and the use of binaries (for example, the term ‘agent’ is used for the ‘oppressor’ and ‘target’ for the ‘oppressed’). In the South African context, I encountered in the writing of some students a misunderstanding of the theory, in the idea that, ‘because I am black, I am oppressed.’ This becomes assumed as the sole relevant identity, thus ignoring the crucial issue of intersectionality. This is not to deny the processes of privileging or subordinating that people

employ in oppressive systems; rather, it is to focus attention on the processes and not on some assumed static endpoint.

4.4 FORMS THAT PEACE EDUCATION TAKES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Given the high levels of violence in South African society and given that the study takes place in this society, it is clearly important to report on the extent of peace education and what forms it takes in the country. In this section, I will report on the literature, which mainly reports on specific projects or case studies within schools, in nonformal education or in higher education. I then move to consider the South African literature that theorises in greater depth the issues of how education can address violence within a violent context.

A review of the relevant literature on peace education from South Africa reveals, first, that it is rather thin. There have been relatively few journal articles or scholarly chapters that directly use the term ‘peace education’. At an educational conference in South Africa in 2022, my paper was the only one out of roughly 165 presentations to address issues of violence and peacebuilding directly, though there were others on promoting social justice in schools.

Secondly, there is nonetheless a much larger body of literature on a range of social and political issues within South African education, such as the need to reorient education away from its colonial and apartheid past, and implications for education of the need to address racism, inequality and gender issues (Chisholm, 2004, 2012; De Lange, Mitchell & Bhana, 2012; Hunter, 2019; Msibi, 2012; Moorosi, 2021; Soudien, 2008). It becomes somewhat unclear as to where we draw the line between this broad literature on addressing these historical inequities and peace education - given that, as noted before, all forms of oppression are related to violence. Thus, Kruger and Zembylas (2024) make the point about the need to include such work:

Although we understand peace education through the lens of Bar-Tal and Rosen’s (2009) classic definition—i.e. as an area of social education and field of study concerned with the socialization of both schools and the society in the peace process, especially in areas of war and conflict—we broaden this definition to entail all sorts of social and political conflict, including those lingering from social injustice, oppression, and coloniality.

However, I will not explore this literature systematically except in the few cases where there is an account of a specific intervention that is in some way designed to advance peace.

4.4.1 Violence and the proliferation of programmes and projects

Of the literature identified explicitly as concerning peace education, a common feature is the acknowledgement of the high levels of violence in South African society (Carl, 2011; Dovey, 1996; Hariram, 2003; John, 2013, 2016a, 2016b, 2018; Maxwell, Enslin & Maxwell, 2004; Ndwandwe & Adigun, 2023). Of these, Carl (2011) is limited to an argument in favour of peace education in schools from existing peace education literature, with no empirical research linked to project work. This literature also identifies the plethora of other, primarily non-formal, initiatives that work with schools or in community settings. For example, John (2018b) reports an earlier database of such initiatives. Dovey (1996) describes over 20 such programmes that at the time could be considered as falling within a very broad framing of peace education, ranging from education about the law to education for democracy to education on issues of gender.

There is little information here on the pedagogy used. Dovey (1996) sets out recommendations based on the overview, such as the need to ‘mainstream’ initiatives into the regular curriculum and the need for skills in conflict resolution to be part of teacher education. She identifies (ibid., pp. 146-7) concerns regarding the use of the word ‘peace’, given that, at the time, there were still memories of how ‘peace’ had been used by the apartheid authorities to condemn the anti-apartheid forces that threatened the ‘peaceful’ status quo. Further, she notes the concern that such work requires an approach that conflicts with the ‘authoritarian nature characterizing the management of many of our schools’ (ibid., p. 147).

Maxwell, Enslin and Maxwell (2004) report on a curricular intervention that they had made in a pre-school, to address the aggressive behaviour of children. They argue that such work should permeate the whole curriculum, given that the White Paper on Education and Training states ‘It should be a goal of education and training policy to enable a democratic, free, equal, just and peaceful society to take root and prosper in our land’ (Department of Education, 1995, p. 22). Furthermore, they point out that the *Manifesto on values, education and democracy* (Department of Education, 2001, p. 26; p. 52) specifically recommends peace education. The authors though (Maxwell, Enslin & Maxwell, 2004, pp. 116-7) make the point that:

Democracy and human rights education are more highly developed in the South African formal education context than is peace education as a specific discipline and there is a real danger that peace education could be lost when grouped together with its two better-known siblings. This assertion echoes Salomon’s (1999) concern that

peace education is so tied up with related fields that it is in danger of losing its individuality and the unique perspective and orientation it has to offer.

Despite the evidence they present of the decline of aggressive behaviour by youngsters in the pre-school, the authors note that there is still corporal punishment in the school, though at lower levels. Unusually for studies in this area, it has a strongly quantitative element that aimed to measure behaviour by the children.

The point made about the limited focus on conflict, violence and peace is important. In the Life Orientation curriculum for grades 7 to 9, the overview makes reference once to ‘health and safety issues related to violence’ (Department of Basic Education, 2011). At grade 7 there is a section dealing with abuse in families; at grade 8, substance abuse is linked to violence, and the concept of gender-based violence is introduced. Only at grade 9 is there a specific allocation to issues of violence, for four hours of the curriculum. In the related curriculum statement for grades 10-12, violence is touched only once, in a two-hour session on social and environmental issues in grade 10. A study of grades 7 to 12 learners in North-West Province that used focus group interviews to collect data on student perceptions of Life Orientation found no references to the issues of violence.

There has been little reporting on what forms of peace education are in fact incorporated into the everyday work of schooling. However, Ndwandwe and Aligun (2023) researched this aspect within three schools in the Western Cape, interviewing principals, teachers and learners, and identified specific action taken to manage conflict and violence involving learners more effectively. They found that respondents reported declines in incidents of violence following an intervention assisted by the work of an NGO that focuses on school violence, and stated that, ‘Relative peace and reduced SBV [school-based violence] was motivated by three measures which are (i) peer mediation and peace campaign, (ii) anger management, and (iii) peace clubs’ (Ndwandwe & Aligun, 2023, p. 565). Such work in the schools has been limited. Progress is limited by the time constraints placed on teachers and by the constant violence of the surrounding community. This case does provide some evidence of the potential for focused initiatives within schools, though it is not integrated into the formal curriculum.

4.4.2 Two influential initiatives

These nonformal projects are reported on here in greater depth, as they have been used within various community and educational contexts. John (2018b) reports how he has drawn on these

and two others in his work; they have also informed some of the work in peace clubs. I will describe them briefly.

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is an international movement active in 13 African countries. According to Alternatives to Violence Project (2022):

The Alternatives to Violence Project is a network of volunteers running workshops for anyone who wants to find ways of resolving conflict without resorting to violence. We work in the community and in prisons.

The Thinking Behind AVP

We understand that conflict is a natural and normal part of life, and that it is possible to learn new ways of handling it. By holding workshops in which the participants consider the underlying causes of friction and violence, practical ways of dealing with situations of conflict are worked out.

Our workshops build on everyday experiences and try to help us move away from violent or abusive behaviour by developing other ways of dealing with conflicts. They help us to increase the respect we have for ourselves and others.

John (2018b) describes how the work of AVP in South Africa has included work in schools, prisons and communities, and how a key role of AVP is its development of large numbers of peace educators. AVP uses an approach that works with the experience of participants and has different levels of skills development.

Healing of Memories [HOM] is described by John (2018b) as a programme of peace education that has a specific focus on addressing the trauma and memories of violence and oppression emanating from South African history.

The Institute for Healing of Memories [IHOM] (Institute for the Healing of Memories, n. d.) sets out its strategic objectives in these terms:

Prevention: Breaking the cycle of dehumanisation, by which victims frequently become victimisers.

Healing: Restoring an enduring dignity, purpose and hope to marginalised individuals and communities.

Empowerment: Making new pathways possible by equipping individuals with the emotional tools to retake charge of their own lives.

This work connects with research that explore South Africans' memories of violence, such as that reported by Lategan (2007), who stresses the need for an African perspective on memories of violence. In addition, he writes of the different memories of the same event held by those who took different roles in a context of violence. Writing specifically about the Healing of Memories workshops, Ward (2011) writes of the significance of this way of addressing trauma in a society emerging from violent conflict – she explores what she regards as the value of the narrative approach adopted. Nell (2011, p. 7), writing from a theological perspective, explores the processes of learning that unfold in workshops with university students, and writes:

By making us of the 'root metaphors and models' of drama and rhetoric, as lenses to look at the IHOM workshops, we discover that they are very useful to tackle the real crisis facing theology in a South African context, namely not so much a crisis of meaning, but one of suffering and exclusion.

Similarly, Mukambilwa (2013), writing of workshops held by IHoM about four years earlier, describes the strongly positive impact reported by participants, a group of Christians who came from different racial and church backgrounds. He asserts that there was some degree of genuine reconciliation and a growing awareness amongst those with more privileged histories of the inequalities of the society.

These two projects, perhaps more than any others, have had considerable influence within peace education, especially within community settings. For instance, John (2018b, p. 65) writes that several thousand people have been trained through AVP and hundreds of peace educators. It has also reached 13 African countries. Healing of Memories has perhaps an approach more grounded in the South African experience, though the scale of its operations seems to have declined since 2020, when roughly 500 participants were reached. The question that arises is whether they have had any impact on the education of educators, a point that is dealt with below.

4.4.3 Peace clubs

While we do not have good information on the extent of peace clubs within South African schools, John (2018b) reports that they have been introduced in schools in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, in particular through the work of the Mennonite Central Committee (Alty, 2013). In addition, there have been specific assessment of their work and effectiveness. Jasson

(2016, p. ii) researched the experiences of learners in a school peace club, which had a Christian character, in Pietermaritzburg. 'Over time, members of the peace club developed a renewed sense of trust, improved self-confidence and a changed identity.' Particular strengths of the process included respect for the principle of confidentiality, the emphasis on spiritual development, and the development of what Jasson sees as a 'community of practice' (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). The researcher found that the benefits were not only specifically in relation to violence and peace, but also in the ability to promote social learning.

Juma (2019) reports on the growth of peace clubs in schools in various African countries, including South Africa. Data was collected through observation of peace clubs and through gatherings of the Africa Peacebuilding Institute (Juma, 2019, p. 168). The nonformal curriculum is described as typically including conflict, violence, gender-based conflict, the journey to reconciliation and trauma healing.

Moyo (2022) conducted an evaluation of the work of peace clubs in seven schools in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, drawn from 15 such clubs sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee. Three of the clubs were in primary schools. Drawing on data collected from learners, the teachers involved and principals, she found that the context in which the schools were located was one of constant violence as the means for resolving conflicts and that this had affected learners and their behaviour directly. The learners described the peace clubs as safe places in which they had learnt to resolve conflicts peacefully. Notably, this also developed the learners' sense of agency in addressing conflicts within schools. This has had an impact in reducing conflict and violence within the schools more generally. An important point is the difficulty of finding teachers to lead this work, as teachers felt that participation was an imposition, although those that did reported significant benefits in how they feel about learners and their own reactions to difficult situations in class. One teacher reported not feeling enthusiastic initially but then felt enriched by the experience.

The work of the School Engagement Project at Durban University of Technology has included leading peace clubs in schools in Durban. I was involved in training tutors working on both peace clubs and subject areas in 2023, with a focus on reflections on their experiences in the work and drawing connections to their own experiences when they had been learners in schools. The latter was an element generally missing in the research on peace clubs reported above; those researchers tend to take a rather positivist view of those they are researching. Secondly, an issue that emerged from the discussion was that, even though the issue of process

is central, educators need to think critically through what constitutes violence – for example, an issue that some tutors had not thought of was the way in which the domination of English over the vernacular could be seen as a form of violence.

Within university education, John (2013, 2016, 2018a, 2018b) reports on his work at certificate and Master's levels. This is dealt with below (4.6), in the section on teacher education. One of the few other examples is the chapter by Hemson, Ngidi, Xulu-Gama and Magudulela (2018) who report on the ways in which the Cornerstone module, taken by most first-year students at Durban University of Technology, confronted issues of violence related to gender. A stronger element here is the use of participatory approaches to connect with students' experiences of gender and violence. The chapter also explores the complexity of bringing the experiences of violence into the room in such ways that such experiences become available for learning but do not cause further hurt.

4.4.4 Decolonisation of education

Many would question why I would include a discussion of decolonisation within a section on peace education. Alternatively, how I can engage with it but only in very limited ways? However, the key point of departure for this study is the relationship between epistemic violence and decolonisation (Hlatshwayo, 2024; Perez, 2019; Spivak, 1994). As argued in chapter 3, our society continues to experience the privileging of certain forms of knowledge and ways of knowing over others. At one level, a focus on decolonisation addresses the more readily visible elements of educational spaces, such as the architecture that declares a classically European identity, or the question as to who is celebrated by statues or by the names that appear on buildings. At another level, it relates to the assumptions driving the curriculum and questions of staffing. At a deeper level, this addresses the question as to whose thinking and ways of working and living are valued and whose are not.

Heleta (2016, p 6) writes of higher education in South Africa that:

... what we have in most fields of study (and particularly in the humanities and social sciences) is Eurocentric indoctrination, which marginalises Africa and is often full of patronising views and stereotypes about the continent: 'European and white values are [still] perceived as the standards on which the country's education system is based and rooted' (Ramoupi 2011, p. 5). Eurocentrism, which dominates the curriculum, 'seeks to universalize the West and provincialize the rest' (Zezeza 2009, p. 133).

Decolonisation became a central focus of the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa in 2015. The series of protests, largely peaceful but occasionally violent, was the one major mobilisation within education against structural violence of various forms, notably in relation to racism and sexism, since the time of the struggle against apartheid. One reason for the ending of the movement was the shutdowns caused by the Covid-19 pandemic; other reasons could have been that the aim of ending of fees for students not able to afford tuition was achieved. While the most direct attention was on the issue of student fees, significant challenges to the nature of the curriculum, gender relations on campuses and living conditions were also articulated. The significance for this study is that it was a rare moment at which issues of the experiences of students and academics were foregrounded in relation to theory.

Keet, Zinn and Porteus (2009, p. 111) remind us of Fanon's comment in *Wretched of the earth* that 'decolonization is always a violent phenomenon.' In reality, the anti-apartheid struggle had both violent and nonviolent elements, raising the question of what Gandhi would term 'acceptable violence' (Rajmohan, 1996). In some ways, what felt at the time like violence was the disruption of our ways of thinking. Yet social movements like #FeesMustFall provide opportunities for peace education, as had the time of the struggle years.

The significance of actions towards decolonisation is that they can be seen as part of the practice of peace education, an approach that would I believe strengthen its effectiveness. The whole area of decolonisation is a major one that cannot be fully dealt with within this study, but it is important to make these connections briefly.

4.4.5 Reviewing South African peace education

In assessing the role of peace education within South Africa, I would make four points. The first is that little work seems to have been undertaken within the formal curriculum of schools. Where there are projects, almost all were not integrated into the formal class sessions.

The second point is that made by Harber (2022), that peace education is not possible within schools that have forms of authoritarian control. There is in fact little evidence of much peace education being undertaken in classes, in any case. The peace club model differs in that it is clearly outside the formal curriculum and organised on a very different basis. It may be that their work serves as a way to foster peace in schools, both through the agency of learners and the impact on those teachers that are involved.

The third point is a point not made in the literature reviewed on peace clubs. This is the remarkable capacity of young people in contexts of conflict to explore new skills and

perspectives, something I had realised when I had once taught co-counselling to a small group of learners in a school project linked to the teacher education campus where I had previously been Head of School. When I asked the group if they had applied what they had learnt, one provided a remarkable account of her successful intervention in an intractable conflict involving an aggressive older boy in the school. The significance of such initiatives in the lives of young people should not be overlooked.

Finally, a critical vehicle for bringing change must be teacher education. Current models of teacher education are not equipping teachers with sufficient sense of their capability to advance peace. The point that teachers working with peace clubs report that they start to change their own practice raises the question as to what was missing from their own teacher education that they are finding in their involvement with peace clubs.

4.5 EDUCATION OF EDUCATORS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PEACE

The emphasis so far in this chapter has been on educational processes relevant to peace education. This study, though, falls clearly within the broad area of what is typically called teacher education, even though most teacher education assumes an institutional context of schools and possibly higher education, which this study does not.

The approach I take in this section is to identify some key issues of concern for those who theorise teacher education. Some of these are areas that teacher education may struggle with; others are aspects that may easily be overlooked. In each case, I will explore the issue both generally and in terms of the implications for peace.

My initial attempt was to address teacher education more broadly and then to move specifically to the literature on the education of teachers for advancing peace. However, this led to duplication and created a disconnect between the two; any deeper exploration in the literature on teacher education leads us into issues that are highly relevant for education of educators for peace. This point is worth exploring further – it suggests that one avenue for an education that is truly for peace is to interrogate what we do in teacher education more deeply and from a longer-term perspective. This is an issue I will explore below.

4.5.1 Limitations of literature on preparing teachers to advance peace

First, though, I need to make the point that, in contrast to the ample material on peace education, there is limited availability of literature that is specific to teacher education for peace. Much of what first appeared to be relevant consisted of compendiums of guidance to teachers and relevant material they could use in specific classes in peace education. For example,

Transformative pedagogy for peace-builders (UNESCO-IICBA, 2017) is a useful resource for teachers, but does not present any scholarship on the process of development. Secondly, much of the work that specifically mentions teacher education focuses primarily on what those teachers do in schools rather than on the issues specific to teacher education.

Those that attempt to review this field comment on the limitations of the work. McClean et al. (2008, p. 60), state, for example, that in Canada, ‘...few studies have examined the influences of pedagogy and content-based knowledge, specifically as they pertain to pre-service teachers.’ Horner et al. (2015) surveyed 120 publications that were in some ways related to the role of teachers in peacebuilding, focusing specifically on teachers and schooling (thus, excluding nonformal programmes), across a very wide geographical range. At the outset of this review, Horner et al. (2015, p. 7) state, ‘This review specifically aims to explore their role in promoting peace, reconciliation, social cohesion and violence mitigation recognising that literature specifically relating to teachers and peacebuilding was limited.’ Further, they write (Horner et al., 2015, p. 19), ‘Not only does the literature on teachers not appear to focus on their potential as peacebuilders, the literature on education and conflict does not significantly feature teachers.’ This limitation applies more so to contexts of greater violence; ‘The initial intention of sampling literature on teachers specifically related to conflict and postconflict contexts was reconsidered in light of the very limited literature. (Horner et al., 2015, p. 13).

Another major review besides Horner et al. (2015) was undertaken by INEE (2012), which surveyed 34 programmes, again, geographically dispersed, that exclusively educated teachers for peacebuilding. They found that most had a major preponderance of women students and often addressed gender issues; the typical topics were found to be skills related to conflict transformation, knowledge of peace issues, specific pedagogical competencies and the development of teaching and materials for conflict-transformation. Many of these programmes were based in academic institutions, some being credit-bearing, but there were also short nonformal programmes. Only 12 of the 34 programmes had a duration exceeding six months, indicating the limited impact of most.

There is general agreement that there must be professional development of teachers if they are to advance peacebuilding. Horner et al. (2015, p. 8), in a major review, stress the significance of professional development of teachers for this purpose, which includes developing individual capabilities to deliver the skills both for employment and social cohesion. Despite that, Reardon (1999, p. 4) reports that, ‘Little, however, has been written about the processes through which

we will develop the capacities for properly diagnosing the problems and creating the policies [related to a culture of peace], and even less about the human agents who will conduct the processes.’ She emphasises the need for a clearly intentional focus in teachers’ tertiary education on how it will address the need for a culture of peace.

Generally, it seems that surprisingly little attention has been paid to the development of peace in formal teacher education. Brantmeier (2003, p. 12) writes that, ‘Peace education has been excluded from mainstream teacher education rhetoric.’ Bjerstedt (1994a, p. 6) writes, based on a survey of peace educators around the world, that, ‘The response distribution shows clearly that rather little is done in teacher training related to peace education in schools at present.’ In a survey of teacher education across the world, Westbrook et al. (2013) report that, ‘A number of studies [primarily from sub-Saharan Africa] cite the omission of newer curriculum subjects, such as health, environment and peace education, in the ITE curriculum.’ There are thus rather few initiatives to report on.

4.5.2 Is good teacher education the same as good teacher education for peace?

Horner et al. (2015) deal with teachers and peacebuilding broadly, but a major section of this work focuses specifically on teacher education. The review states, ‘the limited literature on teacher education which specifically discussed it in reference to peacebuilding and/or conflict rarely contributed knowledge or understanding that went beyond what was already considered in the more general literature about teacher education’ (Horner et al., 2015, p. 44).

Other authors make similar points. Brantmeier (2003, p. 12) writes that, ‘If education for peace was more mainstream and included in rhetoric, we would see more peace theory and peace education practice explicitly integrated into mainstream teacher education courses.’

The implicit approach suggests a focus on a culture of peace (Reardon, 1999). However, if the literature does not explain how such positive educational practices address violence and foster peace, we may well question whether having them is sufficient to address the problems that peace education must tackle, a reminder of the criticisms of peace education made by Gur Ze’ev (2001) and others above. Indeed, Horner et al. (2015) note that:

...many of the approaches for good teacher governance, training, pedagogy etc, in developing contexts in general were similar for conflict affected and post-conflict contexts. This may be explained because good teacher practices are also good for peacebuilding as they are context sensitive, inclusive and encourage professional reflection. (Horner et al, 2015, p. 13)

The one difficulty in the idea that good education is de facto peace education is the objection made to peace education by Gur Ze'ev, noted above, that '...the invisibility of the violence that manipulates, reconstructs, or destroys rival narratives and the establishments that they serve and represent' (Gur Ze'ev, 2001, p. 331). Embedding peace principles into both education and the education of teachers will work only if there is concerted attention to how this addresses the violence of the context, a connection made more pressing in contexts of greater violence. Gur Ze'ev (2001, p. 316) points out the limitations of critical thought amongst peace educators when there is 'scant attention to the social and cultural context and the violence that produces their yardsticks and conceptions of knowledge, values, aims, and imagination, as well as their own identity.'

This points to a persistent weakness within theorising how teacher education may prepare educators who advance peace. Here, Horner et al. (2015, p. 13) make an important critical comment:

The literature is aspirational and intentional in nature - it is important to note the implementation of guidelines and interventions are not straight forward, resulting in a gap between aims and reality and in some settings rhetoric, raising the question in what conditions and with what means do aspirations become reality?

Thus, the enthusiasm for educating teachers for peace may lead into a lack of willingness to recognise what the significant challenges are that confront such an endeavour. Bekerman and Zembylas (2014, p. 54) write similarly of the limitations in the literature within formal teacher education:

When reviewing the literature on peace education, it becomes readily apparent that teacher education is considered to be supportive of peace education efforts (Brantmeier, 2010). In spite of this assumption about the relationship between peace education and teacher education, scant is the literature on theorizing the structural obstacles and difficulties encountered when trying to further the interests and practices of peace education among pre-service and in-service teachers.

This is a helpful caution; in a context where writers speak so positively of peace education, as indeed they do, there is the possibility of an uncritical and insufficiently analytical approach that fails to recognise limitations and obstacles, and that may even be potentially counter-productive. This is a point that will be returned to in the conclusion of this study.

4.5.3 *Characteristics of teachers who advance peace*

Chisholm (2019, p. 175) writes that, ‘Much of the contemporary literature on teacher education positions teachers in terms of what they need to deliver in terms of economic and broader societal goods: most crucially, they are seen as the vehicles for achieving improving learning outcomes.’ Instead, she calls for teacher education to be ‘an activity in which the principal goal is a teacher capable of exercising wisdom, virtuosity and judgement.’ This emphasis on the capacities of the teacher is close to the concerns of this study, and this section focuses on the development of teachers who use their ‘wisdom, virtuosity and judgement’ to advance peace.

To those outside teacher education, it is readily understood that teachers need to know well the **content** that they teach. This focus on the deep understanding of content is indeed one key component of any teacher education. It is also easy to grasp that getting to know **how** to teach must also be learnt. This divides further into the knowledge about learning and teaching, such as history, psychology and sociology, and the skills in designing classes, in presenting information, in thinking through how students are learning and in assessing learning. A final component is that of **practice**, the opportunity to integrate understandings into practice within an actual situation of teaching. Similarly, Hammerness et al (2005, p. 366), using different terms, state that:

To develop competence in an area of enquiry that allows them to “enact” what they know, teachers must (i) have a deep foundation of factual and theoretical knowledge, (ii) understand facts and ideas in the context of a conceptual framework, and (iii) organize knowledge in ways that facilitate retrieval and action.

Though they may be organised or described differently in different contexts, these components generally characterise the education of teachers, though, as is often acknowledged, the opportunities for practice are often the least well addressed (Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006, p. 1021). The authors argue that the area of teacher education is remarkably under-theorised and subject to considerable criticism as a result – and, given the limited literature on education of educators for peace, this applies even more here, perhaps. What then are the considerations that need to be given to the content, knowledge, skills and practice related to teaching that advances peace?

There is a high degree of consistency across the literature about what skills and qualities teachers who advance peace need to have – yet these are very broad. INEED (2011) sets out seven requirements for a teacher who advances peace (INEE, 2013, p. 35):

- *Understands the conflict, root causes and dynamics and the need for conflict transformation*
- *Knows education for all is a human right*
- *Self-awareness of own biases and of how their own actions in/around learning environment may be perceived by different groups in different contexts*
- *Possesses good inter-cultural sensitivity and understanding of learners and families*
- *Able to have a conversation with learners about conflict*
- *Able to see the link between equal access to quality education and prevention and mitigation of conflicts*
- *Able to gather and analyse information in various ways and challenge assumptions.*

In contrast, the review by Horner et al. (2015) sets out three differing conceptions of teachers – as technocrats, as reflexive professionals, and as transformative agents. Within the last category they see four emphases within education for peace – teachers as agents of democratisation, as agents of healing, as agents of peace, and as agents of resistance to inequity. Those who advocate the first conception – as technocrats – have very little to communicate about the role of teachers in peacebuilding. The second is surely an element of any good teacher who learns through thoughtful reflection on practice and on the links to theory. The third – as agents of transformation – is most closely aligned to this study. The one emphasis focuses on how teachers can foster the free exchange of questioning and ideas within their work. The second element focuses on the capacity of teachers to create safe spaces for their students, especially in societies riven by conflict; it requires both that teachers have been able to get sufficient psychosocial support themselves and that they can form positive relationships with their students to enable some degree of healing. The third addresses such areas as conflict resolution, the modelling of peaceful resolution of issues that arise and commitment against forms of violence within education itself. The fourth is that of resistance in contexts such as those we experienced under apartheid or now in societies subject to oppressive rule, such as Myanmar or Palestine

This last point is worth underlining in a study with a critical orientation. In my early years of school teaching, it was made abundantly clear to me (by the head of the teachers' union of which I was a member, no less) that I was a 'problem' teacher in that I had, for example, informed students as to their rights in terms of education law. In a personal communication, Chisholm (2024) writes:

Teacher education everywhere is a function of the state and all nations expect teachers to inculcate what 'the nation' considers important. It's a national task to which teachers are expected to be loyal. It fails when it teaches them to be critical, and to teach critically.

From a critical perspective, what is seen as failure in terms of the dominant norms may indeed be a disruption that threatens an unjust status quo.

Reardon (1998, p. 12) similarly argues that:

Peace and a culture which would sustain it is largely a matter of positive human relations and constructive, mutually enhancing social interaction... This capacity must be as carefully and systematically cultivated in students of teaching as are the skills of instruction... Another significant attribute... is vision, a capacity to see the potential for positive development in learners and constructive change in society.

Throughout the literature, the emphasis is on the development of personal qualities such as critical thinking, self-awareness and a positive regard for learners as much as on skills such as the ability to select and use the appropriate teaching methods. Miller and Ramos (1999, p. 15) quote Caine and Caine (1997, p. 97) on necessary qualities: 'appreciation of interconnectedness; a strong identity; a comfort with uncertainty; an ability to build community.'

Beyond the combination of typical teacher competencies applied to issues of conflict, violence and peace – skills, content knowledge, analytical ability and values – in addition to self-awareness, Reardon includes also 'vision', which I understand as a sense of imaginative possibility of how people and the world can be. At points in my own teaching, starting perhaps from the first time I taught African students in a formal setting, in the late 1970s, I realised that I had a sense of a vision based on a recognition of their own intellectual possibilities and my responsibility for developing those qualities, a form of peaceful resistance given the unforgiving environment of the time.

This section has focused on the capacities needed for teachers to advance peace. How then should the education of teachers develop such capacities?

A recurring theme in much of the literature is the development amongst teachers of a culture of peace. For example, Reardon (1999) places strong emphasis on the need to develop in teachers the core values that inform a culture of peace, so that these values permeate their teaching. She writes (1999, p. 6) that:

...the main and fundamental purpose of teacher education for a culture of peace should be the formation of members of a profession committed to the principles of peace and capable of engendering similar commitment and imparting the skills of peace making and peace building to their students.

Reardon (1999) emphasises a sense of vocation and formation of teachers as central to effective teacher education for peace. She argues (Reardon, 1999, p. 9) that:

...the best peace educators are professionals who have chosen their field because they are called to contribute to the formation of a citizenry committed to and capable of bringing about the social, political and economic transformations that would comprise a culture of peace. Vocation and formation are, thus, the keys to the development of a generation of teachers who will be the main agents of the necessary and fundamental cultural transformation.

Vocation is surely about a sense of commitment to the profession. I wish though to give specific attention to formation. Reardon here foregrounds what followers of would term the development of suitable dispositions (Bourdieu, 1979) as well as the relevant skills of teaching. Her use of the term ‘formation’ connects with the Germanic concept of *Bildung*, and it is worth exploring this further.

Deng (2022, pp. 605-6), writing about education generally, including teacher education, states:

Bildung refers to the full formation of the individual through the development of intellectual and moral capabilities and cultivation of dispositions or virtues such as sensibility, self-awareness, liberty and freedom, and dignity (von Humboldt, 2000; Lüth, 2000; also Hopmann, 2007) ... In other words, knowledge is a vehicle for developing human powers—not something to be taught for its own end. What knowledge is important is not determined by the intrinsic value of knowledge but its contribution to Bildung.

The concept of 'formation', then, is a holistic development that includes knowledge, skills and values. It extends beyond what we typically think of as teacher education. Reardon (1999, p. 11) explicitly contrasts it to the term 'teacher training', a term that has been frequently used, such as in the term 'training colleges':

Whereas training is the development of capacities for particular, educative interactions between teacher and learners, formation is the evocation and articulation of the motivating values that call teachers to engage in those interactions to achieve both personal satisfaction and social goals.

She also asserts (ibid.) that, 'teachers must be committed to democratic values and skilled in democratic practice at a level of integrity and efficacy that can only be achieved by a professional education that involves holistic, humanistic formation and democratic training.' A criticism must be that she does not recognise what of teachers' existing dispositions make that commitment difficult or unlikely and does not explore how professional education should address that problem.

The concept of formation may provide as a truer expression than either teacher training or teacher education for the process of development of educators for peace. How this is done needs further exploration in the following sections. They will address significant issues in teacher education that need to be addressed if it is to be effective in forming educators with the characteristics we need.

4.5.4 Preconceptions of student teachers and reversion to earlier ways of teaching

Hammerness et al. (2005) focus in depth on how those who teach learn and develop in the role of teacher. A specific problem they focus on is this (ibid., p. 366), 'Prospective teachers come to the classroom with preconceptions about how the world, and teaching, works. These preconceptions, developed in their "apprenticeship of observation," condition what they learn.' One example of this is given by Miller and Ramos (1999, p. 21), writing of teachers' own experiences of corporal punishment, write:

Teachers with deep, unexamined assumptions about the inevitability of violent conflict are likely to view conflict they witness--whether in the classroom, playground, or local events – as natural and inevitable. By problematizing such assumptions, transformative teacher education begins to make violence less normative.

This problem aligns neatly with Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). The student teacher is already familiar with teaching, having spent much time observing it and experiencing how it is practised. This may quite possibly have been inadequate teaching but will nonetheless be what is known and is thus readily reproduced. But even if it was adequate teaching, the student is not in fact familiar with the thinking and judgements made in deciding on their practices (Hammerness et al., 2005, pp. 367-8). Thus, students often repeat the procedures they went through, whether or not there was a strong logic to them, whether or not they liked or thought they were being influenced by them. The implication is that there is a need for active exploration of the assumptions that novice teachers hold, within the process of their education. I recall in my own experience moving from an Honours degree suddenly into a primary school and giving an uncomprehending group of youngsters valuable information on the greatness of English novelists, with no regard for context or relevance.

Applying this to education of educators for peace, this leads us to consider whether students' experience of being taught was or was not likely to be an experience of peace. If it was not, the chance is great that the student peace educator may reproduce ways of teaching that are significantly at odds with the commitment to peace. Even if it was consistent with such a commitment (and in the context of a violent society, it is very likely not to be), students will not easily grasp the processes of handling knowledge, strategies, perceptions and emotions that made that possible – processes that are integrated seamlessly in good practice, in ways that are appropriate for the given context. It is an argument for taking time and enabling review and reflection during practice.

A corresponding difficulty is that of sustaining learning by teachers. Learning that seemed to have been effectively achieved in teacher preparation becomes 'washed out' (Korthagen et al., 2006, p. 1021) once student teachers hit into the unsupportive reality of schools. Thus, teachers gradually revert to traditional models that are more familiar and less risky. As someone who had as a young teacher attempted to experiment with alternative methods of teaching, I knew well the difficulty of sustaining this in what may be a hostile environment. In part this may be one's own habitus, but it may also be the political realities within which teaching takes place, whether in schools or community contexts. Korthagen et al. (2006) set out seven principles they advance for teacher education, the fifth of which is this (ibid, p. 1032): 'Learning about teaching requires an emphasis on those learning to teach working closely with their peers.'

One well-recognised response to this problem has been that of the ‘community of practice’ (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). They define communities of practice as ‘groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.’ Similarly, Shulman and Shulman (2004, p. 298) state that, ‘An accomplished teacher is a member of a professional community who is ready, willing, and able to teach and to learn from his or her teaching experience.’ The ability of teachers to consolidate their learning and to sustain creativity and openness is constrained by isolation. Shulman and Shulman (2004) write further about the development of teachers who are working in an approach known as Fostering a Community of Learners (FCL). FCL (Campione et al., 1995) is an approach that draws school students into helping to plan and direct the learning; activities include learning how to reflect and explain to others what they were learning. This extends the concept of a community of practice beyond teachers only. I had realised the potential of developing students as educators when I became aware of the achievements of a group of students in a dysfunctional high school that I knew well (Hemson, 2019), once they took on the role of teaching each other instead of relying on teachers who often failed to come to class. However, students leave; we need a sustainable approach that teachers themselves support.

I connect this with a principle that I try to keep in mind when working with university students, that I see each student as a potential colleague. I know that only a few will ever become academics, but while they are in the university my purpose is their full academic development.

4.5.5 Consistency of pedagogy

Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006) draw on the relevant literature to set out seven principles to inform teacher education. One of their principles (ibid., p. 1036) is this: ‘Learning about teaching is enhanced when the teaching and learning approaches advocated in the program are modeled by the teacher educators in their own practice.’ The authors identify a key problem of teacher education as the lack of coherence and consistency. Similarly, writing generally about effective pedagogy in teacher education, Westbrook et al. (2013, p. 40) identify as a key obstacle for teachers any misalignment between the pedagogy used in teacher education and the pedagogy that they should be using in schools. They comment that at times the educators of teachers advocate that their students use participatory pedagogies but fail to model it themselves.

Two key points often repeated in the literature on peace education are the central significance of pedagogy and the need for the pedagogy of teacher education to match the pedagogy to be

used in peace education. The pedagogy of teacher education for peace is the most central issue in the study, and the literature on this, though limited in extent, is consistent in its message. Authors argue that the way in which the educators of student teachers teach needs itself to convey a value of peace, just as the teachers need to convey this value in their work with students. For example, Miller and Ramos (1999, p. 6) argue that ‘The pedagogy of a training program speaks deeply to teachers of their place within the educational system’. Horner et al. (2015, p. 9) state, ‘A key message in the literature is that the way that teachers teach is as important as what they teach in facilitating the knowledge, skills and attitudes that facilitate or obscure peaceful futures.’

This pedagogy needs to be consistent with the content; Miller and Ramos (1999, p. 5) note that, ‘Most curricula attempt to balance content knowledge with pedagogical training. Yet both aspects are often handled abstractly, and there is rarely an integration of the two in ways that are useful for student learning.’ In those cases where the teaching is specifically related to peace, it is an essential requirement that the pedagogy itself has to communicate peace; beyond that, though, I would argue that, ideally, all teaching, whether of languages, mathematics or geography, should communicate peace.

While there is particularly little in the literature that provides an empirical account of the use of specific pedagogies for the education of educators for peace, there is a high degree of consensus over what such a pedagogy should be. McClean, Cooke and Crowe (2008, p. 60), describe it as a pedagogy ‘...which strives to be student-centred, interactive and productive of affective as well as knowledge goals.’ The emphasis on participatory pedagogies is echoed in INEE (2012), in Horner et al. (2015) and other authors. Novelli and Sayed (2011), writing of formal teacher education for peace in Pakistan, note that, ‘Specific approaches are rare but include modules/topics on peacebuilding and conflict resolution and mediation skills, pedagogies of discomfort, pedagogies of hope, and social justice modules, such as in South Africa’. They make an important point about just how constrained such approaches may be by the need to avoid offending post-conflict governments that react harshly to attempts to explore the realities of power relationships:

As a result, agencies like UNICEF and UNESCO appear to favour implicit but quite generic – ‘learning to live together’ – approaches inherited from global ‘peace education’ models. The danger inherent in this approach is that it avoids debating local issues of social injustice, redistribution, recognition and representation and may

inadvertently contribute to reinforcing these inequalities through a 'pacifying' rather than transformatory approach, favouring forgiveness over justice and acceptance over social transformation. While dealing directly with key issues of racism, injustice, ethnic divisions, and conflict histories is difficult and requires teachers with strong skills, it has the potential to promote much more grounded and locally relevant knowledge that might contribute to transformatory outcomes. (Novelli & Sayed, 2016, p. 33)

The authors (Novelli & Sayed, p. 22) further call for moving beyond psychological approaches to include historical and sociological analysis. This is an important point as it touches on a potentially unproductive divide between peacebuilding and critical thinking. Given the constraints against the critical scrutiny of social issues, many programmes may well resort to an individualistic emphasis on personal and interpersonal, rather than societal, conflict. A critical approach may, even in the absence of overt political restrictions, be at odds with a school curriculum that is focused on more instrumental objectives.

Generally, though, there is little on the pedagogy of teacher education in the context of peace building. Often references to pedagogy, in the context of teacher education, are to the pedagogy that teachers are expected to use in teaching, with the implicit assumption that this is what the pedagogy of teacher education must deliver and without exploration of the challenges in achieving that – in other words, the emphasis being on what they must learn and not how.

That is, however, not true of the literature in South Africa and Israeli, societies that have experienced long periods of protracted division and conflict. Kupermintz and Salomon (2005) argue that peace education generally (not only in the education of teachers for peace) is qualitatively different there and point to specific evidence as to how attempts to educate for peace in Israel simply did not work in the ways that they might elsewhere be expected to. I have doubts about the generality of their argument; writing of 'the adversary' no longer rings true for us in South Africa, though the point about peace education needing to be very responsive to context does. However, my point here is rather that the urgency for peace in these contexts may lead to more specific attention to pedagogy.

For example, Yogev and Michaeli (2011), writing in Israel, describe how changes to the curriculum for teacher education had led into a conservative, individually oriented approach that disconnected teaching from questions over the socio-political context. In response, they argue that 'Political educational consciousness must be equipped with pedagogical, theoretical,

and practical knowledge that can then be translated into educational practice' (Yogev & Michaeli (2011, p. 317). Their means for this was to engage in 'deepening social knowledge' through study of relevant political, sociological and cultural texts, linked with 'experiential service learning.' The latter has taken students not only into schools but into placement with NGOs working on social challenges. There is also extensive use of narratives – integration of learning from these approaches takes place through reflective sessions.

McClellan et al. (2008) note that their work in teacher education indicated that gender was a central issue. They found that 'Male teachers were seen to privilege elements of study linked to politics, economy or human rights, whereas women teachers were seen to favour elements of study connected to gender issues, child protection, and peace' (McClellan et al., 2008, p. 60). One of their pointers for further research was whether student teachers of different genders learn to teach differently on issues of peace, This raises questions as the extent to which teacher education both builds on the strengths of existing commitments and interests and opens up questions over the areas that student teachers have not explored.

Horner et al. (2015, p. 45) go into these issues in greater depth. They argue that teachers who advance peacebuilding need two approaches:

...one which focuses on the promotion of best practices to be learnt by the teacher, and another which emphasises the extended role of the reflexive teacher where they are encouraged to experience pedagogies which can be critiqued and evaluated in order to develop their own pedagogy.

This suggests that teacher education then needs to provide the kind of support that develops specific skills and understandings but also sustains student teachers in ways that strengthen their sense of professional confidence. Elsewhere, the authors argue for the need to balance the general pedagogical skills with the knowledge of the specifics of the local contexts.

Shulman writes (2005) of the different pedagogies employed by different professions, for example, the case study approach of medical education, which he sees as effective in developing professional practice. He describes such 'signature pedagogies' as having the 'distinctive features' of being 'pervasive, ritual and habitual' (ibid., p. 22); they nonetheless are always having to deal with the uncertainty of practice. Despite the strengths of these pedagogies of formation, as he terms them, he asserts the need for subjecting them to critical review, as students 'develop personal identities and values growing out of pedagogical interactions' (pp. 23-24). He thus draws attention to the ways in which such pedagogies

construct students – and, by implications, teachers. In his analysis, Shulman brought in the central role of emotions in such practices, a shift from his earlier work (Shulman, 1987); in Shulman (2005, p. 22) he writes that, ‘...without a certain amount of anxiety and risk, there’s a limit to how much learning occurs. One must have something at stake. No emotional investment, no intellectual or formational yield.’

Inevitably, educators develop ways of working that follow a particular routine and engage emotionally with students in particular ways. Some will be more effective than others in achieving the espoused aims of the teacher; some will subject students to a regime of unhappy conformity and others will open up creative possibilities. Peace educators develop their own styles and routines that need critical reflection; we need students who are able to express freely how they experience our ‘signature pedagogies’.

4.5.6 The divide between theory and practice

Above, I identified as a key problem the lack of coherence between pedagogy and content. A similar problem is the theory/practice divide. One of the key problems that Korthagen et al. (2006) identify is that teacher education often proceeds as if the teaching of theory will translate unproblematically into effective practice. Lack of attention by educators of teachers to the very different capacities – understanding theory, enacting practice – means that teachers often struggle to integrate their theoretical understanding with their practice. A further split is often that between espoused theories (as in the formal curriculum, for example) and ‘theories-in-use’ (Argyris & Schön, 1974), or between the values we profess and the values that are evident in action (Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith & Kelder, 1994).

This problem is that of enactment, the translation of understanding into action; teacher education often creates a disconnect between the learning of theory, subject content and pedagogical knowledge on one hand and the application of that learning in practice. Application requires skill in sequencing and responding effectively to both anticipated student responses and unpredictable responses.

Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006, p. 1021) condemn ‘the irrelevance of teacher preparation for the reality of everyday practice in schools.’ Teachers in various educational settings typically encounter challenges for which their preparation has not equipped them – in my experience as a schoolteacher, such issues as how to keep the attention of a class, or how to be effective while feeling very frustrated, or how to navigate the pressures placed on you by school principals or reactionary colleagues. Much of this concerns the complex navigation of

the specific context in which you work, while holding to one's own values and understandings. It always struck me that when we sent students into teaching practice there was no process of collaborative reflection with them on what they had experienced and what was most difficult. Teaching practice seemed generally to be the area of the curriculum least debated and theorised. Teacher preparation needs to assist students to prepare a series of lessons or design a workshop and simulate it; such activities need also processes of reflection on how these go wrong, the mismatch with theory or the failure to address the context sufficiently. Hammerness et al (2005, p. 366) state that 'A "metacognitive" approach to instruction can help teachers learn to take control of their own learning by providing tools for analysis of events and situations that help enable them to understand and handle the complexities of life in classrooms.'

The failure to integrate may result in part from the failure of educators of teachers to think through the different elements needed. They may need to draw student teachers' attention to issues that they have not yet recognised, posing the problem of the disconnect. There is a need also to recognise the inevitable gap between the induction into new capacities and the development in the student of those capacities. A helpful model for helping to think through the development of increasing competence in integrating professional practice is that of conscious competence, the exact origins of which are unclear (Conor Keeley, 2021).



Figure 4.1 Hierarchy of competence (from Conor Keeley, 2021)

Even if the educators of teachers include the necessary elements of instruction in the appropriate balance, the development of the student's capacity is inevitably uneven. One can parallel it to learning to ride a bicycle. The unskilled observer who has never mounted a bicycle may think this is a simple task – they are at the level of unconscious incompetence as they lack

the skill but do not realise the key skills involved. Once on a bicycle, they became rapidly aware of the difficulties of keeping balance, steering accurately and safely and powering the vehicle all at the same time. With more experience, the skills for each area develop, so that the rider thinks successfully about each other these, but thinking from one to other means that it is not fully integrated. Finally, awareness of these elements recedes as the skills mesh together in ways that no longer need conscious attention. The rider may choose to give one or more of them conscious attention, but generally attention will go to other issues, such as the context of the road. The model provides a useful way of understanding the difficulties for students both of making their own the different capacities needed for effective teaching as well as of integrating these capacities seamlessly.

However, at this point one has to pose the question as to what is being integrated seamlessly. Some of the teachers of my experience had confidently and capably integrated skills in presenting information, in assessing achievement of the intended outcomes, with constant reminders of their power over their students and their intolerance of dissenting views. ‘Integration’ must always be open to critical scrutiny.

4.5.7 Teachers and teacher agency

The development of teachers’ agency, their ability to act in ways that advance their own understanding and ways of working, is another theme in the literature. Miller and Ramos (1999, p. 19) write that a ‘holistic perspective on conflict’ requires ‘appreciation of teachers as agents of growth, of difference, of development in the local community.’ However, the concept of teacher’s agency is not consistently defined. Priestley et al. (2015, p. 134) identify two contrasting understandings of the term, first, as ‘an individual capacity of teachers to act agentically’, which focuses simply on whether teachers take action towards one or other goal, secondly, as ‘an emergent ‘ecological’ phenomenon dependent upon the quality of individuals’ engagement with their environments (Biesta & Tedder, 2007).’

In understanding the differences between these two approaches, it may be helpful to consider two problematic aspects to the ways in which teacher agency may operate. First, as Priestley et al. (2015, p. 135) argue, the language of teacher agency in policy documents may well be referring to the expectation that teachers must find innovative ways of complying with directives from above. Similarly, a review by Brown, White and Kelly (2021) of 70 publications on teachers as agents of educational change reports the complexity of agency; teachers’ agency in the literature seems directed mainly to the area of what they refer to as ‘top-

down' change, in other words, to teachers using their agency to bring about the changes intended in policy.

In contrast, according to Brown et al. (2021), those who demonstrated the ability to initiate 'bottom-up' change were described as having these characteristics: the ability to assess need and activate change through collaboration with others; cultural competence, including a nuanced understanding of others and of the context in which they operate; and an ability to build relationships with others. Brown et al. (2021, p. 12) suggest that, 'The potential benefits [of bottom-up, distributed change] are manifold and include positive effects on teacher knowledge and pedagogic practice, collaboration and social capital development, and more equitable approaches to education generally,' though evaluations of such approaches are not yet available.

A second problematic is identified by Horner et al (2015, p. 11):

Teachers act as both the agents of change, for example, by promoting harmony between pupils including respect, justice and inclusiveness and the agents of conflict, for example, in the way teachers use pedagogy and curricula to perpetuate inequity and conflict between opposing ethnic, religious or socioeconomic groups. The lines between the two are not always clear and the same teacher may play out both roles simultaneously in different moments and contexts.

They point out that teachers may use their agency to obstruct change towards greater peace by using stereotypes or misinformation. Here, teachers have 'agency', but to assess the agency we need to query broader issues of context and purpose.

The implication of the work on agency for this study is that processes of strengthening teachers' sense of agency need to be combined with critical reflection and exploration of teachers' motivations and values, to bring about teacher-driven changes that are truly initiatives of peacebuilding.

McLean, Cooke and Crowe (2008) conducted a study into student teachers who chose a programme on peace and global education at a Canadian university, using a combination of questionnaires and focus group discussions. They give particular attention to the problems that student teachers who are expected to promote peace using appropriately participative approaches experience when entering schools. Among the key obstacles were mentor teachers who were uninterested in or even hostile to the work, lack of confidence in using innovative

pedagogies, and the difficulty of finding a place for peace work within the curriculum. The issue of struggling against feelings of hopelessness at the difficulty of their task is a significant point. Their recommendations included linking the work on pedagogy and curriculum with the students' own social goals, the need to develop ways of thinking critically about social justice and accessing examples of how other teachers have successfully implemented such programmes (McClellan, Cooke & Crowe, 2008, pp. 59-60).

Priestley et al. (2015, p. 144) quote Salomon (1992) on teachers' responsibility:

- *A proper carrying out of role as teacher (necessary whether a teacher is transmitting content or orchestrating activity).*
- *Responsibility for learning processes and outcomes.*
- *Serious consideration of method and content in the light of normative and moral criteria – i.e. consideration of long term educational purposes and values. This responsibility is about 'giving serious consideration to the desirable and less desirable long-term effects of the constantly improvised learning environment' (p. 46).*

Priestley et al. (2015) point out that, in their research, teachers were generally effective at carrying out the first two responsibilities but often failed to take on the third. They thus argue for a more complex understanding of agency, as 'an emergent 'ecological' phenomenon dependent upon the quality of individuals' engagement with their environments' (Priestley et al., 2015, p. 134). This requires judgement as to what is happening in the environment and the quality of the teacher's actions in response to that environment.

So far, section 4.5 has dealt largely with teachers who have the potential to advance peace, and the expectations placed on them. One reflection on this is that the expectations are remarkably high that teachers will bring change, not only within education but within society as well. In reality, as is occasionally acknowledged in the literature, formal teacher education usually does very little (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2014; Brantmeier, 2015) to address the capacities needed and to support teachers in the major difficulties they must encounter if they work within violent societies. This highly limited support is clearly inadequate in preparing teachers to bring about change within the educational system, let alone across the society.

4.5.8 Forms of knowledge that teachers need

This study focuses on pedagogy rather than content; however, as explored in Chapter 1, this divide cannot always be neatly drawn. Shulman (1987, p. 4) writes that those setting policy for teacher education believe that ‘there exists “a knowledge base for teaching” – a codified or codifiable aggregation of knowledge, skill, understanding, and technology, of ethics and disposition, of collective responsibility – as well as a means for representing and communicating it.’ He points out, though, that there is much lack of clarity about what this knowledge actually consists of. According to Shulman (1987, p. 6), the prevailing scholarship is responsible for ‘bifurcating content and teaching process.’ His response was to develop (Shulman, 1987, p. 19) the concept of ‘pedagogical content knowledge’ (PCK) to refer to the specific knowledge related to the content being taught:

To understand what a pupil understands will require a deep grasp of both the material to be taught and the processes of learning. This understanding must be specific to particular school subjects and to individual topics within the subject. This represents another way in which what we call pedagogical content knowledge is used.

In other words, teachers need to develop knowledge related to the teaching of a particular topic; while some general knowledge of teaching principles will apply to the teaching of mathematics and the teaching of languages, there are specific differences in the pedagogical knowledge applying to the two subjects. This becomes particularly relevant for those who address peace education explicitly in their teaching; for that they need to develop a perspective, a set of relevant skills and practices and a base of theoretical understanding that are drawn upon in their teaching of peace. While the focus of this study is pedagogy rather than curriculum, the implication of PCK is that we need to specify some forms of knowledge for the teaching of peace to be effective. This understanding has to include an awareness of the specific challenges that will be encountered. For example, teaching peace must raise questions as to whether what the student experiences of that does in fact promote peace. Teachers need an understanding of the nature of resistance and how to respond positively to it. They need a theoretically informed understanding of what it means to promote peace in their work. While this will not be further explored in this study, it is worth noting.

4.5.9 The role of emotions in teacher education

A particular limitation in the literature on teacher education has been the failure to theorise the role of emotions in its processes. Zembylas (2002, p. 205) explores the possibility that

‘counternarratives of emotions that subvert the current emotional rules and create new ones that are pragmatically less oppressive pose a threat to “the professional order” in curriculum and teaching.’ He further writes (2002, p. 208), ‘By understanding how emotional rules and expectations are historically contingent, teachers can begin to deconstruct the power structures that normalize life at school and in the classroom.’

This scholarship has thus problematised the role of emotions in teacher education, which has significant implications for peacebuilding within education. Whatever the content of the teaching, emotions may constrain or enable teachers to advance peace, a point that is more fully addressed in the section on peace education below. An implication is the need within teacher education to open up discussion and exploration of the actual emotions experienced by teacher educators and their students. Furthermore, these emotions are mediated through the ‘signature pedagogies’ that we develop as peace educators, and these require constant review.

One of the more interesting articles on pedagogy in teacher education comes from a South African context, though it is directed broadly at societies that have experienced either armed conflict or ongoing violent discrimination and oppression. As is often the case, setting clear limits to what is considered as peace education is difficult; in fact, despite their frequent reference to the violence of post-conflict societies, the word ‘peace’ appears only once. Keet, Zinn and Porteus (2009), advocate a pedagogy of ‘mutual vulnerability’, developing a conceptual argument that draws on sources such as Fanon, Freire and African philosophy. Their starting point is this:

Pedagogies of this nature aim “to heal the effects of traumatic events that produce guilt, anxiety, resentment and injustice that persist and distort individual and national well-being” (Hattam, 2004, 1). An array of conflicting differences, power-relations, embedded interests, fears and anxieties that intersect with educational processes in a variety of ways are assumed within reconciliation pedagogies (Keet et al., 2009, p. 109).

These elements work together to produce cultural and normative frames – these seem to operate in ways similar to Bourdieu’s use of dispositions (Bourdieu, 1979) and with Mezirow’s habits of mind (Mezirow, 1997) (Mezirow’s ‘frame of reference’ seems a somewhat broader concept as it includes the more freely chosen ‘point of view’). ‘Disrupting these frames in a moderated educational setting is the primary objective of the employment of the principle of ‘mutual vulnerability’ (Keet et al, 2009, p. 110). This entails the process of revelation of how power

has operated in the life of those present, a process that creates the possibility of modifying that power in more positive ways. For educators, ‘the pedagogical challenge is difficult since temporary ontological and power disruptions that will allow for shifts in meaning-making frames would require educators and education authority figures to make the functioning of their power unfamiliar to themselves’ (ibid, p. 112). The point of ‘unfamiliarity’ is about making the normalised and implicit patterns of power visible to those who exercise such power, however uncomfortable this may be. It leads into educators acting with greater self-awareness of their capacity to either strengthen or hold back the full involvement of those they teach, and to a more ethical handling of one’s authority as an educator.

The authors link this explicitly to forms of critical pedagogy, though they choose the term ‘humanising pedagogy’; this suggests an openness to non-structuralist approaches. ‘On this score a humanising pedagogy is a radical pedagogy, not a “soft” one, and its humanising interest is linked to focusing on both structural and psycho-social dimensions of human suffering, and human liberation’ (ibid, p. 114). This echoes the work done recently on finding an integrated approach that combines psychosocial and mental health with peacebuilding (Tankink, Bubenzer & Van der Walt, 2017). They connect their approach to the writings of scholars in the African context, including Fanon (1963, 1986), and Kwenda (2003, p. 70), who writes:

By cultural justice, we mean that the burden of constant self-consciousness must be shared or, at the very least, recognised and, where possible, rewarded. The sharing part is very important. For it is only in the mutual vulnerability that this entails that the meaning of intimacy and reciprocity in community can be discovered.

Particular emphasis is placed on the self-awareness and engagement by the educator:

As educators and authority figures open up their meaning-making frames to become vulnerable, they simultaneously question the collective cultural, economic and political rooting of those frames. (Keet et al., 2009, p. 116)

This is one of the few writings that direct attention to how the educator has been shaped by societal forces, as with the work of the social justice theorists reported above. In this case, the paper does not report on how that has been applied into practice; however, Brantmeier (2013), writing more specifically of teacher education for peace, though in the context of the USA, builds on their article and explores some of the challenges of applying this pedagogy. He writes (Brantmeier, 2013, p. 96) that, ‘...in practice, the complex terrain of a pedagogy of

vulnerability is tangled given the power dynamics inherent in student and teacher cultural role sets.’ For example, it may feel much safer for those who experience privilege in relation to social identities to reveal how they are aware of their collusion with social structures than for those who are subordinated in relation to their identities.

Brantmeier (2013) argues that this approach involves ‘self and mutual disclosure’ as part of a process of co-learning involving teachers and students. He sets out five assumptions of this pedagogy (Brantmeier, 2013, pp. 100-103): vulnerability opens learning opportunities on cognitive, emotional and behavioural levels – particularly emotional; vulnerability invites vulnerability; as an “educational tool”, vulnerability holds promise for “deep learning” yet can be risky business; there is privilege and power in vulnerability; depth and pace matter; relationships, assessment and emotions matter; ethical choices matter. The issue of deep learning is perhaps most significant, which Brantmeier (2013, p. 96) describes as combining the understanding of concepts and critical thinking in ways that lead to ‘adaptive expertise.’ Adaptive expertise enables someone ‘to be flexible and fluid, responsive to contextual needs while applying concepts and critical thinking skills to real world problems of prime importance’ (Brantmeier, 2013, p. 96). This is a concept used also in the work by Hammerness et al. (2005) above, on the capacities that teachers need to develop.

In line with the points made above regarding the cognitive narrowness of much peace education, Brantmeier (2013) points to the embodied aspects of a pedagogy of vulnerability, and to ways of using activities such as singing or meditation to promote mindfulness within such an approach. He provides specific examples of how this approach is realised through interactions within contexts such as teacher education. Without it being spelt out directly, the implication is that prospective educators learn to work with this pedagogy and are in turn better equipped to handle the complexity of peace education in their work, which, as all the scholars acknowledge, is a challenging and significant task.

Bekerman and Zembylas (2014, p. 408) point out that this emphasis on vulnerability originates with Butler:

Butler (2004) presents a number of examples to show that ‘each of us is constituted politically in part by virtue of the social vulnerability of our bodies ... Loss and vulnerability seem to follow from our being socially constituted bodies, attached to others, at risk of losing those attachments, exposed to others, at risk of violence by virtue of that exposure’ ... The denial of such vulnerability unleashes violence against

others, whereas its acknowledgment creates openings for an ethical encounter with others.

Indeed, Butler (2002) writes of the significance of recognising such vulnerability:

If we stay with the sense of loss, are we left feeling only passive and powerless, as some fear? Or are we, rather, returned to a sense of human vulnerability, to our collective responsibility for the physical lives of one another? The attempt to foreclose that vulnerability, to banish it, to make ourselves secure at the expense of every other human consideration, is surely also to eradicate one of the most important resources from which we must take our bearings and find our way.

This perspective is rarely evoked in the literature on teacher education, and it is rarely evident in the ways in which we prepare teachers. For example, we lack processes whereby teacher educators or trainee students speak of their vulnerability. Even in critical pedagogy, such issues often remain unexplored.

A recent development that addresses some of this complexity is the emphasis on ‘holding space’, defined by Epstein (2023) as ‘the act of being *fully present* with someone else, without judgment or distraction, so that the person can share their experiences and perspective.’ She describes it thus: 1. Be full present without distractions; 2. Create a safe, accepting environment; 3. Listening effectively; 4. Empathizing. This emphasis on safety is similar to that in social justice education; it also echoes the work of Guattari, as Walkerdine (2013, p. 763), describes ‘the centrality of safety to allow for imagination and experiments to be handled safely.’ Kealy and Hebron (2024) emphasise that the openness to emotions is a central element in this approach. Similarly, Powietrzynska et al. (2021) use the concept of ‘holding space’ in their efforts to ‘reclaim humanity in teacher education’.

I include here also an article on the complexities of teaching on violence and peace in a South African context that does capture this perspective; it is not in the context of teacher education, though many of the students would be going into professions such as psychologists or human resource practitioners, including perhaps education. Collins (2013a) writes of the complexities of pedagogy in a psychology course on violence; they had not anticipated the extent to which intellectual and emotional processes would become intertwined: ‘At issue, rather, was the ways in which certain ideas and theoretical frameworks could produce emotional reactions by shifting students’ self-understandings and perceptions of the world, and the complexity of the lecturer’s role in these situations’ (Collins, 2013a, p. 131). A particular strength of this article

is that it recognises both the value of the work and the risks it poses, not only for students who may feel trauma being triggered, but also for a lecturer who has no capacity to take on a psychotherapeutic role and experiences some of the sense of powerlessness that students may express in relation to their traumatic experiences. They write (*ibid.*, p. 129):

I could not only understand the feelings of powerlessness and despair that she expressed, but also felt them personally, both in relation to my increasing distress at the pervasive cruelty and suffering that was being exposed, and at my helplessness when attempting to assist my own students.

As lecturer, they shifted towards a more participatory approach in which students were able to report more fully their emotional reactions, so that those present were better informed as to their needs. One aspect that is touched on is the notion of *containment*, the creation of conditions in which emotions can be acknowledged and spoken of in ways that are not threatening (Collins, 2013a, pp. 143-4). Attending to this brings into question the unrestricted expressions of views that may be hurtful to others; in this course, the question ‘does anyone feel hurt by that statement?’ (*ibid.*, p. 144) was at times used to check on this aspect. This functioned at both an intellectual and emotional level. It is interesting to note that this article does not mention the word *peace* but is clearly highly relevant to teaching ways of creating an educational environment of positive peace.

These approaches, which focus on the vulnerability of staff and students, while recognising the specific professional responsibilities of staff, offer promise. They recognise the need for far-reaching revisiting of the dispositions that shape the thinking, feelings and perceptions of educators, but also their capacity to advance peace across a range of what may be unpredictable contexts, often in the face of considerable obstacles.

4.5.10 Development of educators of teachers

While Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006) identify various problems in teacher education, one that they do not specify is the lack of theorisation of the development of those who educate teachers, though they do note that it is starting to receive attention. This should be recognised as a significant profession, yet receives little attention in research. Further, as Snoek, Snennen and Van der Klink (2010, p. 45) report, there is little attention in policy, either: ‘...hardly any reference is made to teacher educators’ professional development in European policy documents.’ This arises perhaps largely as a result of the complexity of a process of developing people who need to develop people to develop others. While this study does not aim to focus

on that area, it does provide some insight into the development of myself as a teacher educator, and the developments of theory, standards and policy could well be spurred on by the writing and review of such accounts.

How does this excursion into the literature of teacher education inform the concerns of this thesis? The first point is that teacher education is a remarkably complex process, and there is in reality no certain formula that one can rigidly apply to its design. The second is that to bring change into teacher education is also highly complex. Finally, to introduce into the work of teacher education an emphasis on peace is a major undertaking that requires reviewing the design and process of the whole.

4.6 TEACHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PEACE

I here move from the education of educators generally to a review of the literature that is specifically relevant to the context of South Africa. Although the literature on this issue is limited, it covers a broad range of issues, and I will organise the review by the key themes in the literature.

The general points already made about teacher education and peace apply to South Africa as they do elsewhere. I will focus on four issues – first, the relationship of South Africa to other countries in the development of teacher education; secondly, the racial design of the system and the initiatives taken to restructure it for a democracy; thirdly, specific initiatives within teacher education that addressed the racialised history of the system; and, finally, teacher education that has focused specifically on advancing peace.

Studies of teacher education in South Africa reveal the extent to which this has been shaped both by models developed elsewhere, in particular in the United Kingdom and United States of America, as well as its home-grown features. Chisholm (2019, p. 62) reports that ‘Although South Africa’s education officials referred to and constantly compared the South African white system with the English, three models informed the development of the character of institutions for teacher preparation in South Africa.’ The first model was the British move to day colleges that included a stronger role for such educational studies such as psychology and history. The second was the model adopted in the United States for the education of freed slaves, which had a strong influence on teacher education for black South Africans. The third was the model of New York’s Teachers College, which combined ‘university departments of education, the

demonstration school and a research practice centre with the teacher training centre.’ (Chisholm, 2019, p. 63). However, it was adopted without the strong research element.

Kruss (2008, p. 3) refers to ‘the double dynamic’ of global trends affecting all higher education as well as also basic education and teacher education. Chisholm (2019, pp. 7-8) argues for a relational approach to the influences from elsewhere, not simply as a subordinate position in which changes made elsewhere are automatically adopted. One implication is that many of the patterns we see in South African teacher education – both during apartheid and since then – would be familiar to those involved in teacher education in other countries.

As will be recognised in the section on peace education below, significant design elements that have informed the development of education in South Africa have been adopted from elsewhere, as also the specific development of teacher education. South Africans tend to see themselves, in my experience and in literature (Lazarus, 2004), as living in a unique society, and we may overemphasise those features that are particular to our own history.

In teacher education, these particular features included the ways in which authorities imposed a particular and insistent racial design from colonial times onwards. Chisholm (2019, p. 10), writes:

...even as the different elements of the system were linked to one another in different ways, it was racially inflected in every respect: from the naming of programmes and certificates, to the location and mode of preparation, to the entry requirements to enter teacher training to the curriculum. A system was set in place over more than a century: it was produced by a deeply unequal and diverse society and it created a deeply unequal, diverse and changing set of teachers moving in and out of the system over time.

The racial aspects were imprinted onto all aspects of teacher education. The education of white teachers was systematically better resourced and more highly qualified, while black teachers were, until late in apartheid, prepared mainly for the lower levels of schooling (Chisholm, 2019, p. 80). One may note how deeply entrenched the patterns were around a ‘better’ white teacher education system and an ‘inferior’ black system that must have impacted on the ways in which white and black teachers saw themselves. From the perspective of this study, South African teacher education was not only deeply racial, but a system of structural violence (Galtung, 1969). This history continues in the societal attitudes that teachers and parents still hold to, that

the schools that were white under apartheid are superior – as explored in the recent study by Hunter (2019) of schooling in Durban.

The outcome of these various factors was that, by the advent of democracy in 1994, the institutional nature of teacher education in South Africa was ‘highly fragmented’ (Kruss, 2008, p. 1), with a multitude of racial and provincial divisions. There were 101 State colleges. This was also an extremely costly system. Since the advent of democracy, there has been an immense undertaking of trying to shift away from this racialised history. As Pendlebury (1998, p. 334) writes, ‘Under apartheid, education was a primary state of contestation; now it is a primary site of transformation, not only for its own sake but because it is recognised as crucial for transforming other spheres.’

This process of transformation in teacher education entailed moving away from the racially fractured state of higher education generally and teacher education in particular. This largely meant, again, reviewing models from other countries. Of course, as Kruss (2008, p. 4) argues, ‘The South African mediation of global trends is highly particular, in that it is strongly shaped by the imperatives of dismantling the apartheid past’.

Some universities were merged to end the racial basis of structuring, bringing together campuses with very different histories and characteristics. All teacher colleges were reorganised, with most being simply closed; while those that were of higher quality were incorporated into university faculties of Education. As someone who was very directly involved in this process as Head of the School of Education at the University of Natal, during its incorporation of Edgewood College, I am very familiar with the complexity of such processes and the great time involved in managing them. A study was carried out (Kruss, 2008) into the process of restructuring and institutional change, a study in which I was involved as one of a team of researchers (Kruss, 2008). This revealed both some positive reactions by staff to the new challenges but also, as Kruss (2008, p. 192) describes, ‘A strong sense of grievance and sometimes bitterness.’

At the level of schools, there was rapid change in the systems for management and in the national curricula, with constant debate about the latter (Jansen, 1997); at the level of teacher education, the demands of changing the structures, transforming the racial elements and developing new staff were over-riding considerations. On the one hand, scholars would recognise such a racial system as being intrinsically related to the violence of the society; however, little explicit attention is given in the literature to questions over the violence of the

system and what teacher education's response to violence could be. It would be fair to judge that, while the term 'transformation' in teacher education has meant addressing the racial elements as well as opening up to new curricula and educational philosophies (Douglas, 2005), such literature has not posed specifically the issue of violence.

Despite the lack of attention to issues of violence and peace in teacher education, there has been considerable attention on how well or poorly teacher education institutions have handled issues of diversity; here 'diversity' would relate to difference primarily in terms of social identities (Tajfel & Turner, 1978). I would argue that there are necessary connections between this area and issues of violence and peace, given that oppressive practices regarding gender or disability, for example, would be understood in the framework adopted here as structural violence. Hemson (2006), drawing on a social justice approach, researched how three faculties of Education – in KwaZulu-Natal, in Gauteng and in North-West Province – addressed the issues of diversity within their initial teacher education in the Post Graduate Certificate of Education. Some findings are relevant to peace education. First, there were no modules that were designed to specifically deal with diversity, or, for that matter, with conflict and violence. Further, the approach taken by many staff suggested a degree of moralism (e.g., racism as 'bad behaviour'), which served to distance them from the challenging issues. There was also little evidence that the experiences of students in teaching practice were analysed in depth. However, the institution with the most considered response to issues of diversity also demonstrated a much greater degree of coherence amongst staff, who had developed a common vision of the whole qualification, not simply in the area of 'diversity'. This provided evidence for the need for change to be addressed in the most holistic way, through understanding the implications of change at a system level and redesigning accordingly. This finding would align with the evidence presented above on the need for greater coherence in teacher education; where it is achieved, there is a greater possibility of addressing those issues that require deeper levels of change in the ways students understand themselves and their work.

In response to Hemson (2006), Robinson and Zinn applied a similar methodology to three institutions in the Western Cape. They state (2007, p. 62), 'Little attention... has been paid to the specific issue of preparation for diversity, a central aspect of the new democracy.' The authors (*ibid.*, p. 67), stated that the initiatives they found 'displayed little sense of coherence or of operating within a commonly understood framework.' They found that many staff were cautious and many students resistant to teaching in areas of diversity. The authors point out (*ibid.*, p. 76) that the 'individual and collective identities of different generations [of teacher

educators and student teachers] are related to their personal and institutional biographies, including their experiences of schooling.’ It seems that there was no process of engaging with these histories. The authors thus call for a ‘more coherent and rigorous framework of action’ (ibid., p. 76), here concurring with Hemson (2006). The implication is, again, that, for students to develop ways of handling diversity more thoughtfully, we need ways of engaging with students that enable them to reflect on their histories, raising their understanding of how they themselves have been shaped and creating spaces in which there is the possible of more creative responses.

To achieve an education system that is truly nonviolent, there are needs that go beyond teacher education. However, an essential requirement is also that we need students to be developed into teachers with a deep and critical understanding of themselves and those they teach, with a range of capacities related to what they teach and how they present and assess learning, as well as a commitment that challenges the unjust and violent features of education itself. The evidence has been that teacher education is generally limited in its ability to do these; one of the most challenging areas is the need to address inequalities and violence. At this point I turn specifically to the education of teachers that is intended to promote peace.

There is extremely limited literature on teacher education that specifically aims to advance peace in South Africa. Carter and Vandeyar (2009) report on a study of two cases of work within teacher education – one in the United States of America and one in South Africa – on issues of power and privilege. Both cases used the framework of critical pedagogy, linked to a strong ethic of care, and used methods for engaging with students in teacher education regarding issues of privilege and power, in particular related to race. Both researchers reported a significant level of resistance with regard to explorations of issue of privilege and power, especially those students who feel disrespected by references to white privilege. Assessing the nature and impact of the South African initiative is difficult for three reasons – lack of information on sampling, lack of exploration of the pedagogy used and the lack of explanation as to how the links were drawn between inequality and violence.

A second article is unusual in that it focuses not on formal teacher education but on a professional development programme with teachers. It reports on a programme for History teachers in the Western Cape entitled ‘Facing the past – Transforming the future’ (Weldon, 2010). It notes the emphasis on values in the latest South African curriculum, but comments, ‘While expecting teachers to teach a values-based curriculum, none of the official teacher

training programmes for the new curriculum engaged the dual legacies of identity-based conflict and a deeply unequal and divided society' (Weldon, 2010, p. 355). The programme made extensive use of personal narratives in aiming to educate teachers of personal histories, with a strong emphasis on the recognition of racial divisions. It foregrounded issues of emotions as well as developing an understanding of how social structures had created very different lives. The approach used methods similar to those of Healing of Memories; the author draws on her own positionality in a way and adds:

One of the most fruitful fields of further research would be on how exactly the autobiographies, emotions and beliefs of teachers not only filter curriculum knowledge in the classroom, but impact on the way in which democratic values are taught through classroom interactions. Very little is known about this in divided societies.

She further reports that 'personal change after internecine conflict is a long and complicated business' (Weldon, 2010, p. 362).

Maxwell, Enslin and Maxwell (2004, p. 110) describe a project that intervenes with teachers in preschools and make this point:

Peace education for educators is certainly crucial when peace education is a very new concept for educators, as is the case in South Africa, and when the educators themselves have been immersed in South Africa's violent history and violent current reality.

The intervention they developed and report on includes workshops for teachers on the issues of peace, but there is no exploration of the pedagogy and specific content. These workshops were intended to complement the pre-school curriculum the teachers had been writing.

Over a longer period, John (2013, 2018a) has drawn AVP into his teaching at both Certificate and MEd levels, in the development of peace educators. AVP focuses both on addressing peace and developing skills in facilitating workshops on peace. In addition, John's work (2013, 2018a, 2018b) on conflict mapping is a teaching innovation that draws on Mezirow's (1997) perspective transformation, as well as the work of African scholars. He writes (2018a, p. 54) that a central purpose of this work is:

...to engage students in reflecting critically on their perspectives and habitual mindsets that shape their understandings and actions in life. In South Africa, given our violent history of colonialism and apartheid, as well as entrenched systems of patriarchy and

neoliberalism, such socialization is marked significantly by oppression, exploitation, and trauma.

One method of enabling this critical reflection is to get postgraduate students (who are teachers) to map out issues of conflict and violence in their school. They then get their learners to undertake the same task from the student perspective, with male and female learners working separately. The third step is to compare the maps from the different perspectives, foregrounding issues of class, age and gender. Next, teachers design a peace education intervention that responds to the specific issues of conflict or violence. They present a full report on this in class and then write a more academically oriented assignment that connects the work with theory and scholarship.

John (2013, p. 85) relates this work both to Mezirow and to indigenous approaches that draw on other elements that anchor the work in an African context:

While acknowledging the value of Mezirow's version of the theory, Ntseane (2011) calls for a more Afrocentric perspective to transformative learning where greater attention is paid to the communal, metaphysical and gendered dimensions to knowledge processes.

This work thus uses methods that capture indigenous approaches to perspective transformation and contribute to a less individualistic understanding of the phenomenon. There is very little indeed that has been written on teachers' peace education in the South African context that works with African cultural resources.

4.7 LIMITATIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The literature on teachers and teacher education in relation to peacebuilding also reveals what some of the limits to teacher education are, if we work for system of education that advance peace. As Novelli and Sayed (2016, p. 22) point out, 'While many teachers express commitment to teaching and see their work as a vocation, this becomes undermined when pay, conditions and status are eroded, particularly when teachers are marginalised from key decision-making processes and their representation is undermined.' This emphasises the need for a commitment to peacebuilding to permeate the entire system, from the systems design process onwards. This suggests that, however good the education of teachers is, there are likely to be structural constraints that will limit its effectiveness. Priestley et al. (2015) write that policy initiatives with apparently positive aims focus 'on the individual dimensions of what it means to be an effective teacher, while ignoring or subverting the cultural and structural

conditions which play an important role in enabling this to happen.’ There are drivers of violence that are not easily addressed through teacher education alone, as evidenced through assassinations of teachers and principals in this province who stand in the way of ambitious teachers’ promotion. These points signal one of the limitations of this study, given its aim of influencing practice directly through action research.

4.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has covered a very wide sweep of theory and has in the process brought home to me how complex peace education is, as well as the even more demanding process of developing peace educators. Our current systems of teacher education are inadequate to this task, not least because our institutions have rarely attempted to address it.

One implication of this must be the need for our systems to review what forms of violence and what forms of peace students in schools and other settings are learning, and what prospective teachers are learning within teacher education that provides the possibility of their developing the capacity for addressing these evident needs in their work. To assume that good teacher education means effective peace education is a wholly inadequate approach unless ‘good teacher education’ is theorised much more deeply; however, possibly effective education of peace educators could make teacher education truly effective.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out a description, explanation and exploration of the research design. Creswell (2009, p. 5) states that research design ‘involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry, and specific methods.’ Ultimately, this chapter has to set out an argument that the research was undertaken in ways that lead to its findings being regarded as trustworthy and credible.

The sequence followed here is first to set out the research design and the rationale for it. It proceeds to explore the paradigm (Scotland, 2012) or worldview (Creswell, 2009), including the choice of a critical paradigm and the adoption of dynamic realism as the philosophical approach. Next, it sets out the particular form of action research adopted as the research approach, and the rationale for a qualitative strategy. The chapter proceeds to describe the context fully, then the sampling, and the methods of data generation and data analysis. An exploration of trustworthiness follows, the ethical issues are reported and, finally, the limitations of the study are acknowledged, with some additional critical comments on action research.

To reprise, the study adopted these as the research questions:

In a society that has experienced historical violence, how can understandings of contexts, of students and of ourselves inform the pedagogy of a teacher education that aims to build peace?

The subordinate research questions are these:

In a teacher education project that aimed to build peace in contexts of violence, how did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about:

Ways of developing **understandings** of violence and the possibilities of peace?

Ways of developing **a pedagogy** that would address violence and the possibilities for peace?

The nature of a **pedagogy** for teacher education based on these learning?

It is necessary to clarify the roles identified in the research questions. This need arises out of the research design; as an action research project there are two sets of roles. The first is the set of research roles, of researcher and participants. I was the researcher. The second is the set of roles in the action project. As an educational project, there are staff and students; I was the leading staff member. When I use the term ‘we’, I refer generally to ourselves as the staff group. To complicate it a bit further, the boundaries of the staff group were not sharply set; most staff participated as students when not in the staffing role. Furthermore, the staff group was in some ways a collaborative research group (Cornish et al., 2014) where reflection on sessions contributed to data analysis. This complexity is perhaps not sufficiently acknowledged in the analysis of action research.

The next section sets out the implications of such research questions for the research design.

5.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

‘Research design... broadly conceived, involves a clear focus on the research question, the purposes of the study, “what information most appropriately will answer specific research questions, and which strategies are most effective for obtaining it” (LeCompte & Preissle with Tesch, 1993, p. 30)’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013, p. 29). The task of this section is to identify the key elements of the research design of this study and the rationale for these elements.

In summary, the elements of the research design are these: the methodological approach taken was an action research study, with a pilot and an intervention phase. The research was qualitative in strategy. It adopted the critical paradigm and for its philosophical underpinnings used dynamic realism (Röck, 2024), which involves a combination of process ontology and phenomenology.

Understanding how learning takes place in an educational setting requires coming to terms with the complexities of the context. This has implications for the methodology adopted. Radford (2007, pp. 273-274) writes of the complexity of educational settings and the implications for educational research:

In an environment in which there is an increasing interest in systems that are not amenable to experimental methodology, and that appear to defy the relatively stable, bounded, linear and causally balanced conditions within which formal investigations take place, ‘traditional’ methodologies of science may be challenged. ... These examples may be identified as sharing some of the following characteristics:

1. *They are composed of multiple variables that are too numerous and of such precision in terms of their impact, to fully take into account.*
2. *Interaction between variables is non-linear, i.e., there is a disproportionateness between causes and effects. The linkage between two variables might be such as to amplify or deaden the impact of the one on the other.*
3. *Interactions are dynamic i.e. many variables might impact on one or a few and one or a few variables might impact on many (Cilliers, 1998, p. 4).*
4. *Complex systems tend to be relatively fragile hovering between chaos and order, constantly changing and either partially or completely unpredictable (Hayles, 1991, p. 3).*
5. *At the points of change or division within complex systems, what David Byrne has referred to as 'bifurcation points', the system is particularly sensitive (Byrne, 1998, p. 21).*
6. *They are understood in terms of open or fuzzy boundaries in which the impact of particular events on the behaviour of the system may be more or less marginal.*
7. *They yield emergent properties, new interactive variables, i.e., ones that could not have been accounted for prior to, and in the context of, the interactive process that generated them, and, as a consequence,*
8. *They are unpredictable.*

If we understand educational systems as exhibiting this degree of complexity, with the growing evidence as to how such systems operate, then a positivist approach can help us reach only the most meagre conclusions. Understanding the possibilities for effective and ethical social science in the context of such complexity leads us into a research approach that is slow to come to definite conclusions and that needs to be open to unexpected relationships and a lack of linear logic.

An action research study that seeks to understand how to develop teachers to promote peace in a context of violence needs to have a strong focus on the processes of learning and of unlearning. Learning and unlearning have to be inferred and are indeed difficult to measure; furthermore, the self of the researcher is implicated in the phenomenon being studied. There are a great many relevant variables to consider – the prior educational experiences of all

involved, the diverse exposures to violence, the sense of personal commitment to change, the various forms the habitus of those present may take, the emotions that attach to education, the varying forms that the educational process in the study can take, as well as the unplanned influences that happen over a period of time, and the perspective of the researcher. These variables will inevitably interact with each other in multiple and complex ways.

We thus need careful attention to what people say of themselves, their feelings, perceptions and aims, as well as how we perceive them to act. The inferences the researcher draws from this information need to be under critical scrutiny and tested through individual and collective discussion, with an awareness of how our inferences may be shaped by social forces and personal experiences that we may fail to take into critical account. In this study, there is an element of co-construction of learning; I, as the researcher, was also a subject in some significant ways.

The researcher needs also to take a critical view of how such violence arises and is sustained, as well as a commitment to ending such violence. The latter means that it will take a normative stance, and the question of the values that have been promoted through past experiences and the values that the process of the study promote are highly relevant.

An implication that follows from these points is that an objectivist approach to this study is not appropriate. The study will focus primarily on qualitative data and the patterns that arise. This allows a diversity of methods for generation and analysis of data. At the same time, it needs to take a critical stance, which infers the existence of systematic relationships of power and privilege that operate in ways that their social reality needs to be acknowledged. This places the study within the critical paradigm. The study further needs to be very open to new possibilities and not constrained by any assumption that social structures necessarily impede movement towards significant change; creativity, agency and innovation need to be fostered.

This discussion takes us into an exploration of the paradigm, the philosophical framework, within which this study takes place.

5.2.1 Philosophical underpinnings to the research

This study adopts a combination of process ontology and phenomenology within an overarching critical paradigm. Research needs to be located within an overall paradigm or worldview (Creswell, 2009) that provides a coherent and consistent understanding of how the researcher understands the nature of reality and how we can generate knowledge of it. There are in fact different ways of understanding the boundaries of paradigms in relation to each

other; for example, Scotland (2009) distinguishes three: the scientific paradigm (both positivist and post-positivist), the interpretive paradigm, and the critical paradigm. Creswell (2009) sets out four contrasting worldviews: postpositivism, constructivism (equivalent to the interpretive paradigm), advocacy/participatory (equivalent to the critical paradigm) and pragmatism.

A key problem for a researcher like me is the choice between a realist approach (typical of the scientific paradigm), which places knowledge as some kind of reflection of a reality, and constructivism, which argues that our view of reality is entirely constructed (Speed, 1991, p. 396). In the former, as in the positivist/scientific paradigm, there tends to be little attention to the self, with an assumption, generally unacknowledged, that we are somehow distanced from the object of study, as if we have stepped out of the world. This paradigm is accused of failing to acknowledge its own metaphysical assumptions (Zhang, 2023).

A corresponding problem though arises from the idealism and relativism in some forms of the interpretive paradigm. I would prefer a framework in which the significance of our understandings, perceptions and feelings is acknowledged but is subject to critical scrutiny, and a framework in which there is a sense of continuity between the objects of our study and ourselves.

Beyond that, the theoretical framework of the study locates me within a critical orientation, with a commitment to an emancipatory approach which, ‘seeks to address issues of social justice and marginalism’ (Scotland, 2009, p. 13) and places a strong emphasis on values. ‘Critical methodology is directed at interrogating values and assumptions, exposing hegemony and injustice, challenging conventional social structures and engaging in social action’ (Crotty, 1998, p. 157, in Scotland, 2009, p. 13).’ Similarly, Creswell (2009, p. 10) writes that ‘It is emancipatory in that it helps unshackle people from the constraints of irrational and unjust structures that limit self-development and self-determination.’

Social science in the critical paradigm questions not only society ‘out there’ but questions also its own assumptions and ways of working, in a reflexive way. Pillow (2003, p. 178) sees the significance of reflexivity in the rise of critical theory in these terms:

...McCarthy (1994) notes how traditionally the social sciences were dependent upon offering a “‘view from nowhere’ with all of its rights and privileges” (p. 15) while critical theory challenged the “‘privileged non-position of social-scientific knowledge by analyzing the modes of its production, the roles it played in society, the interests it served, and the historical processes through which it came to power” (p. 15).

Generally, those within the critical paradigm take a stance near the midpoint of the continuum from materialism to idealism. A crucial element of this work is ‘The emphasis upon distinguishing between real and subjective, distorted, conceptual or ideological orders of existence is what gives Critical Theory its distinctiveness’ (Critical theory, in University of South Australia, n.d.). This approach does not take at face value how respondents may speak of social issues, problematising what and how meanings have been created. Here critical theory may draw on the social constructionism that is often associated with the interpretive paradigm.

5.2.2 *Ontology and epistemology*

The philosophical foundations on which research activity rests need to include an explanation of the understanding of reality and of the understanding of how we come to know what we know. Without having clarity on these, there is vagueness about whatever claims we can make about our findings.

In brief, as Bekerman and Zembylas (2014, p. 53) write in questioning the implicit norms of peace education:

Generally speaking, ontology is the study of being... and deals with questions concerning what things exist or can be said to exist. The key issue is whether there is something ‘real out there’ that is independent of our knowledge of it (Hay, 2006) ... Epistemology, on the other hand, is the study of knowledge... and reflects one’s view of what we can know about the world and how we can know it (Audi, 2010). The key issue here is whether an observer can identify ‘real’ or ‘objective’ knowledge and if so, how.

These authors are critical of peace education in that it often works in an uncritical way with concepts such as ‘culture’ and ‘identity’, treating them as things we take as existing (similarly, anyone reading social research in South Africa will be struck by the confident use of racial categories from colonialism and apartheid, as if they are simply aspects of reality).

Thus, Bekerman and Zembylas (2014, p. 54) argue that we need to recognise and question the ontological assumptions that underpin work in the area of peace education, for example, the assumed essential differences between ethnic or racial groups.

Zembylas and Bekerman (2013a) report that they take critical realism as a basis for their work. This approach is frequently drawn on by researchers using the critical paradigm (Whelan, 2019). This recognises that there are some aspects that are real but that need to be inferred as

we do not know that: “*Real* structures or mechanisms... exist independently of our observations of them. That is, they exist whether we observe them or not.” (University of South Australia, n.d.). This approach applies to both the natural world and to social phenomena such as racism, though researching them is held to be qualitatively different. As Whelan (2019) explains, one could argue that a social structure is socially constructed, but its persistence makes it ‘ontologically objective’ because of its ability to have powerful effects on the social order. It is though ‘transitive’ in the sense that it can be exposed, challenged and changed.

Whelan (2019) writes that critical realists take the following position:

...looking beneath the surface and developing explanations for what causes things to happen is potentially emancipatory in that it can challenge and ultimately help change dominant narratives and discourses, something which positivistic approaches often fail to do or are not concerned with doing in the first place.

This approach is well suited to the critical paradigm as both require a critique of such dominant narratives.

Generally, in terms of the epistemology adopted within the critical paradigm, according to Scotland (2009, p. 13), ‘Knowledge is both socially constructed and influenced by power relations from within society.’ This approach recognises the need for a critical awareness of how our knowledge of society is shaped through such relations.

5.2.3 *Dynamic realism*

Although I recognise how close my own work has been to critical realism, I am drawing for this study on a relatively recent philosophical development, that of dynamic realism (Röck, 2023). In this section, I explore what it means to adopt this stance; my major argument is that it draws specific attention to the ways in which processes unfold, and thus to the complex ways in which change occurs. Dynamic realism draws on a process ontology and on a phenomenological approach to knowledge. As with critical realism, it thus takes a midpoint between a focus on reality and a focus on our perceptions. I will set out the two key elements of this approach.

5.2.3.1 Process ontology

Critical realism and dynamic realism share the basic assumption that there is a reality ‘out there’. The key difference is what that reality consists of. For critical realism, it is a reality of substances. For dynamic realism, it is rather the reality of processes. This is known as process

ontology; it follows a line from the Ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus, the British philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, and German philosopher Martin Heidegger. The core belief in process ontology (Röck, 2023) is that there is always change, though there is also constancy. Everything we encounter is in a state of flux – and if we do not perceive that flux, it is simply because we have not attended to it long enough. Concrete eventually degrades, living beings eventually die. Even glass will end its form in time, either through devitrification or cosmological change (Bite Sustainability, n.d.).

The dominant perspective within Western philosophy has been a focus on a ‘thing’ that is located at a fixed point in space and a fixed point in time (Röck, 2023b). The nature of other things nearby has no influence on it. In contrast, within process ontology it is recognised that there are constantly processes underway; while these are in a particular relation to each, the object persists, but at some point, the processes will not continue in the same way. For example, our bodily processes may continue until the processes of circulation start to diverge from what is needed for our bodies to continue alive, or a disease impairs specific processes.

A strength of this approach is that it is able to treat both physical phenomena and social phenomena – and body and mind – as real in the same sense of processes that unfold. It thus avoids the rigid dualism that has characterised so much of Western philosophy, more notably with Descartes. At one point in a lecture, Röck (2023c) refers to the sense of humans being ‘homeless’ in the world; this approach restores us as fully in the world.

The fundamental nature is not matter as substance but matter as process (Röck, 2023). In many ways, this is similar to systems theory, but Röck (2023) makes the point that dynamic realism includes temporality; in other words, nature is not simply relational, but the relations are always shifting. The unfolding slow or rapid shift in one process impacts on other processes. There are different ways of understanding the flow of time; one perspective in this approach is that it unfolds, and that time for a tree or a butterfly is not the same as for us. I find this a very attractive way of understanding the world that coheres with what we have come to understand about ecological systems, for example.

Taking this stance has many implications – for the ways in which we think of life, for epistemology, for methods of enquiry, for the ways we understand the research process and for data analysis. For example, the prevailing idea in a Western context is that thoughts do not have impact in the ‘real world’; in dynamic realism, thoughts are processes within the real world.

5.2.3.2 Phenomenology

The epistemology that is most appropriate to dynamic realism is phenomenology. This directs attention to the actual experience of people, as the source of knowledge. ‘The most concise generic definition of phenomenology is Sokolowski’s (2000): "Phenomenology is the study of human experience and of the way things present themselves to us in and through such experience"’ (Budd, 2012, p. 70).

Similarly, Armstrong (2015) reports that, ‘For phenomenology the ultimate source of all meaning and value is the lived experience of human beings. All philosophical systems, scientific theories or aesthetic judgments have the status of abstractions from the ebb and flow of the lived world.’ The original formulation by Husserl, the founder of this philosophy, was that to grasp fully the significance of such experience requires that one seeks to put aside the perceptions and preconceptions that might distort the experience.

Further development of these ideas has led to a rejection of the idea, what has been now seen as an Enlightenment notion, that one can put aside all assumptions, conventions and cultural expectations (Armstrong, 2015). Phenomenology retains the emphasis on ‘lived experience’, but seeks that we bring to reflection on experience: a critical awareness of how such experience is shaped through personal and social histories, cultural conventions, bodily responses, etc. What is key, though, is to maintain a critical awareness of how these influence and shape what we experience.

Experience is often understood in a narrow way as the actual sensory input that we experience. However, as Röck (2019) points out, any reflection on actual experiences will quickly reveal that what we experience is far more than a range of sensory stimuli. As we connect with such sensory data, we bring in many aspects of ourselves and of society:

Basically, phenomenology studies the structure of various types of experience ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity. The structure of these forms of experience typically involves what Husserl called “intentionality”, that is, the directedness of experience toward things in the world, the property of consciousness that it is a consciousness of or about something. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2013)

What this adds to the ways in which we approach data within a study such as this is that we foreground the value of what we experience and of what we understand others to report of their

experience. At the same time, we maintain a critical awareness (in particular, this is appropriate within the critical paradigm) of how personal and social conventions, assumptions and presuppositions shape that experience.

Adopting this approach has direct and practical implications for research. It is clearly highly appropriate to a qualitative strategy as it seeks to capture the quality of experience as best it can. Within a participatory approach in education, for example, this provides a rationale for acknowledging the significance of what people report of their experience – whether of recalled experiences or of fresh experiences in the immediate present. At the same time, it recognises that our very diversity means that we have access both to diverse experiences and to the very different ways in which lived experience has been shaped through the individual and social influences identified above. Philosophically, this brings together process ontology and phenomenology, under the umbrella of the critical paradigm. There are though some elements of potential conflict between this ontology and epistemology and a critical approach, not least because of a bias in so much critical theory towards cognition that was explored in chapter 4. Procyshyn (2020) explores some difficulties in linking critical theory and phenomenology. Against those, he refers to ‘The common insistence on the intersubjective nature of human engagement...’ and sets out other areas of commonality: ‘Phenomenologists and critical theorists... share the same opposition to decision-theoretical models of rational action and rational choice.’ He also refers to common interests in developments around recognition, of vulnerability (explored in chapter 4) and receptivity (Slote, 2014).

Procyshyn (2020) further writes that:

...critical theorizing starts from empirical instances of social failure (disrespect, misrecognition, exclusion/alienation from social practices constitutive of social spheres or identities, etc.), which are accessible to a first-person experiential perspective. Moreover, its proposals for addressing or redressing such failures involve realizing a potential latent in a social situation that has been obscured by contingent historical developments.

Those involved in attempting to apply Freire’s work to participatory processes within education will surely draw connections between these and the accounts of ‘social failure’ that we speak of and hear in our educational practice – and possibly also the danger of education becoming narrowly that. A phenomenological approach brings with it both a focus on the texture of experience and a critical awareness of how such experience has been shaped.

5.3 ACTION RESEARCH AS THE APPROACH ADOPTED IN THIS DESIGN

Within the critical paradigm, action research is well established. It accords well with the transformative emphasis of critical theory as well as the exploratory nature of this study in an area that is under-researched. Its processes of collaborative enquiry with participants are particularly well suited to the development of greater understanding and effectiveness in practice. For example, Kaye and Harris (2017) present various case studies of action research designed to build peace within African contexts that are generally highly complex and have intractable problems of violence – see also the role of action research within the work of the International Centre of Nonviolence (Harris et al., 2024).

Whitehead (1985, p. 97) places great emphasis on how action research aims to make the researcher/participant more effective in bringing positive change. He writes:

I take teacher action-research to be a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in educational contexts in order to improve the rationality and justice of:

Their own educational practices,

Their understanding of those practices,

The situations in which the practices are carried out.

Levin and Greenwood (2013, p. 59) write of action research in a university context thus:

AR is a set of self-consciously collaboration and democratic strategies for generating knowledge and designing action in which trained experts in social and other forms of research and local stakeholders work together. The research focus is chosen collaboratively between the local stakeholders and the action researchers and the relationships among the participants are organised as joint learning processes. AR centres on doing “with” rather than doing “for” stakeholders and credits local stakeholders with the richness of experience and reflective possibilities that long experience living in complex situations brings with it. (Greenwood & Levin, 2007 p. 1)

The authors acknowledge though that this conflicts with the “hierarchical, compartmentalized and authoritarian structures that dominate higher education” (Levin & Greenwood, 2013, p. 59). Possibly this study was less constrained precisely because it was developed and operated

as a nonformal course that did not need to be fitted into such a framework but that could also use the many resources that a university provides.

A recurring image of action research in diagrammatic form is that of the spiral, an unending process that builds on past learning and opens into new. Activities recur in a sequence that in idealised form is represented by Kemmis and MacTaggart (2000) as Plan → Act and observe → Reflect. Within a circle, this could be simply a repetitive process, but mapped onto a descending spiral it gives it a sense of development with the repeated processes gradually building up theory and knowledge.

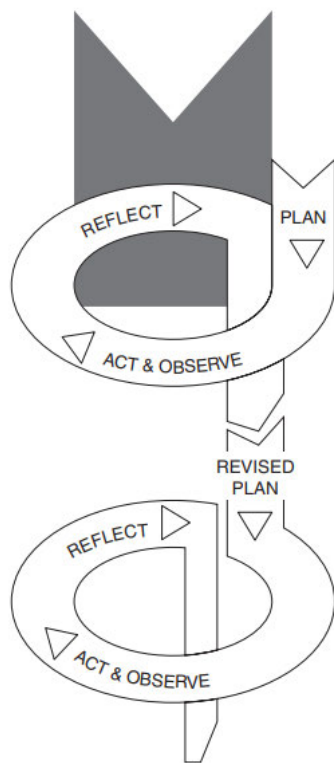


Figure 5.1 Diagram by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) in Koshy et al. (2011, p. 5)

This pattern is similarly repeated in various diagrams that depict the ways in which the research process unfolds, repeating the movement between planning, thinking and action. It understands the research process as ongoing, as new questions may emerge. Another such example is that of McIntyre (2007), who writes specifically of participatory action research, though her image, which shows a spiral that moves from the centre out, could apply to action research generally.

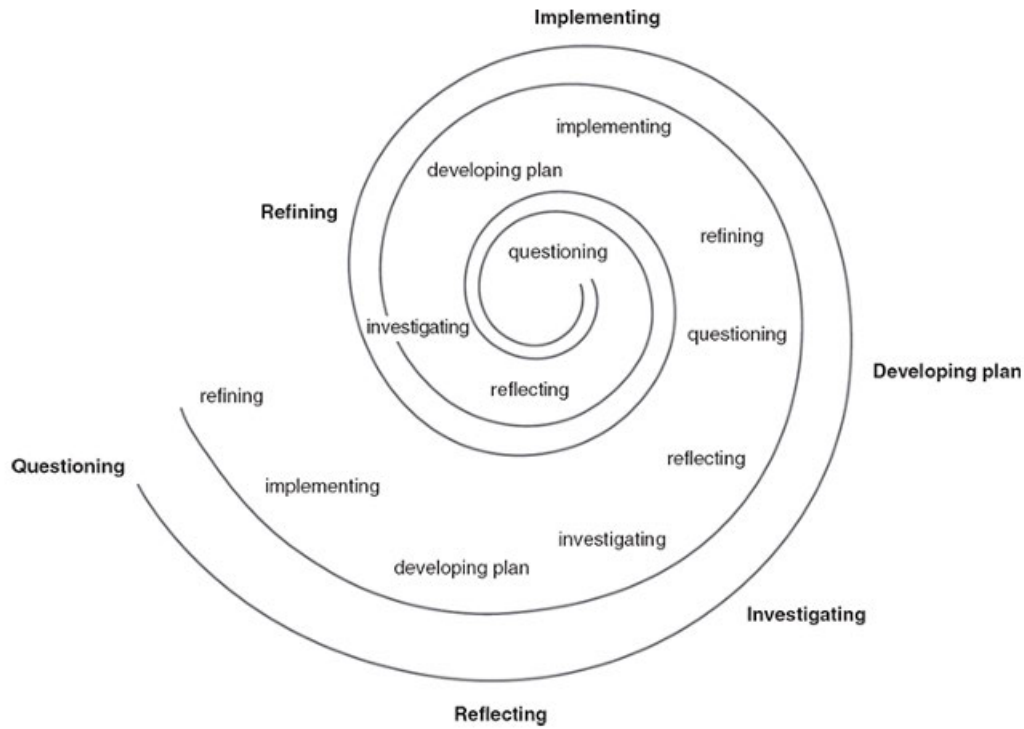


Figure 5.2 The recursive process of participatory action research (McIntyre, 2007, p. 26)

A different way of representing very similar processes is set out by Macintyre (2000), which similarly represents the cyclical nature of the action research processes.

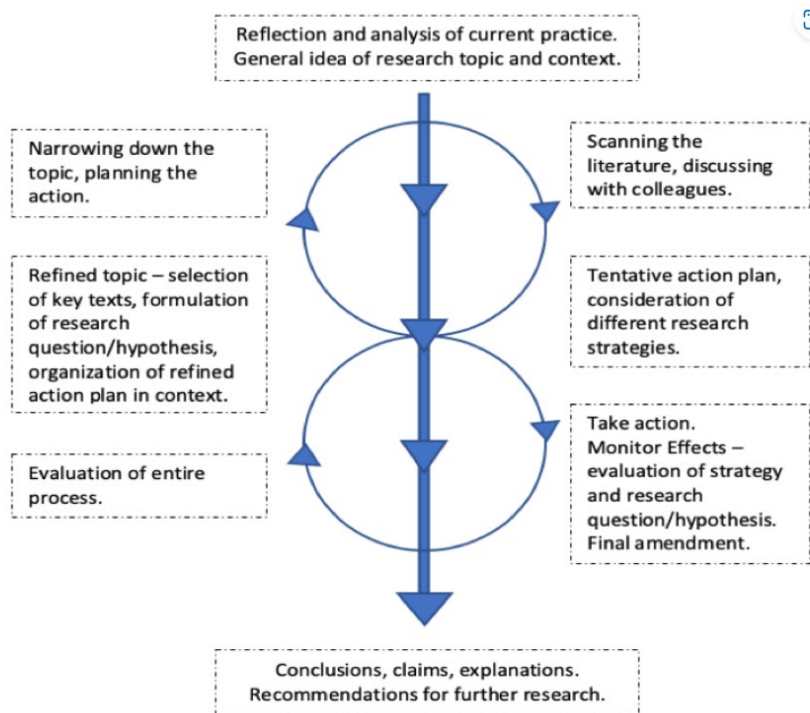


Figure 5.3 Model of an action research process (Macintyre, 2000, p.1)

These three models are cyclical and open-ended, suggesting that the process maintains an openness to what develops. However, if one needs evidence as to how action research can itself become mechanical and linear, here is how the process is set out by Elliott (1991, in Pracht et al., n.d.):

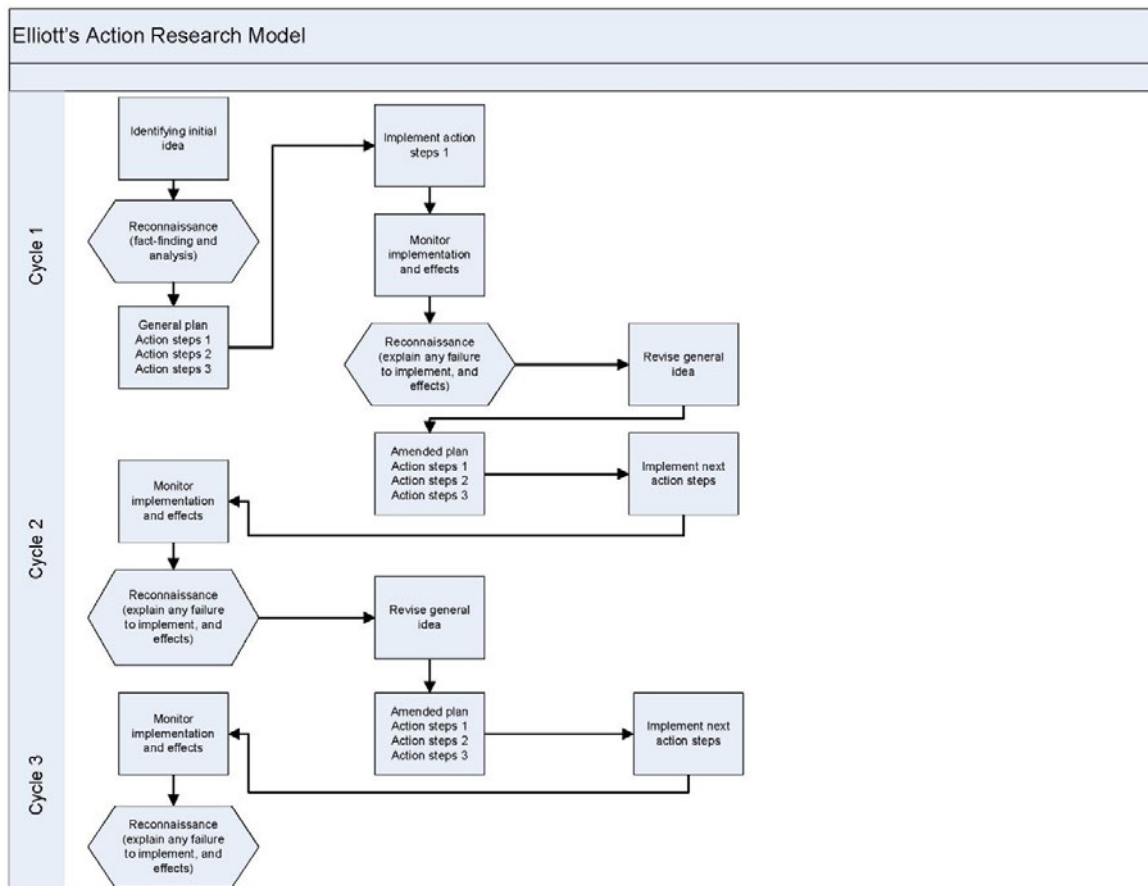


Figure 5.4 Depiction of an action research process (Elliott, 1991, in Pracht et al., n.d.)

The positivist ideas of what many see as scientific research permeate this model, with its assumption that all relevant variables can be pinned down and accounted for. There is no sense in here of the researcher, except as the person taking the data through these steps. Radford (2007) describes how government policy and expectations of 'best practice' have driven action research into a technician and reductive approach that may be designed to deal with complicated matters but that ignores the significance of complexity in educational settings.

Radford (2007, p. 266) further argues that:

...to the extent that action research may be seen (a) to neglect the complexity of educational situations; and (b) to adopt a methodological tendency towards a

deconstruction/ reductionist paradigm, it is unlikely that it will meet the claims that are made for it in terms either of controlled improvement or the emancipation and empowerment of the practitioner.

Such researchers, as with McNiff (2011), reject the narrowly pragmatic use of action research that attempts to resolve problems while failing to hold to the transformational possibilities inherent in action research. Similarly, Radford (2007, p. 278) sets out the need for researchers to take a less controlling role:

Practitioner researchers need to be analysts and critical interpreters of practice in a way that helps them to understand and explain what is happening but the approach is more likely to be historical, exploratory, interactive and reflectively analytical rather than directly interventionist or controlling.

Levin and Greenwood (2013, pp. 56-57) identify four important elements in their approach to action research in higher education:

The first is multiperspective research that mobilises the resources across different disciplines that serves to generate new knowledge and develop theories and methods. Secondly, methodological diversity that enables close connects between theory and practice. Thirdly, inclusiveness of stakeholders – here referring to those outside the university; this makes the work and the potential for theoretical development more challenging because the problems faced are more complex and multidimensional. Finally, changes in social science teaching that lead into teachers and students becoming “more competent theorists and practitioners” (ibid., p. 57)

In this study, I hoped to achieve an action research study that would meet these demanding criteria. My use of this approach led me also into understanding more fully some of its strengths and limitations; I explore these in the section below on trustworthiness.

5.3.1 Participatory action research

McIntyre (2008, p. ix) describes three characteristics of participatory action research (PAR) as follows:

The active participation of researchers and participants in the co-construction of knowledge; the promotion of self- and critical awareness that leads to individual, collective, and/or social change; and the building of alliances between researchers

and participants in the planning, implementation, and dissemination of the research process.

The approach followed in this study meets two of these criteria, regarding co-construction of knowledge and promotion of self-awareness and critical awareness. Regarding the third, specific responsibility for the direction of the programme lay with me as researcher, though drawing on the resources of the staffing group. Participants indeed discussed collectively with staff how implementation was proceeding and gave thoughts and opinions on the planning, but ultimately responsibility lay with the planning team that I led. Potentially, indeed, we could have designed the programme to build up the research capacity of our participants, a possibility for the future.

5.4 PHASES OF THE STUDY

The following diagram sets out the way the action research unfolded:

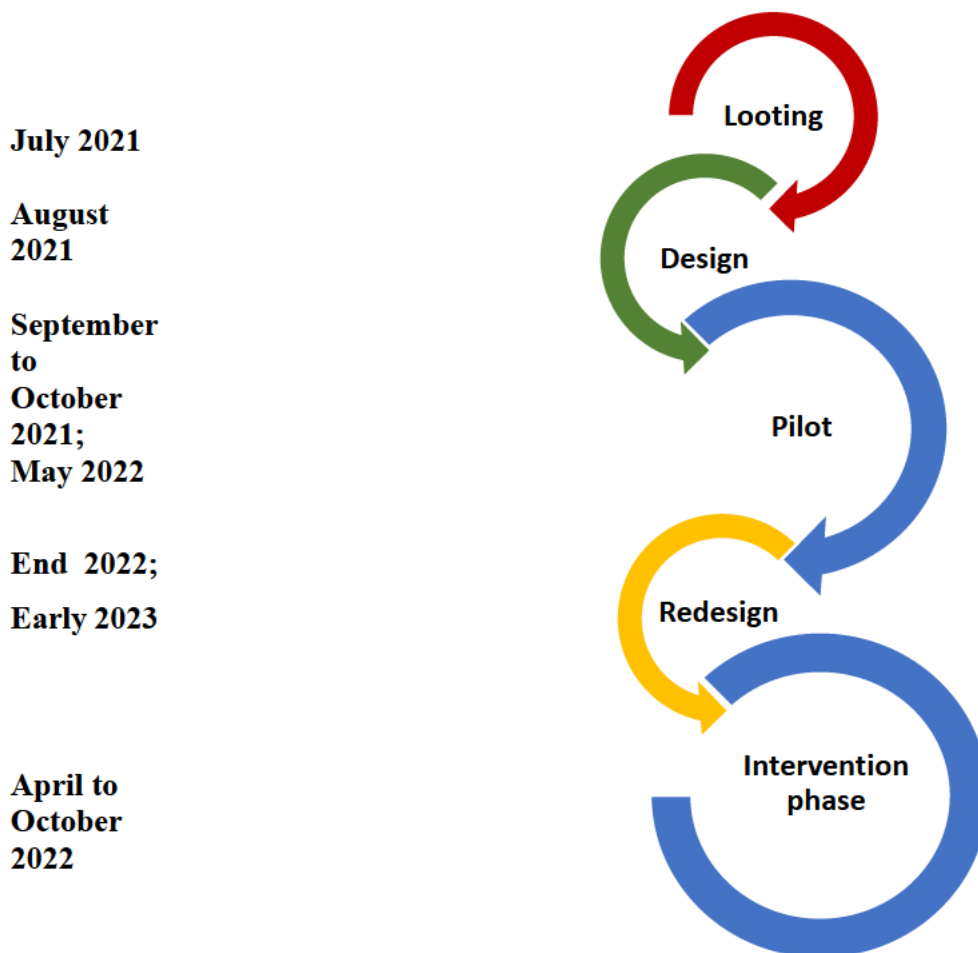


Figure 5.5 The action research process

The study took the form it did in response to specific events that are reported in chapter 1. The immediate context is set out in 5.5.1. These events led into an exploratory course, referred as the pilot. What was learnt from the pilot was used as the basis for the main intervention phase. This began in April 2023 and concluded in October 2023.

A full account of the events of two phases and of the relevant findings is provided in chapters 6 and 7. Here, I present a short overview of the stages of the research project.

This involved developing a formal proposal and going through the stages of critical review. This process began in early 2021 with the identification of the research problem – the lack of education that prepares educators to address violence and build peace, in the context of a violent society. The transition into the pilot took place rather unexpectedly as a result of specific events.

5.4.1 *The pilot*

This consisted of a quickly designed programme that was launched in September 2021 in response to the looting, arson, sabotage and associated violence that took place in July 2021, mainly in KwaZulu-Natal.

Operating under restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, the phase consisted of a series of seven online sessions over six weeks, culminating in a face-to-face workshop in mid-October 2021. A further session was held in May 2022 as a refresher workshop.

This phase was run both as an intervention and as an opportunity to gain valuable experience and insight into the possibilities for such work as well as key limitations and obstacles that needed to be addressed.

There was ongoing reflection and discussion amongst staff who taught on the programme during the pilot. These staff meetings were held online, which had the advantage of being able to be recorded. The staff discussions were critical as they enabled deeper levels of analysis. In addition, there were student responses to sessions, which were captured on Microsoft Forms, and an evaluation process in the final session of October 2021 that captured participants' reviews of the process to that point.

The analysis of this phase, linked to the reading that was being undertaken, led into the development of a set of principles, based on the literature, which would inform the intervention phase.

5.4.2 Intervention phase

In early 2023 planning started with a group of staff and the programme ran with eight workshops from the initial workshop on 15th April 2023 to the final workshop on 28th October 2023. There were two shorter online sessions in May and June 2023. In addition, there was an additional workshop for participants involved in a group focused on gender who had missed an earlier session.

5.4.3 Evaluation and assessment

Regular reflections were captured through Microsoft Forms and a fuller evaluation was undertaken at the final session in October 2023.

5.5 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In chapter 1, I set out the broader context of violence in South African society and then the specific eruption of violence that prompted the action undertaken in this study. In chapter 8, I review my personal history and how that connects with violence, peace and my work as a teacher and educator of teachers. Here I focus more narrowly on the historical and geographical context within which this research was undertaken.

Durban is a major seaport, with the fourth largest container terminal in the Southern Hemisphere and the second largest in Africa (The Economist, 2019). Its initial slow development under the British took place in the years following formal colonisation in 1843. There were years of conflict between British and Zulus, in which the British gradually extended their control (I rely here in particular on Guy, 2013). The Secretary for Native Affairs of Natal, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, developed a policy designed to maximise the effectiveness of control over the Zulus through a combination of formal respect, guile and brute force; his strategy was to reinforce the position of chiefs over the Zulu population and to use them as instruments of control. There were also deep and violent divisions amongst African people, many groups choosing to side with the British or the Boers against other black groups. The settlers were generally much more overtly racist. Not all whites took the same stance, though; the first Anglican bishop, John Colenso, originally an admirer of Shepstone, became influenced in his thinking by Zulus who questioned the literal truth of Biblical accounts, contributing to his critical theological views that deeply upset the mainstream Anglican Church. Colenso came to strongly advocate the rights of Zulu people, challenging British government policy where necessary. However, British control expanded, culminating in the war of 1879, which led to the final defeat of the Zulu kingdom, despite its victory at Isandlwana.

It is worth noting that in 1878 the Natal Code, as it came to be called, was set up and fixed certain patterns of relationships amongst Zulu people in the province. This included ‘The subjection of the female sex to the male, and of children to their father or other head of the family...’ Guy (2013, pp. 466-468) argues that this reflected the patriarchal nature of Zulu society, but at the same time undermined the existing rights of women to productive land.

The logic of colonisation was extraction of wealth – in the case of Natal, wealth from sugar and timber plantations. Because of the unwillingness of Zulu men to work as cane cutters, the planters agitated for the importation of indentured Indian labour, and Indians began to arrive from 1860 onwards (South African History Online, 2017). It was into this environment that Mohandas Gandhi arrived, against the backdrop of racist white hostility, to represent merchants subject to anti-Indian discrimination.

Durban had international relevance for systems of imperial control. Apart from the complex divide-and-rule practices of Shepstone, the British introduced concentration camps in Durban, as elsewhere, during the Anglo-Boer War. Conditions in many of the camps were dire, leading to large numbers of deaths of Boer and African inmates. From the 1920s, J. S. Marwick became the administrator of Africans in Durban and developed what became known as the Durban System (Maharaj et al., n.d., p. 7):

The local state was not prepared to finance African housing from the municipal budget so that White capital interests could be supported. It developed a unique ‘Durban system’ whereby African workers contributed to the cost of their own reproduction. It established its own African eating houses as well as a monopoly on the sale of beer. A separate Native Revenue Account was established which was used to finance the native affairs bureaucratic administration.

For example, workers from rural areas were recruited for the major stevedoring industry, but under conditions that meant that they could suddenly be excluded from the urban area and lose the income they were relying upon (Hemson, 1979). Whatever facilities they were allowed to use, such as beer halls, had to be funded from their expenditure.

In addition, agitation by whites in Durban had prompted the provincial government of Natal and in 1943 the national government (Act no. 35, 1943) to introduce a new system of urban racial segregation, pushing Indians in particular out of the central residential areas. This formed the template for the national Group Areas Act under the National Party.

The city of Durban was thus central to the systems for population control that typified authoritarian and racist regimes around the world. Its systems were those of structural violence, while its colonial and apartheid history was replete also with direct violence (Galtung, 1969, 1990). There has also been a long history of division amongst the subordinated groups; its history was one of racial conflict, most vividly demonstrated in the 1949 riots in which Africans attacked people of Indian descent, often with the direct collusion of whites. There had though been periods of rapid economic growth, as in the Second World War and in the period of expanding white consumption under the apartheid regime. The port was a major outlet for exports and the major port for imports into South Africa.

Durban University of Technology (DUT) arose from changes in government policy with the end of apartheid. Racially organised institutions were merged from the 1990s; in 2002 the formerly white Natal Technikon merged with the formerly Indian M. L. Sultan Technikon, becoming finally DUT. This was also a process of making technical institutions into universities of technology (Perumal, 2010). It has roughly 32 000 students, with a significant number of foreign African staff and students. The International Centre of Nonviolence was established as a result of an initiative by Ela Gandhi in 2008, initially as a non-profit organisation based on the DUT campus, with the aim of developing education that promoted peace. In 2015 it became a research centre within DUT but was also central to a new system of general education for students.

5.5.1 ICON's response to the events of July 2021

At the University, our Centre was asked to join a discussion with the Provincial team responsible for responding to the social divisions. The analysis that both I and Professor Monique Marks (of the University's Urban Futures Centre) independently arrived at was, in brief, that one could not understand all these events without a realisation of how traumatised people in the region are, much of that trauma connecting to issues of class and race. Secondly, that a way ahead would be to set up dialogues that brought different groups into a thoughtful conversation with each other.

I was also asked to speak on radio and television about these events, and, based on my long knowledge of areas like Phoenix and the neighbouring area of Inanda, explained both the origins of trauma and how we could create conditions for people to deal with these histories.

There were also initiatives being undertaken by individual people to address the divisions, both during and immediately after the violence. They were rare but highly productive, cutting across

community divisions in ways that were effective in building a sense of collaboration about immediate problems that involved high levels of violence. They provided examples of how individual people could take leadership and could use their skills in facilitating discussions on the most sensitive and conflictual of issues and demonstrated the significant impact of how the combination of commitment to nonviolence and the necessary skills and understandings could bring a sense of hope in an otherwise bleak situation. As ICON, we decided to offer a programme to train facilitators in both formal educational and informal community settings.

As it happened, in 2021 we had not run an annual leadership programme that ICON had hosted since 2012, as we were conducting a major evaluation. Following our discussion of the need that we had identified for facilitators of potentially very conflictual discussion in community settings, we decided to embark on the action undertaken in this study; we thought that many of the people who typically applied for our programme would find the changed focus suitable for them.

5.6 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population that this study addressed is educators (as broadly defined in Chapter 1) who wish their teaching to advance peace in a context of violence. Worldwide, this may encompass many millions of people. Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010) define ‘population’ as ‘an entire group about which some information is required to be ascertained.’ They describe the full group – those who wish to advance peace in a context of violence – as a target population and distinguish further what they refer to as the study population, that which is available for study. For example, we did not, for reasons of convenience, attempt to sample educators beyond the region of KwaZulu-Natal within range of the city of Durban. Our sample was thus drawn from a study population of educators who wish to advance peace in the context of this region.

Stringer (2007, p. 43) refers to the use in qualitative studies of purposeful sampling:

...that consciously selects people on the basis of a particular set of attributes. In action research, that major attribute is the extent to which a group or individual is affected by or has an effect on the problem or issue of interest.

The approach taken in sampling, at both the pilot and the intervention stage, was purposeful. Patton (1990, p. 169) states that purposeful sampling consists of, ‘...selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research.’ The study required that we work with people who were already involved in educational or activist roles that included an

educational element, for example, and who were prepared to state their commitment to engage fully in the study.

Thus, the study used purposeful sampling with the specific strategy of criterion sampling. Coyne (1997, p. 629) argues that:

...all sampling in qualitative research is purposeful sampling. Thus the sample is always intentionally selected according to the needs of the study. However, there are many variations of sampling contained within purposeful sampling as evidenced by Patton's list of 15 kinds of sampling.

The range of sampling strategies set out by Patton (1990) includes criterion sampling, the selection of research participants on the basis of specific criteria. Palinkas et al. (2005, p. 5) further refer to criteria of inclusion or exclusion. In our case, we used criteria of inclusion, what the authors refer to as a set of 'criterion-i', in other words, the criteria that we used for inclusion of potential participants.

Addressing the sampling used in this study needs to take into account that there was both a pilot and an intervention phase.

The determination of numbers in a qualitative action research study is influenced by diverse criteria. Marshall (1996, p. 523) makes the point that, 'Quantitative researchers often fail to understand the usefulness of studying small samples. This is related to the misapprehension that generalizability is the ultimate goal of all good research...'

For the purposes of this study, three distinct reasons to increase the number were the aims of achieving sufficient diversity, of developing significant numbers of participants who may have continued relationships with each other (and thus be able to some extent to form a 'community of practice' (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015)) and of having some degree of impact in the local region. Three reasons to limit the number were the practical requirements of venue and cost, the number we could manage in terms of giving sufficient attention as staff to individual participants, and the recognition that attempts to increase size were likely to bring in more people who were unclear as to the role of facilitation.

For the pilot, the first relevant criterion of inclusion was, thus, that the participants needed to be educators as we had defined them. Secondly, they need to have lived in a context of great violence, such as the South African context, though in reality we limited attendance for practical reasons to the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Thirdly, they needed to have a

commitment to advance peace through their educational work, demonstrated by their application to participate in a project lasting several months that was explicitly focused on their development as facilitators in dealing with sensitive issues. The fourth criterion was one that we applied in particular in the pilot, of attempting to gain the greatest diversity in terms of race and gender. This criterion was intended to address a point made by Palinkas et al. (2005, p. 7), ‘Although qualitative methods are often contrasted with quantitative methods on the basis of depth versus breadth, they actually require elements of both in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of interest.’ We wanted to explore not only in depth the experiences of our participants, but also in sufficient breadth, so the range of variation was sufficiently broad.

For the intervention phase, the three criteria of living in a context of violence, having an educational role, and being sufficiently committed (in this phase, to a longer programme) applied. There was an additional requirement, that each applicant must identify the organisation within which they would apply their facilitation. I felt that in the pilot we had excluded some with strong commitment and brought in others with less connection to facilitation, in our attempts for maximum diversity. This shift meant, first, that there were fewer applicants for the intervention phase and that a higher proportion of participants were involved in university tutoring. We had fewer community activists and somewhat less racial diversity.

What makes an educational action research study of this design rather complex is that there are overlapping roles. Those who joined the programme to learn could be described as students. However, all were invited to join the research programme as participants. In reality, in both phases, all the students agreed to enter the research programme and signed consent to that, so they are described consistently as participants. There were also staff members on the programme who took a role both as educators and participants, also signing consent forms. I was present in my role as leader of the staff team, as an educator, but I was also, as becomes evident in chapter 8, also a research participant.

5.6.1 Recruitment and selection

Given that the population we identified was broadly defined and was not limited to any specific career path, for the pilot we activated local university, environmental and community networks. A full description advertising the programme went to the student portal of the DUT website, through the General Education network at DUT, and through contacts with peace activists and community leadership (Appendix 1). The poster attracted 66 applicants, more than we had

expected, who completed the application form (Appendix 2). Given our poor connections to groups such as teacher unions, we had no applicants from primary or high school teachers. We knew we did not have the resources to handle this number, so decided to limit numbers to 36, using further limiting criteria. In this case we aimed to gain as balanced a group as possible in terms of gender, age, race and nationality.

The two largest groups accepted into the programme were tutors in the General Education programme of DUT and graduates from earlier years of the Leadership Programme we had been running. Others were linked to an environmental organisation. Two were academics, both professors in Education, and three were involved in an NGO active in working on issues of violence. Two other groups were of community activists who had been mobilised in response to the July 2021 looting.

The following table sets out the demographic profile. The group was very diverse in terms of age and nationality and balanced in terms of gender. If one included the staff members (three of whom would describe themselves as white), the group was fairly representative of the racial demographics of the region. It is important to note that this was based on our perception of how people would be seen in the convoluted logic of South African racial classification; in reality in South Africa those whose families are not recent migrants from other continents may have quite diverse ancestries.

5.6.1.1 Participants selected and staff: Pilot

	Pseudonym	Age (if given)	Gender self-description	'Race'	Occupation
1	Adebayo*	30	Male	African	Postgraduate student
2	Andile	43	Male	African	NGO worker
3	Bright*	33	Male	African	Postgraduate student
4	Charles		Male	African	Community activist
5	Christine	20	Female	African	Community activist
6	David	35	Male	Coloured	Community activist
7	Dhaya	58	Male	Indian	Senior academic
8	Esther	31	Female	African	University tutor
9	Fawzia	46	Female	Indian	University tutor
10	Geneviève*	23	Female	African	Student
11	Georgina*	30	Female	African	Zimbabwe
12	Gerda	70	Female	White	NGO activist
13	Gertrude*	30	Female	African	Senior student

14	Jane	47	Female	African	Community activist
15	Judy	58	Female	Coloured	Community activist
16	Khayelihle	20	Male	African	Community activist
17	Lindokuhle	28	Male	African	Community activist
18	Lungisani		Male	African	Graduate, self-employed
19	Malindi	35	Female	African	Community activist
20	Mfundo	54	Male	African	Provincial official
21	Mpumelelo		Female	African	Community activist
22	Msizi	49	Male	African	Community activist
23	Nonhlanhla	27	Female	African	Criminologist
24	Nomaswazi	31	Female	African	Community activist
25	Nombuso	42	Female	African	Community activist
26	Nomusa	44	Female	African	Municipal shop steward
27	Nqobile	19	Female	African	Community activist
28	Sanele	27	Male	African	Student leader
29	Sibusisiwe	31	Female	African	Community activist
30	Sunitha		Female	Indian	Senior academic
31	Thabisile	35	Female	African	Environmental activist
32	Thobile	32	Female	African	Outer Durban township
33	Xolani	26	Male	African	Outer Durban township
34	Yusuf	39	Male	African	Community activist
35	Zakithi	30	Female	African	Durban
36	Zamokuhle	22	Male	African	University student
37	Zusakhe	20	Male	African	Community activist

	Staff	Age	Gender	'race'	Occupation
1	Charity*	35	Female	African	University tutor
2	Crispin	74	Male	White	Academic
3	Justine		Female	White	Academic
4	Snenhlanhla	51	Female	African	Academic
5	Priscilla	58	Female	White	Environmental activist

*Foreign

Table 5.1 Participants and staff on the pilot

For the intervention phase, after discussion with those assisting in the staffing, we decided to place greater emphasis on the relevance of facilitation to their work. Advertising of the programme was limited to our organisational links with tutors at DUT, a student organisation focused on gender issues, and an environmental network, using a poster (Appendix 4). This attracted 42 applicants, and after some discussion as to whether all would manage the slightly

more academic emphasis of the programme, it was decided to accept all applicants. Two never in fact came, and others withdrew because of other commitments or health issues.

5.6.1.2 Participants selected and staff: Intervention phase

Pseudonym	Age	Gender self-description	'Race'	Occupation
Amina	47	Woman	Indian	Community activist
Bhekithemba	27	Man	African	University tutor
Dumisani	20	Man	African	Student organisation
Felicity	30	Woman	Coloured	University tutor
Grace	21	Woman	African	Student organisation
June	62	Woman	White	Environmental activist
Khanyisile	27	Woman	African	University tutor
Kwanele	26	Woman	African	University tutor
Mathombi	24	Woman	African	University tutor
Mbali	26	Woman	African	Environmental activist
Mcebisi	35	Man	African	University tutor
Mfana	27	Man	African	University tutor
Mnqobi	25	Man	African	Student organisation
Nandi	25	Woman	African	Student organisation
Nathi	28	Man	African	Student organisation
Ndumiso	50	Man	African	Peace Studies graduate
Nelisiwe	35	Woman	African	Environmental activist
Nobantu	21	Woman	African	Student organisation
Nola	62	Woman	White	Environmental activist
Noluthando	28	Woman	African	University tutor
Nolwazi	27	Woman	African	University tutor
Nomcebo	24	Woman	African	University tutor
Nozizwe	34	Woman	African	University tutor
Ntombifuthi	24	Woman	African	Environmental activist
Nzuzo	24	Man	African	University tutor
Olwethu	38	Woman	African	University administrator
Sibusisiwe	33	Woman	African	University tutor
Simangele	30	Woman	African	Student organisation
Siphokazi	25	Woman	African	University tutor
Sizani	21	Woman	African	Student leadership
Thabisa	21	Woman	African	Community activist
Thabisile	22	Woman	African	Student organisation
Thabisile	36	Woman	African	Environmental activist
Thandiwe	24	Woman	African	Environmental activist
Thembeke	27	Woman	African	Student organisation
Thenjiwe	23	Female	African	Student organisation

Thuthuka	27	Man	African	University tutor
Wandile	26	Man	African	Student organisation
Zanele	31	Woman	African	Environmental activist
Zibuyile	20	Woman	African	Student organisation
Zinhle	27	Woman	African	University tutor

	Staff	Age	Gender	'Race'	Occupation
1	Grace*	31	Female	African	University tutor
2	Crispin	75	Male	White	Academic
3	Justine		Female	White	Academic
4	Snenhlanhla	53	Female	African	Academic
5	Priscilla	60	Female	White	Environmental activist
6	Penny	62	Female	White	Environmental activist

*Foreign

Table 5.2 Participants and staff on the intervention phase

5.7 DATA GENERATION

Qualitative research may typically use a diverse range of methods of data generation. In action research, the variety of activities and the duration of time may lead to the use of a range of methods. In this study, online sessions and staff meetings were able to be recorded on video, while reflective notes by myself, online response forms, a focus group discussion, online and in class evaluation activities, and interviews of a sample were additional ways of capturing data.

Since action research involves the researcher directly in the project as a co-participant, participant observation becomes a major method of data generation. Often, during this process, taking field notes while involved in the work of the project was difficult, and much depended on the role then of the reflections I wrote after a session; I had access to participants' online reflections, though much more systematically in the intervention phase than in the pilot, because of the intermittent connectivity for many.

A range of methods of data generation was used in the study; this had both negative and positive consequences. First, these generated a great deal of data of different forms, and made analysis perhaps more difficult than it might otherwise have been. However, the diversity of methods made possible a higher degree of triangulation than would otherwise have been possible. According to The Farnsworth Group (n.d.), 'The goal of triangulation is to enhance the credibility, validity, and reliability of findings by reducing bias, increasing the richness of data, and ensuring that the results are robust and well-supported.' Similarly, Nowell et al. (2017)

state that, ‘Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested a number of techniques to address credibility including activities such as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, data generation triangulation, and researcher triangulation.’

One potential source that was not used for data generation was the written assignment that participants completed in pairs. This required the submission of a design for a community dialogue, as well as an individual written reflection on what was learnt in the design process. These did provide some insight into areas of strength and weakness in the learning at that point. For example, it was striking how frequently Johari’s Window appeared in the design. A key limitation for our purposes was that the design skills taught were very limited and focused mostly on the immediate preparation of a dialogue, such as framing questions. There was thus great variation in the fullness and quality of the work submitted. A future assignment might usefully link a project of designing part of a dialogue, with an emphasis on the questions to be used and their rationale, with a reflection on how this work related to their learning on the programme generally.

Data generation started with the reflections on the first session in September 2021; the last data collected was in June 2024, with the interviews of a purposive sample of participants on the intervention phase.

5.7.1 My written reflections

It is often difficult to collect data while immersed in the interaction, so reflective notes written after the sessions were a valuable way of recording data from the sessions. These notes focused primarily on critical incidents and responses to them. Flanagan (1954, p. 338) writes, ‘‘An incident is critical if it makes a ‘significant’ contribution, either positively or negatively to the general aim of the activity and it should be capable of being critiqued or analysed’ (p. 338). As Tombs (2019) writes, ‘A critical incident is produced by the way participants look at a situation; it is their interpretation of the significance of the event.’ For example, in reviewing a session, staff would focus on an incident or issue that had been salient for all of us, because it marked a point of emotional force, or tussle over a meaning that provoked further enquiry.

5.7.2 Video recordings of sessions

All except the last two sessions in the pilot were online. Despite the limitations this imposed, that are recorded below, this had the advantage of providing a video record of all full group discussion in each session (except in one session where there were technical problems with the recording), though not of discussions in breakout rooms. The recording transcripts provided

excellent access to some of the most critical interactions in each session. For example, in the second session, the intensity of the discussion in the dialogue on gender socialisation is very well captured.

Video recording of the actual sessions was not used for the intervention phase, as these were almost entirely face to face, except for one additional short online session, which was recorded. The reasons not to record were both that the resources required for such recording would have been substantial and that the presence of a video camera and operator would have felt obtrusive and interfered with the process of the programme. In this phase, much greater use was made of Microsoft Forms as a means of capturing ongoing reflective comments of participants.

5.7.3 *Online reflections*

At the conclusion of sessions of the intervention phase in particular, staff would ask students to respond to questions that they would access through Microsoft Forms. Typical questions would include what the high and low points of session had been, the emotions experienced and the reasons for those and what had been learnt overall. The major limitation of this method would be the failure to respond to these; for example, in session 2 of the intervention phase, which had proceeded without any intensity, there were only 11 responses. In session 4 of the same phase, there were 21 responses, often with lengthy and detailed comments, as the session had been so compelling for those present. In a study of an online forum for teachers (not directly comparable, as our participants did not see each other's responses), Trofort (2018) found that the online format was highly convenient, but there was limited participation. This would suggest that we find ways of linking certification of such programmes in future to timely completion of these responses.

5.7.4 *Focus group discussion*

Gill et al. (2008, p. 292) state that 'Focus groups are used for generating information on collective views, and the meanings that lie behind those views. They are also useful in generating a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs.' In this case, the purpose of the one focus group discussion that was held was to assess how participants in the pilot had experienced the course. Thus, late in 2021, a focus group discussion was held online with five participants and two staff members on the pilot, the sample purposively selected to cover the greatest diversity in terms of gender and race. The course participants consisted of three women and three men; one was Indian, one 'Coloured' and the others African. This

focused on three questions – What have I been learning about the context we are in, what have I been learning about those we teach, and what have I been learning about myself?

This was an opportunity to take a more distanced reflection on the process of the course. The question about learnings about oneself seemed to be the most productive. Both the strengths and limitations of focus group discussions became evident; one participant introduced the issue of people expecting facilitators to have the answers, which was explored well and thoughtfully, but this topic became overly dominant as a focus of the discussion.

5.7.5 *Video recordings of staff meetings*

This was a rich source of data, as, effectively, a group of participants were engaging in reflection on the sessions as well as thinking ahead as to what was needed. The events became rather like focus group discussions carried out by a section of the participants. The fact that they took place primarily online enabled recording. As discussion moved from identifying thoughts, feelings and learnings drawn from in the sessions towards developing a more collective understanding, these meetings were very helpful at identifying critical incidents and possible themes to consider in the process of data analysis, as described below.

5.7.6 *Evaluations*

An evaluation by participants was carried out in class at the conclusion of the pilot; it consisted of a two-fold exercise. The first was the writing of Post-it notes in response to four questions:

Where will I use these skills?

What is the next step in my development as a facilitator?

What did I learn about myself?

What did I learn about context?

The Post-it note comments had the advantage of being visible to other participants, thus getting others to consider the points made.

There was also an evaluation using a drawing of the outline of a hand, on which each participant was asked to write their responses to the item linked to each finger, as follows:

Thumb: Something useful I learnt

Index finger: Something I would like to point out

Middle finger: Something that needs to change

Ring finger: Some new realisation that I gained

Little finger: One small additional point

These two combined techniques were helpful in generating many comments on the programme, and the analysis of themes in chapter 6 draws on them at various places. One limitation of such evaluations is that perceptions may change with time, and these did not provide a more distanced view on the programme, another being the inability to pursue a point raised.

For the intervention phase, we relied on online comments at the final session, which reported both on the session and on the programme as a whole. We had 19 responses (the total number of participants who completed the programme successfully was 28). In comparison with the evaluation comments for the pilot, these were mainly fuller and gave more pointed feedback.

5.7.7 Interviews

Eight months after the conclusion of the intervention phase, I conducted interviews with five participants from that phase. The purpose was to test the final conclusions I was reaching, and to strengthen the credibility of the findings. These were semi-structured; Gill et al. (2008, p. 291) state that ‘Semi-structured interviews consist of several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allows the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail.’ The short interview schedule is recorded in Appendix 9.

Polkinghorne (2005, p. 143) states that:

Access to one’s experiences is not straightforward; it often requires assistance and probing to discover and explore areas of the experience that did not emerge initially. It is the interviewer’s task to help in unpacking an experience and gaining access to deeper levels and more nuanced descriptions of the experience.

I found it helpful towards the end of each interview to slow down and to invite other comments or anything that came to mind only then. The advantage is that, while at the outset the participant may have a salient point that needs to be captured immediately, the process of interviewing may well encourage deeper reflection and an opening to uncertain and more tentative points – as in the valuable points made by Mathombi about the concept ‘beyond facilitation’, which she made at the conclusion of her interview.

5.8 DATA ANALYSIS: REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

An initial decision regarding data analysis needs to be made between an inductive, a deductive or a collaborationist approach.

Nowell et al. (2017, p. 8) describe inductive analysis as, ‘a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a preexisting coding frame or the researcher’s analytic preconceptions.’ However, as Braun and Clarke (2019, p. 12) state, ‘researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitments’; no analysis is undertaken without either an implicit or explicit framework of some kind. Deductive analysis, instead, ‘is driven by the researchers’ theoretical or analytic interest’ (Nowell et al., p. 8), giving stronger emphasis to the categories established in theory. A further approach is described as collaborative analysis. ‘By “collaborative data analysis” we refer to processes in which there is joint focus and dialogue among two or more researchers regarding a shared body of data, to produce an agreed interpretation’ (Cornish et al., 2014, p. 79).

It is thus possible to combine elements of these approaches; clearly an inductive or deductive approach could also be collaborative. In this study, the approach was primarily inductive, privileging the richness of data over the categories set out in the research questions. I saw the value of this approach as its ability to capture themes that were not apparently closely related to the initial concerns of the study. For example, the one theme, that of ‘beyond facilitation’, did not obviously connect with the critical orientation of the study, yet is a finding that I regard as having major implications.

Another important aspect is the extent of collaborative analysis that arose from part of a staff group that reviewed and discussed what we were noticing from our involvement in the project. While the selection of the themes was ultimately my own responsibility, engaging with the perspectives of other educators on the programme directed my attention to possibilities I might otherwise have missed.

The method adopted for analysis of the qualitative data, across this wide range of data sources, was thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2012; Nowell et al., 2017), and its further development as reflexive thematic analysis (Byrne, 2022). Braun and Clarke (2006) describe thematic analysis as, ‘...a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data.’ This requires selecting from the data corpus, the entire body of data collected, a data set based on what is deemed relevant to the study and then searching for it to identify recurrent patterns that may become themes. A theme ‘...captures something important about

the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 10). The distinction between all data drawn from the project and the data set used for the generation of themes is critical; in this study the data set consisted of the data that was judged to be relevant to the specific research questions. For example, it was not everything we were learning about the students but specifically the data that consisted of evidence of students' learning or resistance in relation to violence and peace, in relation to understanding of their learning and in relation to developing ways of teaching. The search for themes was focused on that data.

The approach of thematic analysis has been developed through further theoretical refinement (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Byrne (2022, p. 1393) provides an example of reflexive thematic analysis, described as:

...a reflection of the researcher's interpretive analysis of the data conducted at the intersection of: (1) the dataset; (2) the theoretical assumptions of the analysis, and; (3) the analytical skills/resources of the researcher. (Braun & Clarke, 2019)

The implication of this development is that there is no one 'correct' version of themes for a given data set; the themes need to be understood in relation to the underlying assumptions and the concerns and approach of the researcher. This approach focuses more on the meanings given to the language in the data set, given both by the researcher and by the participants (Byrne, 2022, p. 1394).

Thematic analysis is largely recursive in nature (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 16):

...analysis is not a linear process where you simply move from one phase to the next. Instead, it is more recursive process, where you move back and forth as needed, throughout the phases. it requires going over material and then revisiting it and searching again.

In this study, this involved going back to reread specific extracts of data to clarify or question a meaning. Given that the data generation took place over a considerable period of time, and there were two phases of action, initial impressions and meanings inevitably shifted, leading to review of earlier data.

What we search for is driven by our interest in specific research questions but also by such factors as our feelings, events we found unexpected, a comment by a participant. An example of this is given at the end of this section.

Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data

Initially, one needs to go through all the relevant data to start to notice what appears to be salient. Clearly, this reading is driven by the research questions, but there is also a need to be open to recognition of points that do not look like the anticipated evidence but nonetheless seem related. In this study, I undertook the actual transcription of data from video recordings and recorded interviews; this gave the advantage of a sense of closeness to the data and not just the content but the ways of speaking. Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012) recommend that this phase requires making notes without attempting at this stage to be formulating a systematic analysis.

Phase 2: Generating individual codes

This phase requires that each element of the dataset is given a code that identifies the significance of that data. The code developed for the first data read may be the same as or different from the code for the second section read. Byrne (2022, p. 1402) writes of the need at this stage to ensure that, ‘...sufficient depth exists to examine the patterns within the data and the diversity of the positions held by participants.’ Rushing to a premature generalisation risks ignoring outlying data that may still contribute to a significant theme. The review of the dataset thus resulted in a large number of disparate codes, however, there were from the initial analysis frequently recurring codes.

Phase 3: Searching for themes

This entails linking codes that can credibly be seen as connected to develop potential themes. According to Byrne (2022, p. 1403):

The coded data is reviewed and analysed as to how different codes may be combined according to shared meanings so that they may form themes or sub-themes. This will often involve collapsing multiple codes that share a similar underlying concept or feature of the data into one single code.

The point is made (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 7) that the themes do not emerge from the data; they are made evident by the researcher. In a reflexive approach, it is understood that such factors as the motivation and orientation of the researcher will inform the search for themes.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes

Braun and Clarke (2012, p. 65) set out the criteria to be used at this stage to interrogate the potential themes:

- *Is this a theme (it could be just a code)?*
- *If it is a theme, what is the quality of this theme (does it tell me something useful about the data set and my research question)?*
- *What are the boundaries of this theme (what does it include and exclude)?*
- *Are there enough (meaningful) data to support this theme (is the theme thin or thick)?*
- *Are the data too diverse and wide ranging (does the theme lack coherence)?*

The listing of themes in this study went through various iterations as I reviewed them critically. Some were formulated early in the study, others much later. For example, it was only towards the end that the significance of issues of personal development became salient. Possibly my own critical orientation had led me to overlook the significance of this, as I may have been more attuned to differences in power relations.

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

This requires attending to the sharpest definition of each theme and the most compelling name for the theme. It also involves the selection of extracts of data that most usefully communicate the nature of the evidence for the theme, while presented a balanced and fair reflection of the range of relevant experiences and meanings.

Phase 6: Producing the report

The point is made (Byrne, 2022, p. 1409) that this is rarely a neat phase right at the end; rather, like the coding, it is likely to be a recursive process. In this case, initial themes were reported in two conference presentations in 2022, though with the caveat of course that the study was nowhere near conclusion.

To give greater clarity on how the approach of reflexive thematic analysis was handled in practice, a specific example is provided from the study in a way that links to the methodology put forward by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012, 2019).

5.8.1 *Example of analysis in this study*

At one point in a staff meeting we began to talk about how slow the process of training was, how long it took for participants to emerge as confident facilitators. This led to my looking more closely at the data in terms of preoccupations or struggles that would give greater clarity to the processes of learning and unlearning. This drew my attention to a pattern I may well not have noticed in the data; some participants were expressing the need for slowing down on some topics. This was consistent in fact with our use of habitus in the theoretical framework; on reflection, the point drew attention to why we thought it was slow. This argues for long attention to the data, the need for further questioning, and openness to the unexpected.

Braun and Clarke (2005, p. 12) distinguish between a semantic approach, which relies on attention to the specific wording, and a latent approach, which seeks to make connections to underlying factors that are judged to be shaping what is spoken. A semantic approach would have led to coding as ‘slow’ and a search for other uses of the word in the data set. As it happened, it was not used elsewhere. However, my approach was more latent, in seeking for the factors that could provide a link between ‘slow’ and other processes or conditions. A further distinction is between an experiential and a critical orientation. Byrne (2022, p. 1397) makes the point that, ‘...a critical perspective seeks to interrogate patterns and themes of meaning with a theoretical understanding that language can create, rather than merely reflect, a given social reality (Terry et al., 2017).’ Rather than focusing on how the staff member experienced the slowness, I wanted to relate ‘slow’ to a critical understanding of the context. This then linked the rare use of ‘slow’ with a more frequently recurring code, the depth of change. An example of this would be this sentence from an evaluation: ‘My own prejudices were challenged and new perspectives inspired.’ The language I used for the code draws on the use by Bourdieu (1977) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) of the term ‘dispositions’. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 10) make the point that, ‘Ideally there will be a number of instances of the theme across the data set, but more instances do not *necessarily* mean the theme itself is more crucial.’ Another researcher may not have seen in the word ‘slow’ the same significance, but my own orientation and concerns led to this formulation of what became, in the final overview, ‘It takes time to develop depth of learning.’ Here is the significance of this being reflexive thematic analysis. I am arguing for a particular theme that makes sense in terms of the theoretical framework and my approach.

A second example would be a sub-theme of emotional regulation. Too readily, I think researchers latch onto a theme that they have, effectively, pre-selected, as it is present in their

questions for data generation and is thus imposed on the data. A case in point could be that of a study in which there were repeated questions on changes in practice, and this was identified as a theme, predictably, whatever the data. The term ‘emotional regulation’ could have been merged within a broader theme of openness to the emotions; it was a concept introduced by three or four of the participants. The meaning they gave it was as a response to the difficulties they encountered in handling their emotions as facilitators. From attention to the way the term was used, I came to see it as a statement of a process they were working through; in time they may well be able to integrate an awareness of and decision-making about emotions into their practice as facilitators.

5.8.2 Relationship to ontology and epistemology

An implication of the combination of process ontology and phenomenological epistemology described in 5.2 for the analysis of data is that the researcher needs to be open to the very diverse ways in which an exercise in class or an intervention or a theory presentation is responded to and spoken and written about. The diversity results from such issues as both commonality and diversity in socialisation, with the relevant assumptions and expectations, specific experiences of trauma, the prevalent discourses in society and from individual thinking, as well as from the nature of the space within which these events take place and are responded to (ref). Despite the diversity, it becomes possible to note the recurrence of certain themes as we search for evidence not just of ‘what is’ but also of ‘what is changing over time’, a necessary focus in an approach such as action research. Röck’s process ontology (Röck, 2023) draws attention to the significance of change over time. Applying this to action research, in which events unfold, and new phenomena enter the interactions amongst participants and researchers, analysis needs to consider the ways in which our understanding of a theme may shift at different stages in the process. Furthermore, a reflexive account should report how the researchers themselves may change in the process of the research – this appears in Chapter 8.

5.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS

The approach taken here in addressing questions of the trustworthiness of the study is to use as its frame an article by Stahl and King (2020) that builds on the seminal work of Lincoln and Guba (1988). This addresses questions that would concern reliability and validity, in the case of quantitative research, within the broad term ‘trustworthiness’, encompassing credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. This section thus assesses the degree to which this study can be seen to meet these criteria.

It needs to be noted, of course, that there are different terms used for these issues by different scholars. Creswell (2009, p. 190) uses the terms qualitative validity, which ‘means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures’, and qualitative reliability, which ‘indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects.’

Further, there is nothing sacred about this summary of the relevant questions into four headings. Drawing on theorists such as Lather (1986), Tracy (2010) sets out in eight criteria to address issues of excellent in qualitative research. These are: worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethical, meaningful coherence (Tracy, 2010, p. 840). These criteria cover the same terrain as the four I address in this section but also extend beyond them. Specifically, the argument as to whether this is a worthy topic is addressed in chapter 1, the ethical justification appears elsewhere in this chapter, and the claims to making a significant contribution are made in the final chapter.

I will take these four elements of trustworthiness in turn to set out the evidence regarding the trustworthiness of this study.

5.9.1 *Credibility*

This, according to Stahl and King (2020, p. 26), asks ‘How congruent are the findings with reality?’ This requires a degree of consistency, that the findings are not based on unrelated bits of information that cannot form a coherent whole. With other researchers (Creswell, 2009; Stringer, 2007) they argue for triangulation, so that, however the data is engaged with, analysis leads to similar findings. In this study, there was considerable methodological triangulation. This took the form first of data triangulation; diverse methods of gathering data, specifically, observation, field notes, video recordings and transcripts of sessions and of staff meetings, evaluation forms, online evaluations, a focus group discussion and finally, individual interviews. Secondly, there was investigator triangulation, in that the staff members on the programme collectively discussed the significance of what participants on the courses said and did in relation to the aims of the study. Finally, there was theoretical triangulation, as the theoretical framework has drawn on different theories to provide the lenses of enquiry.

A second means of promoting credibility is member checking. At the concluding session of the intervention phase, a review of the emerging findings was presented and discussed; there was general agreement that these were reasonable. The final data generation, which involved in-depth interviews with five participants, provided an opportunity to test whether the major

themes fairly represented their experiences and perceptions, and these were confirmed. Furthermore, ‘members’ in this case included the staff teaching on the programme, who at times questioned interpretations of data.

A third factor is the prolonged engagement with the context of the study. Data generation began with the first session in early September 2021 and ended with the final interviews in July 2024. Tentative analyses were made at the end of the pilot, in mid-2022; these informed the strategy of the intervention stage and the focus of data generation in that stage.

Stringer (2007, 58-59) recommends, as another element that enhances credibility, referential adequacy: ‘Concepts and ideas within the study should clearly be drawn from and reflect the experiences and perspectives of participating stakeholders, rather than be interpreted according to schema emerging from a theoretical or professional body of knowledge.’ Given that I was so focused on a critical orientation in the focus on relationships of power between social groups, there was a risk of downplaying elements that seemed less relevant. I would argue though that where there was compelling evidence beyond such issues, they were fully acknowledged. For example, a major theme became; “‘Beyond facilitation’’: education as development and as healing’, which was not an issue that I had given much attention to prior to this study.

Finally, there is the matter of ‘thick description’. The study has attempted to provide full and, where possible, verbatim accounts from participants, as well as detailed description from field notes, to provide a full sense of how the process of learning proceeded.

5.9.2 *Transferability*

Given that such a study does not claim to be replicable in another context, I would argue that there are nonetheless elements of general phenomena that mean that findings can provide useful guidance to those working in such contexts. The significance of this is greater than it might have been had there been a greater body of scholarship in the area of educating educators for peace. For example, the findings about the need, in a context of chronic violence, for participants to experience a sense of safety in the education, and the guidance regarding the need to negotiate agreement on how the teaching should proceed are likely to be useful for peace educators elsewhere, even if they only provide confirmation of an existing understanding.

To achieve greater transferability, it is also necessary (Stahl & King, 2020, p. 27) to provide sufficiently full description so that readers may determine for themselves the extent to which the findings may or may not apply to contexts elsewhere. The aim has been to provide this depth of reporting.

It needs to be noted that there are significant obstacles to transferability that are explored in 5.11.2 below and in the recommendations for teacher education in 9.10.6.

5.9.3 Dependability

Stahl and King (2020, p. 27) argue that a key factor that promotes dependability is peer checking, the process of ensuring that others with sufficient scholarship would concur with the findings achieved. A major advantage in this study was the active participation of two fellow academics from our Centre and another skilled educator with a relevant postgraduate qualification, with whom perceptions and judgements could be tested.

A second factor (ibid., p. 27) is that of bracketing, i.e. of asking oneself how my own assumptions and perspectives may have influenced the conclusions I made. This entailed being aware, when making any assertion, that I would need to be able to provide sufficient evidence to myself before I could proceed. In particular, as I argue in chapter 8, I needed to take my own biases and areas of limitation into account in the process of formulating conclusions. That chapter provides insight into what the relevant assumptions and perspectives may be, enabling the reader to draw their own conclusions more readily.

5.9.4 Confirmability

This condition refers to the confidence that the research did take place and that the findings reached were truly based on the data generated in the study. Typically, as Nowell et al. (2017, p. 3) report, achieving credibility, transferability and dependability, through such methods as triangulation, peer checking, etc., leads to the achievement of confirmability. In addition, a specific audit trail can be created that bears evidence as to the events of the study and to the methods used to collect data and reach findings. Action research is often a rather public event and evidence for the action is often easy to provide, in this case even through mundane sources such as the notice placed on the university portal advertising the course, venue bookings or emails to participants. Some of the data itself was captured from such sources as video recordings of sessions and of staff meetings, potentially providing convincing evidence of the data and enabling other researchers, should the need arise, to check on the soundness of judgements made.

5.10 ETHICAL ISSUES

Any research programme requires ongoing attention to its ethical dimensions. While I would argue that these dimensions apply equally to all research, it is fair to expect that research in a centre that promotes nonviolence needs to be seen to be exemplary. Typically, these

dimensions include, first and foremost that the researcher does no harm. Specifically, this entails that no information is revealed that has a negative impact on any participant, that participants are not exposed to adverse situations that would in some ways impair their lives.

Beyond the general need for ethical processes in the research, and the particular requirements of one focused on sensitive issues, there is also the need to take into account the ethical issues that arise from action research. Stringer (2007, p. 55) writes of action research that:

... there is a particular imperative to ensure that all participants know what is going on, that the processes are inherently transparent to all. Because participants in an action research process have much more control than is usually accorded participants in a study, they are in effect engaging in a mutual agreement about the conduct of a study.

Similarly, Organizing Engagement (n.d.) states that:

In a participatory action research process, students, parents, or community members—i.e., those who would be viewed as “subjects” in a traditional research study—are enlisted as “co-researchers.” In a PAR process, community participants become collaborative researchers who either work alongside professional researchers and evaluators, or they become community-based leaders of an action research project that involves other community members.

In a study in which we were actively reviewing situations of violence, thus potentially triggering disturbing memories and associated feelings, these issues were very salient. As Creswell (2009, p. 91) notes, ‘Researchers also need to anticipate the possibility of harmful, intimate information being disclosed during the data generation process.’ Given that in this study there were many points at which data is being collected, and given the focus on violence, it was indeed likely that intimate, if not necessarily harmful, information would be disclosed. Below I report in more detail on how this such issues were handled in the programme.

Ethical clearance for this study was granted by the Institutional Research Committee (IREC) of Durban University of Technology (Appendix 8), Rather to my frustration, the issues raised by IREC prior to final approval were very technical in nature and did not provide helpful ethical guidance, focusing instead on such issues as the sampling numbers and structure of the proposal. It is important to note that the same procedures regarding ethical practices were undertaken in both the pilot and intervention phases. Specifically, these were the following:

5.10.1 Informed consent

According to Stringer (2007, p. 55), in action research, participants may have greater control over the process as they are directly involved in the action undertaken. He points out though that all formal processes of informed consent must still apply, such as those outlined by Creswell (2009, pp. 89-90). One point that I see little addressed in the literature I have read is the complexity of a process in which people (possibly in large numbers) are drawn into action that is simultaneously a research process. This is very different from the typical research situations that have clear boundaries and that identify participants exactly. Such situations make the process of informed consent a matter of some judgement. For example, in both the pilot and intervention phases, the programme was directly advertised without reference to the research process. This necessitated that those applicants who were accepted were informed of the research process at the time of the programmes' commencement. Possibly because this was clearly within a university context, this seemed to be well understood. The point was explicitly made that one could participate fully in the programme without being a research participant. In reality, all those who were accepted into the programmes did agree to participation in the research process and signed the consent forms, in both the pilot and intervention phases. The letter of information and informed consent form for the intervention phase is presented in Appendix 5; it was almost identical to that used in the pilot.

The right to withdraw from the whole programme was certainly understood; in perhaps three or four cases those accepted onto the programme never arrived, while some withdrew formally, generally indicating that they had conflicting commitments.

5.10.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

As required in the ethical clearance through the University's Institutional Research and Ethics Committee, we maintained confidentiality and anonymity in the reporting of discussions through the use of pseudonyms in reporting discussion. It was only my name that is reported directly from the participating group. Mthokozisi Lembethe attended the one session in the intervention phase; he has consistently expressed his view that we use his actual name.

Given the sensitivity of the issues that could be discussed, we also ensured that we had the support of the Student Counselling Centre of the University and were able to refer participants to them for assistance if necessary. There were perhaps three cases where participants mentioned making use of Student Counselling in relation to issues raised in the course.

5.10.3 Negotiation of the ways of working

On the first session of both phases, we negotiated with the whole group agreement as to how things would be done in the time together. This has become a standard practice in the teaching of modules in ICON and draws on the social justice education tradition (Adams et al., 2007). The process is simply one of asking students to brainstorm the principles or practices that they wish to see followed in the course together, then assessing them in discussion to amend, remove or add proposals, and then testing for consensus. The listing that results is always open for returning to change – in our experience, we have found that sometimes an issue comes up that leads to a rewording or an addition of something omitted. Typically, the word most likely to be raised in our context is ‘respect’, which, if not elaborated, is followed by the teacher asking for what that would mean in practice during the course. For example, there is usually a way of expressing the principle that we are free to disagree but that disagreements should not be turned against the person with whom we disagree.

These statements are referred to at various times during the courses run at the Centre – for example, when we are about to deal with a more sensitive or conflictual topic. They apply both to face-to-face teaching and in online interaction (Forbes, 2015), the latter point being crucial as the pilot was mainly online. In Auvine et al. (2002), the values they propose for facilitation are democracy, responsibility, co-operation, honesty and egalitarianism. That forms a useful point of comparison with the selection made by these two groups.

The full details of the ways of working agreed upon are set out in Appendix 5. There was considerable overlap between the two. For example, in the pilot and intervention phases, respectively, there were these proposals on confidentiality: ‘Confidentiality – make sure we **ask** around sensitive experiences/sharing – consent and anonymity’; ‘Confidentiality: appropriate handling of what we hear, thinking about how we use that information’. With regard to safety: ‘Creating a safe space for people to express themselves’; ‘Creating a safe space for us to share experiences.’ There were several points made in each phase about treating others with respect, accepting diversity of identities, experiences and views, and not personalising differences of opinion.

One difference was that in the pilot a point was made about the use of language – ‘Using language in equitable ways – home language plus translation where necessary.’ This was perhaps because we had more community-based participants. Another comment was an encouragement to speak of feelings. In the intervention phase, points were made about attentive

listening, empathy and compassion. ‘Willingness to learn and unlearn’, and ‘Honesty to share what they want to share, honest to say what they don’t want to share.’

Some of these are clearly more directly related to ethical issues, such as confidentiality and the insistence on a safe space. The point about honesty was important, as it was a reminder that there should be no pressure on people to reveal what they do not wish to reveal.

Generally, my judgement is that in both phases there was evidence that the ethical issues addressed in these lists were well adhered to. For example, I cannot recall a single occasion where I was aware of any breach of confidentiality while in the discussions, and no-one reported to me that they had experienced or witnessed a breach of confidentiality. Some of these points were less well achieved, such as ‘punctuality’, ‘consistency of attendance’ and ‘comfort breaks’ (I, especially, would tend to get too caught up in the session and forget about the need), but the more directly ethical issues were generally well observed.

There were no doubt some stronger or less effective practices around such issues as ‘being empathic and compassionate to each other’, but that is an ideal, and part of the purpose of the projects was to learn how to do that more effectively in such a context. Furthermore, these are not intended to be ‘rules to follow’, but rather as points to direct our awareness to.

Above I identified as a key ethical issue the point of self-disclosure that could lead to negative consequences for the person concerned. However, there was no reporting of such an issue, including in the online responses that were seen only by staff. What was more significant, perhaps, was the depth of secondary traumatisation reported both in the online responses and in the final interviews. At least one person made use of the services of Student Counselling to deal with their feelings around this (we had secured the support of this unit in advance). To some extent, participants appear to have recognised this as the unavoidable costs of exploring issues of violence; in the intervention phase, we introduced the use of listening dyads, which was seen as providing a significant way of dealing with feelings arising from hearing accounts that triggered such emotions. This was welcomed by participants; for example, in one of the comments in the discussion after we first used it, a participant said, ‘It took more emotions out of me; the more I spoke, the rage was continuing. When she was speaking, I became calmer; at some point I realised it is not always what you are feeling, it is about what she was feeling.’ Another said, ‘...it reminded me how important it is to offload. As facilitators, we sometimes get to a topic and you think you can deal with it, but you may be wrong.’

5.11 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

To assess the credibility of the study, it is necessary to set out the delimitations and limitations that applied. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019), p. 155), advise that ‘authors should openly and extensively report their research limitations, delimitations and assumptions in order to improve the quality of their findings and the interpretation of the evidence presented.’ Identifying limitations, in particular, requires critical scrutiny and judgement as the researcher may fail to notice what is a significant constraint on the trustworthiness of the study.

In distinguishing limitations and delimitations, Price and Murnan (2024, p. 66), state that, ‘A limitation of a study design or instrument is the systematic bias that the researcher did not or could not control and which could inappropriately affect the results. In contrast, a delimitation is a systematic bias intentionally introduced into the study design or instrument by the researcher.’

All studies of necessity have to be bounded by what they address and what they do not address, what we might refer to as the delimitation or scope of the study. Furthermore, there are limitations that arise from constraints or setbacks that potentially limit the trustworthiness of the study. This is of relevant to those who seek to replicate aspects of this study.

5.11.1 Delimitations

First, the delimitations. The study did not attempt to address all aspects of peace education, such as the content or a curriculum for peace education. It focused more narrowly on issues of pedagogy, though it does indicate in some places how theory may strengthen the pedagogy.

Secondly, it chose a particular research design, that of action research. This directs the focus to issues of practice and the rationale for practices.

Thirdly, the focus was on the development of participants to develop discussion in sensitive areas, which is only one aspect of the many tasks a teacher must undertake in an educational context. It did not focus on their broader development as teachers as those who enable the development of subject knowledge or who assume the other tasks of teaching.

Fourthly, this was conducted in a society with very high levels of violence. It is not possible to determine from this study how relevant the conclusions are to societies with much lower levels of violence.

Fifthly, the study did not extend into the period after the training programme; we can judge what happened within the programme but not assess how participants developed in their role

as educators. This is similar to evaluating a formal programme of teacher education without knowing what students did as teachers in schools. It raises the question of whether there could be a 'community of practice' (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015) that would support those who complete such a programme.

The implication of these delimitations is that the findings are relevant to some but not all aspects of peace education in relation to teacher development.

5.11.2 Limitations

A limitation of most action research studies is that of subjectivity and bias (Kock, 2005), as there is a strong reliance on the perceptions of the researcher. In part, this arises because of the desire to ensure successful action, Participants are also working closely with the researcher and have a similar investment in the success of the project, a factor that does not arise with other forms of research. This is clearly a threat to trustworthiness. To reduce the potential impact of this, I have attempted to identify as accurately as possible those elements that were in some way negative, as against those that were positive. Kock's proposal (Kock, 2005) for multiple iterations has been at least partially met in this study because of the two phases; consistency in the findings between these two has strengthened trustworthiness.

A second limitation that is often noted is that the difficulty of drawing general conclusions from an action research project. They are not replicable, though it is indeed possible to make comparisons with other projects that have similar elements. This study has addressed this by attempting to be informative as to the processes adopted so that other researchers may identify elements that may be similar or different to the elements of their context and research design.

5.11.2.1 Issues of transferability

Given that the title of the thesis is 'Educating teachers for peace in a context of violence', most readers are likely to expect a focus on schoolteachers. However, the sample for both the pilot and Intervention phases had no currently active schoolteachers, though there were former schoolteachers, and the autoethnographic chapter reflects on the experience of being a schoolteacher. This remains though a limitation on the ability to transfer unproblematically the innovations of the project to the context of schooling. Similar concerns must arise with regard to transferability to the context of formal teacher education – an issue addressed more fully in 9.10.

5.11.2.2 Difficulties of the lockdown and technical problems

The pilot took place over a period in which we were under Covid-19 lockdown, with only two sessions being face-to-face. I am of the view that this work will generally be more effective under conditions where it is easy to communicate freely and with full information on body language, with where people are able to eat together and interact freely. That face-to-face work was not possible in that phase; in addition, the online work was directly hampered by the poor quality of some devices used as well as the connectivity problems in some areas. A specific problem was that the move into breakout rooms often did not work, leaving some participants suspended from the discussions. The quality of interaction on the intervention stage was unquestionably better.

5.11.2.3 An unbalanced range of educators

Few of the participants were educators in basic education, whether undergraduate students or teachers in schools, while the programme had strong representation from those tutoring in higher education. Community educators, in particular from environmental organisations, were well represented. This meant that we lacked those with specific experience of school teaching, whether from teaching practice or from their careers. We lacked a perspective on how what we were learning would apply in schools. In a later iteration of the programme, however, a schoolteacher joined and commented on how she was able to apply what she learnt in her class teaching. This point, though, remains a significant limitation.

5.11.2.4 Uneven sampling

While I had not adopted the requirement of representative sampling, the intention had been to cover as diverse as possible a sample. That was better achieved in the pilot, though in both phases the sample under-represented people of Indian origin, a significant group within the population of the province. Otherwise, both samples were reasonably balanced in terms of age and gender, with a slight but not strong preponderance of those from urban areas.

5.11.2.5 Issues of language

This is a context in which English is a dominant language, despite IsiZulu being the home language of the majority of the population, and indeed of the participants. Formal education above junior primary level takes place generally in English, but the fact that most people have to change to another language in their learning can be seen as a form of epistemic violence (Spivak, 1994; Perez, 2019). We discussed the issue in developing the ways of working; while English was used as the language of teaching, participants were encouraged to use the language

they preferred in small groups, provided others in the group could communicate in that language. This applied in both the pilot and intervention stages, though the use of IsiZulu in the pilot was more difficult as the technology made smaller groups less possible, and there were also more African foreigners whose might prefer English. The limitation around language issues mattered because we were dealing with sensitive issues in which participants might struggle to express their thoughts fully because of language constraints, and there was some imbalance in participation, with those who seemed less confident in IsiZulu participating less in plenary discussion. This was more so for the pilot, as there were more community activists, in comparison with the large numbers of university tutors in the intervention phase.

5.11.2.6 Issue of time

As was identified by participants, the pressures of time limited the full exploration of some issues. One reason was the pressure from us as staff to move on to reflection on what was being learnt, leaving insufficient time to explore the issue itself. This goes to the complexity of teacher education – it must always deal with both content and pedagogy, as well as the perspectives of both teacher and learner (Snoek, Snennen & Van der Klink, 2010). At times we might have achieved greater learning if we had allowed more time to explore the content under discussion.

5.11.2.7 Sustainability

The question of sustainability arises within action research, which needs to pose the question as to whether positive achievements in the research context will be sustained and will indeed lead into continued positive change. In this study, how confident can I be that positive changes – that is, those changes in understanding, skills and practice that promote greater peace – will persist over a period of time and that our participants will be able to deepen their learnings with time?

The participants of the pilot in particular came from various backgrounds and might well not be able to collaborate in future, while there was a stronger representation in the intervention phase from university tutors and teaching assistants, a group that would interact at various points over perhaps two or three years. This is relevant because a potential means of securing sustainability would be developing a community of practice on the model developed by Wenger and Wenger-Trayner (2015). ICON staff have played a leading role in developing both incoming and existing teachers in the General Education programme. These sessions typically operate over five mornings early in each year and are highly participatory, providing one

opportunity for continuity for those who were involved in this study. ICON is likely to continue this role, thus bringing further opportunities for making links to what was learnt through the study.

For other participants, there are not structured opportunities for sustained development in place; however, data from the final data generation, interviews with a sample of the intervention group attests to what various participants identified as significant personal development (see chapters 7 and 9).

For McNiff, (2011), sustainability is best achieved by promoting a focus on personal theories. She writes that, ‘Personal theories are especially powerful for sustained educational change. Sustainable change happens when people create and implement their own ideas rather than only accept and implement the ideas of others’ (McNiff, 2011, p. 12). From this approach, keeping emphasis on my own learning is the best way of sustaining my own development, and such development of myself is critical in then enabling others to develop their own theories. This is explored more fully in chapter 8.

5.12 CRITICAL COMMENTS ON ACTION RESEARCH

As someone who has from time to time read studies of action research at postgraduate level, I am very aware of the failings that may give rise to accusations of lack of trustworthiness (Kock, 2005). My concern regards the role of the researcher and has two interrelated aspects. First, typically the emphasis is so strongly on action, action that is frequently assumed from the outset to be positive in nature, that there is insufficient critical scrutiny of findings. So few of such studies reach the conclusion that the action failed, suggesting a high degree of bias that may result from the researcher’s investment in demonstrating the success of the action. Such a conclusion is typically reached based on a brief evaluation soon after an action, which fails to take into account that participants may be unwilling to hurt the feelings of the researcher or are not familiar with giving focused negative feedback.

Secondly, often the presence of the researcher in the study is not treated as potentially problematic, as if it makes no difference that the researcher is directly involved. Rather, to strengthen trustworthiness, it would make sense to problematise the role of the researcher through an analysis of positionality and through use of reflexivity. This is well recognised in qualitative research generally (Pillow, 2003; Day, 2012), but less so in much action research. At an ICON conference in 2022, a graduate, (Mauwa, Kaye & Mukwege, 2022) gave a compelling account what she went through in undertaking research with women who had

experienced rape during armed conflict in an area of the Great Lakes region. This spoke to the great significance of foregrounding, rather than erasing, the role of the researcher. Ultimately, even more than in most qualitative studies, the role of the researcher must inevitably overlap with that of the participant, and, while this is always a complex relationship, it is a productive area to focus on.

There are also strengths of action research in this area – that is, the prolonged contact of researcher with the topic. As Stahl and King (2020, p. 27) put it, ‘Prolonged engagement, at least for a complete cycle in the life of the research context (e.g., an entire semester for a learning to learn class) has long been recognized as desirable.’ Secondly, the closeness of the researcher to the issues, even though this may lead to some degree of bias, means that the action researcher often speaks from deep familiarity with the context and the participants.

In the case of this study, holding the final interviews about nine months after the conclusion of the action research was a major advantage. The time since the study had given the opportunity for fuller reflection both by me and the interviewees; it could also have been a function of the greater time allocated for the interviews. The interviews certainly provided a different and fuller perspective on the strengths of the programme. In a doctoral study that I was close to (Shozi, 2023), the evaluation of the action was delayed by a year because of Covid-19 lockdowns; the fact that the effects were still demonstrably present enhanced the sense of trustworthiness.

5.13 CONCLUSION

This was a long study, with the pilot starting in September 2021 and the intervention phase ending in October 2023; data generation concluded in mid-2024. In this chapter I have attempted to provide coherence to what often felt like an erratic and uncertain process. I have set out the philosophical underpinnings, the action research approach adopted, the phases of the study and the context within which it took place. I then addressed the formal research elements, such as data generation and data analysis, as well as ethical considerations and limitations.

Despite my sense of the wandering and uncertain trajectory of the study, the review of the action element has led into a growing sense of clarity and conviction concerning what I and those with me have learnt. The next chapter will explore the specific events of the pilot and the critical incidents that enabled that learning to take place.

CHAPTER 6

THE PILOT PHASE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to report first on the overall design of the pilot, extending the information presented in the last chapter. It then describes in some depth the initial themes developed from the data generated in this phase. What was learnt from this phase informed some changes made in the major intervention phase, which is reported in chapter 7.

It is worth reiterating the overarching research question of this study:

In a society that has experienced historical violence, what understandings of contexts, of students and of ourselves should inform the pedagogy of a teacher education that aims to build peace?

In the previous chapter, there is an account of the events that precipitated the move to train facilitators for possible community dialogues. This presented a particular opportunity; however, this phase proceeded under Covid-19 restrictions that were finally eased in mid-October 2021, requiring that all except the last two sessions were online. A major limitation of this phase was having to spend most of the sessions online in a context where many participants had erratic access because of poor connectivity in specific locations or device limitations. Despite this, the process served to provide significant evidence as to where the approach taken was working or was failing. In turn, this provoked me to read further in specific areas; for example, understanding the slowness of the process was very helpful, drawing my thinking to Bourdieu (1977) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1990).

The themes that were developed from the data of this phase were these:

	Theme	Sub-theme	Sub-sub-theme
1	The violence and trauma of South African society		
		High levels of violence experienced – particularly normalised violence	
		Social identities and socialisation caught up in violence	
		The difficulty of speaking of violence and trauma	
2	The unfolding processes of change		
		Creating a safe space is essential for change towards peace to happen	
		Developing ways of working with each other	
		Acknowledging experience and diversity	
			Acknowledging difference of experience
			Acknowledging difference of perspective

		The growing awareness of the significance of emotions
		Emotional self-regulation
		The value of questioning
3	The depth and pace of change	
		Change takes place at a deep level and in multiple forms
		The slowness of change

Table 6.1 Major themes and sub-themes in the pilot

6.1.1 Learning outcomes

Through our initial staff meeting, the initial draft of learning outcomes I had prepared were explored and refined, and logistics including possible dates were discussed. The intended learning outcomes were as follows:

Participants will be able to:

- 1) Develop safe dialogue and learning spaces
- 2) Develop an understanding of how patterns of violence and trauma operate at personal, institutional and societal levels and across time, and how these engender conflict and the inability to resolve problems
- 3) Explore ways of addressing experiences of violence at these levels
- 4) Enhance their skills in leading discussion in small and larger groups, including listening attentively and intervening appropriately in ways that assist groups to address common problems
- 5) Identify and apply principles that strengthen the role of dialogue in transforming conflict and building peace.
- 6) Identify sources of psycho-social support and referral processes for participants they engage with.

6.1.2 Guiding principles for the pedagogy of the programme

At the outset, I had framed a set of statements that set out how I understood the principles adopted in the programme. These drew on such approaches as Freire (1972/2005, 1998), Fanon (1952/1986) and Herman (1992/1997/2015); they could broadly be described within Mezirow's transformative learning (1997):

- The major distinction between staff and participants is that staff take formal responsibility for the programme.
- Both staff and participants need to demonstrate commitment to its effectiveness, which includes a willingness to resolve obstacles to such effectiveness.

- Both staff and participants bring a rich range of resources. These include diverse experiences of the issue of violence in their lives and in the broader society, and experiences of ways in which people have attempted to resolve conflict and violence.
- Reflecting on the experience of violence, on our responses to violence and on our knowledge of communities is an essential element of this work. To do this, we have a collective responsibility to make this a safe space for all who are present.
- Working on issues of violence together requires particular attention to confidentiality and to the need for ensuring mutual support. What is discussed in the group needs to remain within the group.
- Although it is not the intention of the group to do any harm, should anyone feel traumatized or need extra support they will be referred to the support services offered by DUT (such as the Student Counselling Centre).

6.2 OVERVIEW OF SESSIONS

This table sets out the dates of session, whether the session was online or face-to-face, and the major activity that took place in the session.

	Date of session	Mode	Major activity
1	4 September 2021	Online	Introduction, ways of working, research process
2	8 September 2021	Online	Developing questions on violence and peace
3	15 September 2021	Online	Dialogue on gender
4	22 September 2021	Online	Theory on trauma, panel on race
5	29 September 2021	Online	Group discussion on race
6	6 October 2021	Online	Dialogue on race
7	13 October 2021	Online	Planning facilitation in groups
8	16 October 2021	Contact	Role plays on five scenarios
9	22 May 2022	Contact	Dialogue on age

We were feeling our way in the design of sessions, knowing that we would definitely start with ways of working, then developing questions, before moving on to gender and race. Otherwise, we would plan sessions on the basis of our review of where we had got to and what was most needed next. Although I was leading the staff, these decisions were ultimately a matter of consensus at staff meetings, with staff commenting on proposed designs that I would develop, before we finalised them.

The following were the themes identified from the analysis of the data gathered from this phase. In some cases, there are sub-themes that address a particular cluster of data that is closely related to the major theme.

6.3 THEME 1 THE VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA OF SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY

In this study, the violence and associated trauma of the society was the often-assumed backdrop, a fabric into which daily events have been woven. Frequent mention was made of how violence had impacted on the lives of those in the course – particularly those from black and working-class backgrounds – and how trauma persists. This was not a result of our probing to find the violence – it was rather that participants increasingly volunteered accounts of violence and its impact.

6.3.1 High levels of violence experienced – particularly normalised violence

The first subtheme relates to participants expressed their experience of violence as an assumed norm. This was evident in the first dialogue in the course, which addressed socialisation around gender. In contrast to earlier experiences of dialogues on gender with students at DUT, where I felt that young men retreated into defensiveness and denial when hearing of women's hardships, the men in this dialogue reflected immediately and in some depth on their own lives.

For example, Mfundo said:

I realised suddenly that one's childhood was really, really, traumatic, traumatic. And it's been ongoing for quite a long time, so, probably it has, it has resulted at some point where the issues of, of using violence as a solution which seemed normal, you know.

Here he points to the normalisation of violence in the context of his childhood (Collins, 2013b).

In the focus group discussion, Lungisani spoke of the violence that he experienced when gun shots from a group of thieves shattered his leg and left him with constant pain, though, as he said in the focus group discussion: '*I don't now even hate the guys who shot me.*' [To make more evident to the reader where I have short quotations from the data within a paragraph, I am highlighting them in italics].

In this society, violence is seen as a cultural norm, as Snehlanhla said in reflecting on the gender session of the pilot:

...it made me think a lot of about where I come from, the upbringing, the influence of the culture and everything, so I also felt some kind of pain for that because the speakers at that point were going through, um, the, the pain of the memories that the, they had experienced.

There was ample evidence thus not only of the actual violence experienced, but of the full range of trauma that followed from the violence, including physical pain, emotional pain and vicarious or secondary trauma (American Counseling Association, n.d.; Herman, 1992/1997/2015), as in what Snehlanhla refers to. Her comments capture how hearing stories of violence triggered her own feelings of trauma in a society that Eagle and Kaminer (2013) refer to as being in continuous traumatic stress.

6.3.2 Social identities and socialisation caught up in violence

The second sub-theme concerns how this normalised violence is so connected to socialisation into specific social identities. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990, pp. 54) wrote ‘[The habitus is] embodied history, internalized as second nature and so forgotten as history.’ From this perspective, it was evident how the dispositions of social groups (for example, around race, gender and class) had been shaped through violence. The first dialogue undertaken was on gender. It was notable how readily men had portrayed their socialisation around gender as consistently implicated in violence. Fawzia was the facilitator and later commented how she had expected to have to push men to speak honestly but realised that it was not necessary: ‘*I thought as facilitator I would have to take the men on, and it took me time to realise that was not needed.*’ She had asked people to speak of a good thing and a bad thing growing up in their gender. In the gender dialogue, Zamokuhle immediately identified that being a boy in his context meant not being picked on in the way that girls were picked on; he stated that the bad thing was that ‘*I was never allowed to actually be weak or vulnerable; I could never showcase anything that actually hurts me...*’

Msizi spoke thus of his boyhood:

Being a male I was able to grow quicker... the bad thing was there were certain things where you would feel like, ja, it's tough to be a boy, A lot of things happening to, to the, to the boychild and nobody actually knows about it and you have no one to tell when such things are happening to you, and when you grow up you only then realise, oh, that was an abuse.

Zamokuhle spoke again:

...those stereotypes are literally enforced on you from birth and really you don't have a choice, because you see yourself also saying the same thing... I could only tell when I left that the space I was in wasn't OK, and I actually had a lot of issues from it, but from the time I was still there it never felt like most of these things are wrong, or they feel off to me, I just had to, sort of, go with everybody and go with the flow, and I never felt outside until I came out.... Basically, the violence is still there, it is also embraced in the sense that it is behavioural, it is cultural... and to them, I feel like, violence is only when you actually see someone bleed, but as long as they can take a punch, they are still OK, the fight can still carry on.

Zamokuhle states with clarity how, within that context, the process of socialisation becomes invisible, 'internalized as second nature'; it is only when outside the context that it becomes visible. Violence thus becomes an essential element in the way things are. At this point, we can see how socialisation into specific identities coincides with socialisation into the conviction that violence is a norm.

In the same dialogue, Lungisani identified both the privilege of greater freedom than girls and the rigidity of expectations applied to being a man:

I am very expressive, I am very connected to my family's side, I don't have a problem expressing my emotions, I don't dress, I still don't dress the way that guys dress, you just have to prove that you are, like, you are really a man, like, if you, if you don't fit a certain description, and then you end, you know, harming people and you get harmed yourself, because people – and I'm light-skinned – so it's just a lot of things, you have to develop certain traits that I am not proud of... you are conditioned to believe a man is like this, and that is very destructive to you and the persons around you.

He identified both the mistreatment against him and his own collusion with the violence. In our staff meeting after this dialogue, Justine commented on how these childhood experiences were infused with violence. We had not introduced the Cycle of Socialization (Harro, 2000), but the discussion by the men spoke directly the processes in that theory.

My notes on the same dialogue included a comment on 'how women spoke of the constraints placed on them, such as being subject to low expectations and more limited lives, in which their desire to act freely was constrained.' Not all violence took the form of direct violence (Galtung, 1967); violence, as in the WHO definition (1996), is that which 'either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in... maldevelopment or deprivation.'

Similarly, in the panel on race in the fourth session, four people spoke about their early experience of noticing that they were in some way racially different. Judy spoke of having constantly to negotiate race given the different identities and racialised identities across her family. Her experiences included having to hide her grandmother in a laundry basket if the 'Blackjacks' arrived – these were the municipal police responsible for enforcing the exclusion of African people from what was, in this case, a 'Coloured' area.

For Lungisani, the constant background still is that of racism, as he said in the focus group discussion: '*... it is something I encounter every day... I do hold back when it comes to race with people who aren't black. There will always be tension.*' Mfundo's experience, as working as a youngster in the gardens of well-to-do white people, had generated feelings of envy and anger, though these feelings led in a positive way into political activism from a young age. Snehlanhla spoke of her realisation of the racial discrepancies when she visited her father, a police officer, at his work; when she questioned him about it, he told her not to raise such questions.

For those of us on the project who have a white identity, there was so much greater distance from these situations of direct violence; it was not that violence was impossible – one had lost two family members to murder – but so much of our lives had been held in spaces of less intense violence.

There was thus constant evidence of the ways by which violence was implicated in socialisation into specific social identities, and how social identities brought with them specific experiences in relation to violence.

6.3.3 The difficulty of speaking of violence and trauma

The third sub-theme concerns the difficulty of speaking freely and fully on these issues. One of the elements that perpetuates the trauma is the silence and sense of isolation. In my notes on the third session, I had written: '*The issue of how we speak of feelings (or cannot find the words to speak of feelings) came up. Did it perhaps feel unsafe for people to speak about feelings?*

The response of people to the experience of trauma itself has been part of what confronted survivors of violence. Snehlanhla referred to the suspicious death of her father; in my notes I wrote:

...she had felt that the ideas that her family should 'move on' and 'forgive' after the death of her father had meant exactly that they had not been able to 'move on', that

all the trauma from that event had meant that the issue would come up freshly whenever they were reminded of or saw the people responsible.

On reflection, we as staff had not taken fully into account how difficult it could be for participants to speak. In the meeting of staff after these first two sessions, there was discussion of what was perceived as the reluctance of participants to become involved in discussion and to assert their own views and experiences. There was a marked guardedness over the risks of participation that suggested the significance of traumatic experiences, this initial phase of anxiety being consistent with the concept of continuous traumatic stress (CTS) (Eagle & Kaminer, 2013). However, it was perhaps particularly relevant to early experience with education. In our staff meeting, we discussed the experiences of humiliation and fear in our own histories within education, as we recognised the connection. We were not yet at the point of skills development, even though a significant proportion of participants had experience of being in a tutoring, teaching or activist role. Indeed, in my notes on the sessions, I wrote, 'Participants have not directly confronted the difficult experiences around dialogues'; on reflection, developing skills in facilitation could be only one section of the full range of learning that we needed to achieve.

Mfundo's work included organising community dialogues for the provincial government. Despite this, he stressed that the discussion had taken him into areas he had never explored before. He stated this in the reflection: '*Actually, I felt a bit emotional after reflecting, because it is the first time I reflected really on how one's childhood was like.*' There were many such references to the experience of violence as being something not spoken about, perhaps because, in a context in which everyone has had such experiences, you learn not to claim attention for your plight. I compared in my mind my own readiness to foreground my few tragedies when they have befallen me. Herman (2015) refers to '...the shame and social isolation that afflict trauma survivors.' Mfundo's comment provides further evidence for the role of CTS, given the duration of 'one's childhood'. What those on the course witnessed though was not the isolation of an individual survivor in a context where others were not affected; it was the isolation of the individual who nonetheless grasps readily that this is also the condition of those around them.

Part of the difficulty of speaking was that it was painful or risky. In the staff discussion after the seventh session, Priscilla reported how a participant had spoken of not wanting to '*open old wounds*' in the room she was in. She then said how difficult she had felt it in being speaking openly with black people about her own experience of racist events, after I had spoken in class

of an incident in which a family member had said something racist that, as a child, I then vaguely assumed to be true. Was openness better, or did one potentially inflict further hurt by reminding people of the racist realities that may be in the past but that may also have been part of the socialisation that continues to affect it now? Charity argued that this could be the *'elephant in the room'* and that black participants may well have suspected that you had had such experiences, so it was better to deal with them openly. This was a point at which achieving safety, in terms of our ways of working, was not the same as avoiding discomfort (Griffin & Oeullett, 2007, p. 96), a point I return to below in considering the role of emotions. It connects with the advocacy of mutual vulnerability (Keet et al., 2009).

6.3.4 Implications for teacher education

In concluding this theme, I consider the implications for teacher education of the extent of violence and trauma revealed in the work. One question that arises when we note the omnipresent violence and the ensuing trauma in South African society is how this is recognised and addressed within teacher education. My study (Hemson, 2006) of the handling of issues of diversity in South African teacher education revealed that few universities provide any opportunity for recognising and dealing with such central life experiences. One argument would of course be that we cannot effectively deal with such experiences within education; they fall into the territory of psychology or religion. In my view, taking such a stance requires that those studying must maintain an attention divided between the most significant life experiences and their studies, as if these two worlds do not, and cannot, inform each other. In distinct contrast, I would argue that teacher education needs to address the central experiences that preoccupy would-be educators and to follow a strategy that seeks to gain meaning and understanding from such experiences. Teachers who have developed such an understanding possess a form of capital such as navigational capital (Yosso, 2005) and are thus, I contend, well placed to assist those they teach through the challenges that confront them.

6.4 THEME 2 THE UNFOLDING PROCESSES OF CHANGE

The second major theme addresses the conditions that enabled positive change and the nature of the changes that followed. 'Transformative leaning is a complicated, intensely emotional process that takes considerable skill and knowledge to facilitate effectively and responsibly' (Robertson, 1996, p. 44). In attempting to develop sufficient 'skill and knowledge', what factors enabled this development?

In part, these conditions were a matter of design, such as the commitment from the outset to making this as safe a place for participants and staff as possible and the practice of developing with all present a common understanding of our values and ways in which we would work. The approach to questioning drew on earlier work I had done, within the Freirean tradition (Hemson, 2024). The other conditions flowed from these initial commitments as an unfolding process, as they developed in consistence with them. Participants and staff drew on what Kruger and Zembylas (2024) describe as the ‘affective atmosphere’ that characterises educational spaces.

A difficulty I encountered in this analysis is around the fact that I tried to distinguish between the prior conditions, those that we initiated, and the resulting changes. While this appeared to be productive in terms of making specific findings, the sharpness of the distinction made it unworkable. Introducing a new element of process – such as the ways of working – immediately changed the flow of the course, making it hard to separate out the continued influence of the intervention from the changes that resulted. This difficulty of separating out cause from effect was made more difficult still as what seemed to be resulting changes reinforced the condition itself (in a feedback loop). For example, using ways of working to create a sense of safety led to greater openness about personal feelings, which seemed in turn to enhance the sense of safety. The complexity is I think best addressed by the richness of description of the process, in line with the process ontology of Röck (2023a). She argues that the best focus is on the *how*:

Every past event and any historic moment was set in very specific circumstances. It is radically singular and not repeatable. So that strictly speaking a simple learning from the past is impossible. So does that mean that we cannot learn from the past at all? No, it is just not as simple as it is usually made out to be. We cannot merely draw on similarities between past and present or future situations, but we also have to see the specific differences for an adequate anticipation. (Röck, 2019, p. 49)

This has direct implications for the findings of the study and the confidence with which they can be applied to other contexts.

6.4.1 *Creating a safe space is essential for change to happen*

There is great significance in creating safety in enabling participants to address the rigidities created by stereotypes and harsh experience, as set out by Walkerdine (2013, p. 763): ‘...the process is indeterminate, plays upon complex unconscious and affective processes, and

demands the centrality of safety to allow for imagination and experiments to be handled safely.’ The purpose of this safety is not to insulate those involved from challenge, but to allow the troubling thoughts and feelings to be addressed in ways that lead to change.

After the first session, Charity (staff member) wrote in her reflection:

I love that participants feel that the grouping is a safe space to communicate and share sensitive or controversial information. Case in point is when Thabisile stated that she has been a bully for most of her life because of her background where she had to fight for everything.

In the extract from Zamokuhle, above, he recognised the significance of space: he had to ‘come out’ of the context he had grown up in. This enabled him to ‘feel outside’ and thus to understand the processes he had been through and to see that they were wrong. Here he echoes a point in Harro’s Cycle of Socialization (Harro, 2000) that identifies the challenge of confrontation that comes with understanding.

An anonymous comment from the evaluation of the session on gender was in response to a question on what had been learnt about the context: ‘*The importance of creating a safe space in which people can talk freely about their own context and experiences. Our contexts differ and people need to be exposed to each other’s realities.*’ This links to the emphasis on safety and class climate in reviews of school performance; as the Thomas Fordham Institute (2021) points out, supportive educational environments are:

... characterized by positive relationships between teachers and students, a place where genuine respect is the norm, and where all students feel they belong. The same is true for adults—both the teachers and families who make up a school community. In a nurturing culture, educators and family members share candid exchanges based on mutual interests and respect. Their social and emotional needs are part of the equation, too.

Again, in the final evaluation, in response to a question about the context, there were these three comments:

The context was very interesting and it ensured that it tackled critical issues in a very safe space.

It is a fear-free zone.

The importance of creating a safe space in which people can talk freely about their own context and experiences. Our contexts differ and people need to be exposed to each other's realities.

This last comment makes a point about diversity – communicating across difference is valuable, but it requires a sense of safety. There is ample evidence from the comments that participants did experience this generally as a safe study. How then was this sense of safety in the course achieved?

6.4.2 *Developing ways of working with each other*

The second sub-theme sets out a key element in creating the conditions through which change becomes possible – the development and use of a consensus on how participants and staff worked together.

Von Holdt (2022) criticises the emphasis in Bourdieu on a monolithic social order, noting that, instead, there is a ‘surfeit of agency’ in the fields of practice in South Africa. Indeed, he argues that such contexts require order. In line with this observation, we need what I would term a form of ‘benign order’ within educational contexts that aim to promote peace; it needs to be designed with awareness and deliberation. This is perhaps a surprising emphasis, as order is normally associated with control rather than criticality, but I will explore more fully later how this indeed be benign.

Following the guidance of the social justice education literature (Adams et al., 2007) we had a systematic process of developing consensus over the principles we would keep in mind and the specific ways in which we would handle issues:

... feminist facilitators recommend establishing explicit classroom norms to ensure respect and confidentiality, to help participants differentiate between willingness to move outside their comfort zones and experiencing threats to their safety, and to guide the handling of conflict and “triggers”. (Adams, 2007, p. 30)

Similarly, Ellsworth (1989, p. 316) reports the need to give specific attention to ensuring that all member of a class feel a sense of safety and mutual support: ‘*We agreed that a safer space required high levels of trust and personal commitment to individuals in the class*’.

The ways of working that were negotiated at the outset of this phase are set out in Appendix 10. They were well acknowledged by participants – for example, Thobile wrote, ‘*The developed ways of working are perfect.*’ Generally, they became an integral part of the

programme and specific guidelines were respected. For example, while participants often mentioned sensitive personal experiences, no-one reported a violation of the principle of confidentiality. At several points in the course, staff reminded participants of the ways of working, in introducing an exercise; for example, in reporting back on group discussions, we would remind participants not to give an account of the actual experiences they heard, but to focus on their thoughts and reactions in response.

One of the effects of the ways of working was that some participants immediately wished to speak of some issue that disturbed them. I had previously noticed this response with other groups, as soon as we had spent time clarifying what was needed to make people feel safe – for example, at the first workshop I had run with youngsters from high schools, early in my work at the Centre, as soon as we had developed agreement as to the guidelines we would follow, some immediately volunteered hurtful experiences they had been through.

6.4.3 Acknowledging differences of experience and differences of perspective

A core aspect of the programme was its emphasis on the centrality of experience and reflection on experience, rather than debates and differences of opinion. This emphasis was set out clearly in the initial invitation to attend:

Both staff and participants bring a rich range of resources to the course. These include diverse experiences of the issue of violence in their lives and in the broader society, and experiences of ways in which people have attempted to resolve conflict and violence.

Reflecting on the experience of violence, on our responses to violence and on our knowledge of communities is an essential element of this work.

This was reflected in many comments and forms the third sub-theme. This draws its theoretical basis from Freire (1972/2005) and his injunctions to focus on the social reality of students, and was further developed in the social justice education literature (Adams et al., 2007). Developing the capacity to hear well the experiences of others not only extends our understanding of how the world operates, given the inevitable diversity of contexts and experience, but provides access to other perspectives and the emotions that emerge within such perspectives. While diversity of opinion needs to be acknowledged and accommodated, our assumption was that ideas alone are not sufficient to change fundamental learning dispositions. Mezirow (1997) identifies processes of transformation that must challenge existing feelings, perceptions, values and bodily responses.

The significance of diversity became evident in two different senses. The first was the diversity of social identities and the related, though not necessarily consistently related, diversity of experience. The second was the diversity of perspectives and approaches, an intellectual richness. These were closely related; as we explored the diversity of experiences, participants would speak more of the different perspectives they gained from hearing the experiences. These form two sub-sub-themes.

6.4.4 Diversity of social identities and experiences related to identities

Diversity is seldom explored fully in its complexity. Within the South African context, there has long been a focus on racial and ethnic difference, but often through the lens of apartheid and separation that propagated stereotypes and essentialised such difference, while paying relatively little attention to the many other forms of difference (Francis & Hemson, 2010).

An example would be the use of stereotypes to ‘explain’ how people are different from each other. Hardiman, Jackson and Griffin (2007, p. 60) define stereotypes ‘as generalizations about the attributes of a particular social group that disregard individual diversity within the group.’ Such stereotyped assumptions about groups have long dominated South African education; a light-hearted account of the absurdity of such assumptions is given by Leclerc-Madlala (2004).

From the first session, it became evident that speaking of one’s own experience and hearing those of others led to new realisations. The icebreaker invited people to respond with a yes/no to a range of questions about experience, and then to discuss what they noticed from the exercise. For example, a senior academic, Dhaya, identified how he had worked in a biscuit factory when young. In the review of the exercise, he spoke on realising how his life had changed – crucially, he stated that *‘I didn’t reflect on this, in fact, until your question.’* The differences by class emerged clearly in the review, such as the distinction between those whose lives had always been working class, and those whose families are now middle class, but whose grandparents had been in occupations such as domestic work.

Speaking of experience and hearing the experiences of others I saw as more productive than engaging in debates or exploring differences of opinion. While diversity of opinion needs to be acknowledged and accommodated, dispositions do not change, typically, based on ideas alone. The value of hearing the story was often touched on by participants. As Charity (staff member) wrote in a reflection, part of which was quoted above:

I love that participants feel that the grouping is a safe space to communicate and share sensitive or controversial information... Therefore, for me, this brought to light the

fact that it is always important to hear the other side of the story whether we agree with that side or not. Like Chimamanda stated in her famous Ted Talk, there is a danger in a single story.

The distinction between dialogue and debate is expressed well in this diagram by Bursom (2002, p. 26).

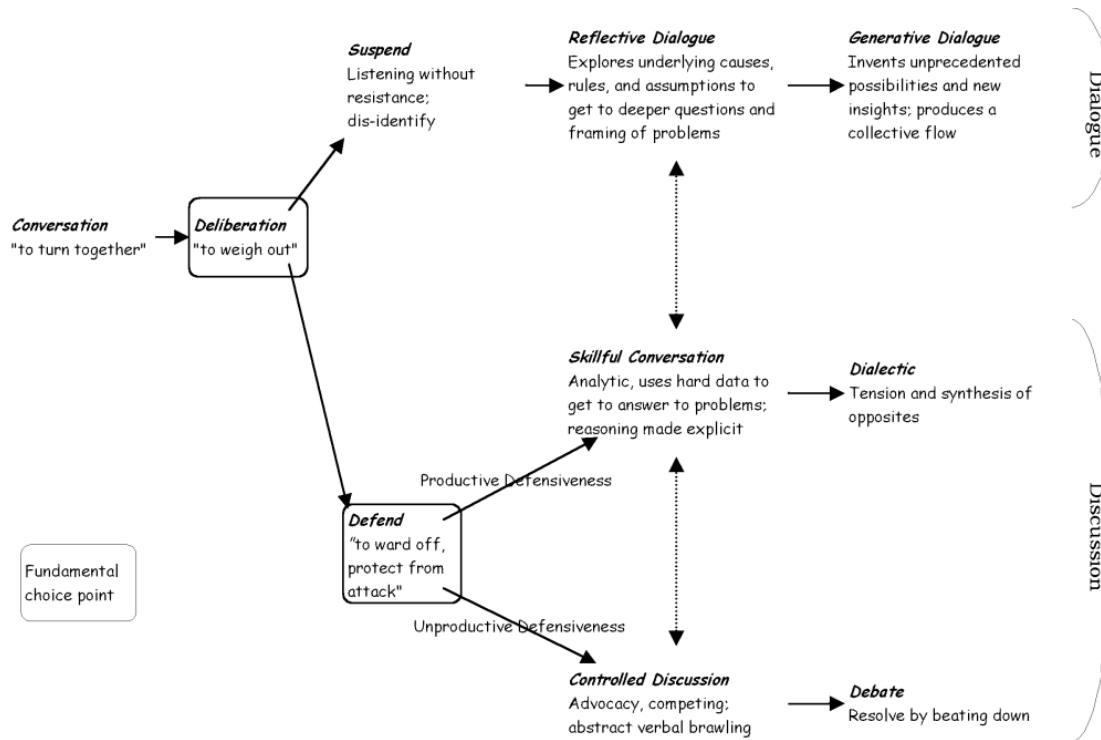


Figure 1. The divergence and dynamics of conversational paths

Adapted from *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*, by William Isaacs.
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Figure 6.1 The divergence and dynamics of conversation paths (Bursom, 2002, p. 26)

The approach of speaking of experience in a space that had been developed to create a sense of safety had, in the views of these participants, led along the top line of this diagram (Bursom, 2002). It involved the suspension of judgement and reaction, moved into what it refers to as reflective dialogue, and created the potential for generative dialogue.

Mfundo and others focused on diversity in terms of the range of social identities and the related experiences: *'The diversity of the group enriched engagement'*; Thabisile wrote, *'we are all different'*, and Sunita noted that *'learning in a diverse group is rich.'* Similarly, Cynthia wrote, *'Everyone around me is a rich resource of inspiration, encouragement and knowledge. Our diversity is our strength.'* The image of wealth in these quotations is compelling; the enjoyable exploration of difference provides a counterweight to what may be seen as the heaviness of violence. Given that this was soon after the violent events of July 2021, which had deepened

social divisions and intensified fear of ‘the other’, this was notable. Thus, Msizi wrote of the need to ‘engage more in diverse groups for the purpose of unifying and understanding that will result to acceptance and compassion.’ Engaging with diversity in this way becomes a resource for developing a more humane society.

Georgina, a non-South African tutor, wrote after the second session:

The discussions we had in the session emphasised the importance of dialogue as, just by engaging with other participants, I would hear of experiences I have never heard of before or even thought of. It made me to also unlearn some thoughts I have held towards certain social groups and be more on the understanding side on what may influence certain behaviours and how best having dialogues can be of aid in addressing the issues concerned.

The word ‘unlearn’ points to the possibilities for perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1997) that follow from this openness to the experiences of others. A key element in unlearning is simply developing a richer and more complex understanding of the lives of others – and possibly also of one’s own.

What the focus on experience revealed, again and again, was the complexity that results from the myriad experiences and the multiplicity of possible identities. For example, Msizi spoke of growing up in a patriarchal environment, but the absence of girls in the home meant boys undertook the chores typically allocated to girls. Lungisani spoke of being seen as different because his clothing and emotionality did not conform to expectations, and he was also light-skinned.

Not that there were not major commonalities in the experiences of young rural Zulu men and women, and consistent differences between the experiences of white and black participants; it was just that we would not know the immense variety of experience without asking. For example, Thabisile grew up in a racist society; her memory was of her parents working as a domestic worker and gardener for an Afrikaans family, a situation familiar to many black families. However, in her childhood she was not aware of the racial and class distinctions because the Afrikaans family were warm and welcoming; she had simply assumed that they were all part of her family. Incidents of racism she encountered later did not trigger a strong reaction, even though she could readily understand the reactions of people whose experiences were very different. For those familiar with South African society, this situation was very unusual.

In the same dialogue on race, we used breakaway rooms. Georgina encountered only one person in the room; as both were black African, she initially assumed a much higher commonality of experience than was the case; she then realised that there was a lot about the experiences of the other that she could not have known. A recurrent realisation that was expressed in the course is that we may think we know people based on our assumptions over perceived social identities, but there are always unexpected similarities and unexpected differences.

A point that came up repeatedly was the significance of listening actively and seeing that as more important than advising. Khayelihle wrote that '*...everyone has a story to tell. All we need to do is listen to them in order to understand them.*' Msizi noted the need to do '*more than talking and allowing others space to express their points.*' His comments suggest mutuality; what makes the space safe is not simply the freedom to speak openly and be heard, but the sense of being committed to ensuring that for others.

This openness to diversity thus led to what was at times accounts of pain and trauma, at times humour and acceptance. The 'rainbow nation' image for South Africa has been sharply criticised for its denial of the harsh realities of inequality and violence (Francis & Hemson, 2007, 2010). Ahmed (2007, p. 135) argues that a certain form of multiculturalism is seen as compulsory if Britons are to be happy. She then refers to the unhappy effects of this 'happiness', and writes, 'I think it is the very exposure of these unhappy effects that is affirmative, which gives us an alternative set of imaginings of what might count as a good or at least better life.' Her argument is that there are strong pressures to celebrate multiculturalism as bringing us happiness, in making us feel good in ways that gloss over the pain of division and oppression. In this course, openness to diversity encompassed both celebration and pain.

6.4.5 The diversity of perspectives and approaches, an intellectual richness

What flowed from the acknowledgement of diverse experience was also the multiplicity of perspectives that now seemed possible. Developing the capacity to hear well the experiences of others not only extends our understanding of how the world operates but provides access to both other perspectives and the emotions that emerge from such perspectives. Diversity can apply to people, but also to ways of thinking. The ability to shift perspective and to consider new possibilities was identified as a strength in participants' learning. Genevieve wrote, '*I have realised that every leader has a different way of facilitating and different ways of approaching a problem*'. Cynthia wrote, '*There are several/many ways to address a problem. I need to*

challenge myself towards considering alternative ways of problem resolution'. In the final focus group discussion, Mfundo said, *'In our diversity we find each other, and we get to emphasise and understand the perspectives different from ours.'*

There was also increasing flexibility in dealing with diversity, as both participants and facilitators. Auvine et al. (2002, p. 53) write that 'Facilitation... works best when certain values are accepted and practiced not only by the facilitator, but by the entire group in which facilitation occurs', and this became evident. Thus, with time over the programme, the handling of diversity became more relaxed. In the final session, Charity facilitated a dialogue on communication across generations. Her approach was light and disarming – *'I would have loved to start by asking if you are comfortable to share your age – but just vote if you are comfortable to share your age.'* Unanimously, there was agreement to do that. *'Right now, if that is OK?'* After people gave their ages (ranging from 24 to 74), with a fair amount of laughter, she asked, *'What do you like about being this current age that you are?'* What struck me was how well people participated; irrespective of what they had or had not learnt about facilitation, they had certainly learnt to take part in ways that were not defensive and to listen to each other without judgement. It was the kind of discussion I seldom witness, of people speaking of their lives in a very open way. In the review, there was general satisfaction about the way she asked questions that were equally appropriate for any age and did not suggest any undisclosed agenda; I felt that she had thought through how the question could be experienced by each delegate, and this approach gave full expression to the diversity of the group. When Lungisani took over the facilitation, things did not work well, as he seemed to be promoting a particular response; the group challenged him, but in a way that was not tense, so that it became a jovial rather than defensive interaction.

6.4.6 The growing awareness of the significance of emotions

This forms the fourth sub-theme of the processes of change. The point has been strongly argued that emotions should be fully acknowledged as relevant to the processes of both learning and teaching, in contrast to Cartesian divisions between mind and body (Ahmed, 2004, 2014; Kruger & Zembylas, 2024; Zembylas, 2007).

Constantly, in discussions and in written comments, participants identified the need to acknowledge and work with emotions of the self and of the other. The awareness of and focus on emotions became stronger as we went later into the programme, appearing most often in the evaluation comments – for example, this comment by Nomusa: *'Facilitation needs awareness*

of your emotions and dynamics involved’, and Sunita’s assertion, ‘It is important to pay attention to people’s feelings.’

In the anonymous section of the evaluation, these two comments were made in response to the question, ‘What is the next step in my development as a facilitator?’

I need more learning or more introspective exercises in order to stay alert of my own hindrances and emotions. That I need to constantly think about this as I facilitate.

Practice managing my emotions.

In response to ‘What did I learn about myself?’:

That I am human with emotions and possibly trauma that can affect my ability to facilitate.

As these comments indicate, emotions in themselves may be negative; it is the awareness of emotions – one’s own, your students’ – that offers positive possibilities. Secondly, attending to emotions as a facilitator entails attending to both the students’ and one’s own emotions.

However, it is not enough simply to feel; one still has choices about where you focus attention. As evidenced by comments from several participants about emotional regulation, it is important for the facilitator to attend to what is happening with participants and the discussion rather than focusing on one’s own reactions.

As the neuroscientist Mays Imad (Imad, n.d.) states,

One of the misconceptions about how we learn concerns the role of emotions in our thinking. Emotions are seen as irrational and unruly, something that is connected with “acting out of control.” From that position comes the idea that by making decisions without emotions, purely rationally, we become more sophisticated thinkers and decision-makers. As a consequence, we often expect students, and ourselves, to leave emotions outside the classroom. But we know from the work of many neuroscientists that it is impossible to separate emotions from reasoning, on both neurological and even biochemical level.

By the final session, in the dialogue on age, I noticed how participants were expressing emotions freely (as happiness, regret, frustration, and so on) but in way that were not defensive or reactive. This led to lighter, even joyful, interchanges. As indicated in the section on diversity, there was considerable positive experience that drove enthusiasm and sustained commitment.

In the staff meeting after the seventh session, we entered a discussion about incidents in our lives where we had witnessed abusive and oppressive behaviour and the value of intervening directly, which often lead to ourselves having strongly emotional responses. This was a productive discussion; hearing and reviewing such accounts, Justine pointed out, could be a useful process for developing empathy. On further reflection I realised that, while asking people to speak about such experiences was likely to bring up strong feelings, these feelings may be not only about the experience but also about the difficulties in speaking of such experience. In line with the phenomenological approach of this study, it is more important to be open to the emotions around such experiences and the significance that those involved place on them, than to satisfy our curiosity over the 'story'. This can become part of developing a critical awareness over how emotions are shaped and how we respond to them.

6.4.7 Emotional self-regulation

The fifth sub-theme is that of emotional self-regulation. This was not a concept that the staff had raised, but at several points participants raised the topic of how facilitators need to notice and manage their own emotional reactions. For example, Lungisani said in the focus group,

I can't detach myself from the subject, I might end up using more emotion over logic, that might disturb the outcome of the process, I am aware that I might need someone as a partner, someone to assist or guide me when I start getting too emotional about things.

Similarly, Yusuf referred to the need for '*monitoring my emotions before and during a dialogue,*' and Esther, her need for '*dealing with my own emotions as well.*' Nomusa wrote that the work '*needs awareness of your emotions and dynamics involved.*' Lungisani's comment suggests the disruptive role of emotions; possibly we had not sufficiently focused attention on this in theory and in reflections on dialogues. Robertson (1996) writes of the emotional challenges of facilitation; participants did achieve an awareness of the significance of their own emotions in the role of being a facilitator but still lacked confidence in negotiating them.

6.4.7.1 The value of questioning

The final sub-theme is that of questioning. This follows in the tradition of Freire's problem-posing education (Freire, 1972/2005). Not all questions are useful; so many of the questions used in education invite a predetermined response, while people often use rhetorical questions that are more expressions of opinion. Helping students to develop questions and to work with questions that probe and open up areas of uncertainty or unexplored experiences is an essential

part of an education for peace educators – and surely for teacher education generally. It serves to develop the understanding of those present. Such skills are starting to be recognised more broadly, including in relation to emerging forms of technology such as AI (Gregerson & Bianzino, 2023).

Participants repeatedly identified this as an area that they had previously had little awareness of. Esther wrote of the significance of her learning: *‘Question development in preparation for facilitation. This really made impact on me. I learnt a lot here.’* Charity endorsed this approach when she wrote of *‘the idea of questioning instead of leading towards a particular answer’*. Gerda referred to *‘the importance of finding good questions and sequencing them.’* Sunita stated that, *‘Asking the right questions is critical in the facilitation process.’* Despite the work by Freire (1972/2005) on problem-posing education, participants had clearly little prior knowledge of this.

The significance of questions for facilitation was not for the purpose of opening up debates; the focus was rather on the framing of questions to explore experience in depth, and to foster reflection. At times in the teaching, I found myself comparing good questions for a dialogue with good questions in an open-ended interview, ensuring that questions did not convey unexamined assumptions (Cornell University, n.d.; University of Leicester, n.d.).

We also used questions not only for facilitation but as tools for intellectual exploration. In thinking about violence, in the second session, we asked participants to generate further questions in response our question: *‘What questions need to be asked if we are to understand violence in our contexts?’* Among those proposed were these, *‘Why are people angry?’*, *‘What do people understand as violence?’*, *‘How can communities reduce the level of violence?’*, and *‘Why do we give more attention to violence rather than nonviolence?’* We then reviewed the whole list, noticing common themes and different perspectives but not attempting to provide speculative answers to the questions.

In his reflection on this session, Zamokuhle wrote:

The nature of the questions were very interesting because they became an entire discussion for me about violence without necessarily having to be specific about the issue, stating them out and explaining the perspective that question comes from was sufficient for me.

The questions thus generated a discussion that used terms such as ‘what if’, ‘maybe’ and ‘why’; participants noticed similarities and difference, as well as possible reasons why the question was being asked. Charity wrote about the experiences that informed questions:

As one of the members so rightly observed, each of the questions asked, and how they were asked, are a reflection or could be a reflection of the experiences of a person. There are some questions I wouldn't ask because perhaps my experiences have not given me the impetus to ask such questions. Again, the questions brought to mind the adage that sometimes we don't get the answers we need because we don't ask the right questions.

Charity emphasised, like Zamokuhle, the origins of the questions but also the need to be critical about the questions we choose to use and to consider what might be more productive questions. Georgina wrote:

The exercise of drafting questions related to violence was very educational in a sense that it really unpacked different underlying issues related to violence and how some acts may be classified as violent but are not talked about or regarded as such in our communities.

Her approach was to focus on the thinking about violence that this process set off, and the ability of the questions to provoke further questions and ideas.

This exercise provided a necessary counterbalance to the potential tendency to see the role of the facilitator as simply applying a technical skill without having to analyse the topic. It also counter-acted the possibility that facilitators would steer participants to simplistic conclusions. It was one of the points most emphasised in the final evaluation. Esther wrote, as a key learning she would take away, ‘*Question development in preparation for facilitation. This really made impact on me. I learnt a lot here.*’ Mpumelelo wrote of the ‘*Power of asking relevant follow-up questions in order to get to the gist of the dialogue.*’

Working with questions in this way was thus a productive exercise that could be used at different points in the education of teachers.

6.5 THEME 3 THE DEPTH AND PACE OF CHANGE

In this third major theme, I consider what we learnt about some of the changes that became evident later in the programme. This relies largely on the data from the focus group discussion and the evaluation comments.

6.5.1 Change takes place at a deep level and in multiple forms

It is relevant here to reiterate the reliance on Bourdieu (1977) and on the magnitude of the task of challenging ingrained dispositions through the process of learning. Learning at these levels necessitates also some degree of unlearning of existing dispositions.

A key point was the ability to shift the ‘rules of the game’ in education as a field of practice. Many of the comments indicated that there was significant learning about the self, evidence that there had been shifts at the level of participants’ dispositions (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

There were various comments in the evaluation of the phase that indicated that significant learnings extended beyond the formal learning outcomes. The ‘hand’ evaluation exercise, in October 2021, asked participants to respond to a series of points. In response, various comments that focused on learnings about the self that extended further than the formal outcomes of the programme. These included: *‘I learnt about myself (my story is important).’* (Nombuso); *‘To be more open and never look down upon myself based on my background and upbringing.’* (Khayelihle). *‘I don’t want to look down/put myself down anymore.’* (Mpumelelo). *‘The realisation I gained is to not box myself but to embrace my diversity.’* (Nonhlanhla). Another participant wrote in a note, *‘I learnt that I am more open and confident to engage with new people than I thought I am.’* These comments suggest that the programme challenged negative internalisations of the self, resulting in greater self-acceptance.

In a context of the histories of invalidation of people based on their race, the two comments about learning not to ‘look down’ on themselves indicate that some participants were challenging what they had long internalised, what Bourdieu (1977, p. 86) refers to as the ‘internalised structures’ that form part of the habitus, Fanon’s ‘internalised oppression’ (Burawoy, 2012a, p. 76). Burawoy (2012b, p. 6) states that such challenge to internalisation is central to Freire’s understanding of critical pedagogy.

Mezirow (1997, p. 5) identifies that in transformative learning, ‘...learners move toward a frame of reference that is more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience.’ His ‘frame of reference’ includes ‘habits of the mind’, and some of these comments indicate that the phase worked at that level. Cynthia wrote, *‘My own prejudices were challenged and new perspectives inspired’*, while Nomusa’s response was, *‘Introduce facilitation in my personal development.’* Zusakhe’s comment, *‘I think we have to be humans*

first, implies a commitment to the mutual humanity of the *Ubuntu* philosophy (Eze, 2000; Jared Reichbaum, 2007).

These statements by participants indicate that it is difficult to pin the learning down to specific outcomes – they indicate the diverse but far-ranging learnings that developed through the course of the programme.

6.5.2 *The slowness of change*

After one of the earlier sessions, in the staff review, I asked how people had felt after the dialogue. Everyone said that they had felt exhausted. One of us referred to how slow the process was; she had in mind how long it took for participants to learn to become effective facilitators. We began to discuss this.

It then struck me that we may be underestimating the extent of learning required. It was rather like expecting someone who knew little Mathematics to become a teacher of Mathematics in a short period of time. There had been little prior opportunity for participants to learn systematically about the issues we had been discussing; the style of learning was itself different from what they had previously experienced; taking on the mindset and practices of facilitation was new to many present. Effective facilitation would require being able to think about the issue under discussion and thinking about those you are facilitating, while in the process of speaking and listening – and, as participants often pointed out, managing their own feelings about both the issue at stake and about the tensions of standing in front of a group with the responsibility to lead discussion.

Possibly, learning this complex combination of tasks is slow, or perhaps our expectation of greater speed was driven by the pressure of measuring learning by short-term learning outcomes (Caspersen, Frølich, & Muller, 2017; Erikson & Erikson, 2019; Jansen, 2006). We needed greater time.

A key element in the challenge was the need to unlearn what had become deeply ingrained, such as the expectation of receiving knowledge, as with Freire's banking education (1972/2005), or acceptance that one's own experiences of life are not relevant within education. Piaget (McLeod, 2024) would refer to this 'unlearning' as accommodation, the modification of existing schemas of thought on the basis of new experience; however, he understood this as essentially cognitive. Mezirow's transformative learning (1997) does this greater justice, though perhaps a more fitting idea of the challenge of unlearning is provided by Bourdieu (1990, p. 54), quoted above, where he refers to the habitus as 'embodied history, internalized

as second nature...’ We were asking participants in the programme to question not at the level of information but at a level of fundamental dispositions, not simply hearing of the experiences of others, but changing the way of understanding oneself and others, within the context of education.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The pilot was designed in a short space of time and promptly implemented, suffering the constraints of having to work online in a context of inadequate technology. If we take the original statement of principles I had developed, they still seem relevant, but my understanding, and that of my fellow staff members on the programme, was greatly extended by this experience.

The findings set out in these themes confirm much of what I thought, but there was much that challenged my own thinking and practices as an educator. Greater understanding of the implications of these themes led to a rather more systematic design process in the intervention phase.

The next chapter sets out the key findings from that phase and presents the themes generated from data. It will be seen that there is much continuity from the phase analysed in this chapter, but also significant other findings.

CHAPTER 7

THE INTERVENTION PHASE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter set out an analysis of the pilot, presented in terms of major themes and sub-themes. This chapter focuses on the intervention phase, the programme from April to October 2023 that taught facilitation skills to a group of 41 participants (seven of whom dropped out or formally withdrew).

Three major themes were developed from the analysis of the pilot, with sub-themes:

- 1 The violence and trauma of South African society
 - High levels of violence experienced – particularly normalised violence
 - Social identities and socialisation caught up in violence
 - The difficulty of speaking
- 2 The unfolding processes of change
 - Creating a safe space is essential for change towards peace
 - Developing ways of working with each other
 - Acknowledging experience and diversity
 - Acknowledging difference of experience
 - Acknowledging difference of perspective
 - The growing awareness of the significance of emotions
 - Emotional self-regulation
 - The value of questioning
- 3 The depth and pace of change
 - Change takes place at a deep level and in multiple forms
 - The slowness of change

Understanding gained from the development of these themes led to a somewhat more coherently designed intervention phase, as staff tried to incorporate what we had learnt into the way we implemented this phase.

The chapter provides a brief overview of how the phase was initiated and developed, and then presents the themes developed from analysis of the intervention phase. It will become clear to

what extent these themes differ from those of the pilot or whether they confirm and deepen the understanding of these themes.

One major difference between the pilot and the intervention phase was that most of the former took place during the Covid-19 lockdown, with only two contact sessions. In contrast, all except two sessions were face-to-face, which resulted in some major changes in the process.

The sources of data were broadly similar, drawing on video records, field notes, online reflection comments, and a final evaluation exercise. The one additional element was in-depth interviews conducted with five participants about nine months after the end of the phase. This was important in providing a longer-term perspective on the learnings identified by these participants.

The structure of this chapter is similar to that of the last. It presents in summary an overview of the ten sessions of the intervention phase. It then sets out the themes that were developed, drawing on the perspectives provided by the theoretical framework, and relating them to relevant literature. The presentation of the themes draws in part on the field notes that review some critical incidents, as well as the related comments by participants. It finally focuses on some implications for teacher education.

7.2 OVERVIEW OF THE INTERVENTION PHASE

As is set out in chapter 5, we had a less complex and quicker selection system and took, in the end, all who applied to join the programme within the period allocated, making the grouping somewhat less diverse in terms of race and national identity.

The aim of the 2023 programme was set out as follows in the short study guide: To develop people as leaders who have the capacity to facilitate dialogues and workshops in ways that advance peace, nonviolence, social justice and environmental sustainability.

The programme drew on some key elements of what we had learned from the pilot. I would identify four changes that we made:

- We sought to integrate theory presentations more closely with the participatory work, sometimes presenting theory before an activity, sometimes after reflection on an activity.
- We took things at a slower pace, taking care not to push people into moving into challenging areas that we and they were not prepared for.

- We encouraged the use of more readings and required a written assignment towards the conclusion of the programme.
- Although we kept the option of online sessions, we used only two, though we could have used more. We were free, without Covid restrictions, to run sessions face to face and made full use of this. We ran face-to-face sessions on one campus, either in a large flat venue or in our own smaller seminar room.

7.3 OVERVIEW OF SESSIONS

The final schedule of sessions was as follows:

1	15 April	Getting to know each other Creating a safe space Developing and posing questions
2	6 May	Wicked problems Seeing ourselves and others as resources
3	18 May	[online] History, trauma, socialisation and safety
4	3 June	Understanding violence and its implications for learning
5	22 June	[online] Extending theory on violence and trauma
6	24 June	Designing dialogues
	29 July	Designing dialogues: session for gender group
7	5 August	Emotions and facilitation
8	26 August	Gender dialogue
9	23 September	Methods of facilitation
10	28 October	Assessing learning

Table 7.1 Schedule of sessions - intervention stage

The great advantages of this design over the programme of the pilot were first that it gave ample time for reflection and development; secondly, all except two of the sessions were face-to-face and they were relatively free of technical difficulties.

What follows is the listing of themes and sub-themes generated from the data from this phase.:

	Theme	Sub-theme
1	The extent of direct violence, and the resulting trauma	Speaking of violence as a form of ubuntu
2	Generating and sustaining a sense of safety	The use of relevant theory Use of the listening dyad Sharing of personal experiences Commonality between students and staff Consistency of process
3	Addressing emotions and enabling learning	'Leave the emotions outside': negotiating emotion norms

4	The value of questioning	
5	Beyond facilitation: The strength of personal development	
6	The need to slow down: Resisting the pressure to push ahead	
		Living with discomfort

Table 7.2 Major themes and subthemes - intervention stage

The final development of these themes was undertaken after the conclusion of the phase. However, most of these points were discussed in the staff planning and review sessions, and a summary of these was presented to participants at the last session.

7.4 THEME 1 THE EXTENT OF DIRECT VIOLENCE, AND THE RESULTING TRAUMA

In this phase, evidence of the prevalence of violence emerged even more strongly than in the pilot, with much greater emphasis on how participants handled trauma. For example, even when, towards the end of the programme, we introduced a dialogue on issues of disability in a group with no obvious disabilities, we were reminded of how so many issues involved violence. Given that the theoretical framework relies on Galtung's distinctions (Galtung, 1969, 1990) between direct, structural and cultural violence, and there was ample evidence of both structural and cultural violence, it was nonetheless striking how much of what people spoke of was the experience of direct, often extreme, violence. Secondly, possibly because we drew closer to accounts of violence, there was greater emphasis on trauma, not least the trauma triggered through listening to the violence being spoken of by others.

This experience of direct violence was evident in some initial comments. For example, Nomcebo wrote in her reflections on the first session, which had not focused on violence:

Seeing that we are addressing social ills (I believe), I would really like for us to talk about gun violence. I selfishly hope to use this platform to get past my recent traumas and hopefully move on with my life.

Thandiwe said in the one session:

All of us, I, I think all of us in the world or all of us here in South Africa have been victims of violence and trauma. So, I somehow realised that it is something that we cannot run away from, and it's kind of sad because no one prepares you to be able to.

Thuthuka wrote:

...this reminds me that violence is normalised in this country... I also reflect about my own chain in terms of experience, violence. When I was young, growing up, doing stick fighting and seeing faction fighting in my community, experiencing gender-based violence, experiencing political violence... and also seeing examples of sexual harassment... this continuum of violence in our country.

As in the pilot, there was indeed ample evidence of how violence is both pervasive and normalised.

The most direct confrontation with these issues came in the fourth session. Until this date, occasional accounts of violence had been volunteered by people in the class. However, Mthokozisi Lembethe (his actual name, as he wishes not to use a pseudonym) had asked me if he could speak to the group about his experience of violence; in 3.2.1 I set out the account of what had happened. Attendance at this session was good, with all but a few participants being present. The original plan had been for me to interview him, but he interrupted that and insisted that he would tell his story in his own way.

As I had anticipated, there was evidence that some participants experienced secondary traumatic stress, described by Jenkins and Baird (2002, p. 423) in these terms:

Secondary traumatic stress (STS; also called “compassion fatigue”) and vicarious traumatization are conceptualized as reactions to the emotional demands on therapists and social network members from exposure to trauma survivors’ terrifying, horrifying, and shocking images; strong, chaotic affect; and intrusive traumatic memories...

For this reason, we had asked participants to do some basic reading on trauma and then started the session with a discussion of relevant theory. Indeed, in the comments in the online reflections, several students spoke of their strongly emotional reactions because hearing Mthokozisi’s account triggered their own experience of trauma. For example, Mathombi wrote:

Triggered. I’d say triggered because the way in which our guests describe what trauma and pain does to you was something I could relate to. As someone who’s currently grieving the death of my grandmother of a long time of seeing her sick I just couldn’t help but remember the day she died and what that did to me. When our guest said “Trauma result in you not doing things that you are passionate about” I thought of how I don’t sing as much anymore because of that experience, and I can’t find my way back to the love I had for singing.

Similarly, Nelisiwe wrote, *'Emotional and stressful. I felt the pain of wanting to [carry] on in life while you struggling to heal,'* and Zibuyile's response was, *'The session was very emotional, and it made me be emotional and it also triggered my own trauma and the situation of violence that I was a victim of.'*

Mbali had another response, but again one that frequently arises in hearing of another's trauma:

I felt so numb. I didn't allow myself to feel anything. Mostly because when I saw that the session that we were gonna have on that day was on trauma, the whole time was expecting to be triggered... So the moment I stepped in, my guard was already up.

This session focused most directly on the experience of violence; despite the difficult emotions around it, it seemed to have provoked much learning and was referred to by respondents in the final interviews. Mathombi said in her interview:

I think for me it was significant, because it, I think, just taught me a lot about the importance of ... allowing students or allowing people to reflect on their own experiences by using someone else as a tool to that.

Her perspective was that our engagement with the account of violence both took us back to our own experiences of violence but also provided a means for reviewing them. It was not so much the violence that Mthokozisi experienced as his willingness to confront and speak of it that drew participants into deeper reflection.

In the same interviews, Thandiwe expressed that the difficulty of handling emotions in this session provoked in her a deeper understanding, in response to a question as to what had been the most effective session:

...especially where we had that gentleman that was a victim of gun violence, um, I think that was a bit um, uncomfortable but a bit triggering for other people and it also taught me that, um, in, in, in, in them other groups you find people who cannot control their emotions, er, who are triggered by types of topics you are discussing and it is your responsibility to navigate that and to be able to accommodate, and not make them feel like they are acting out of place because they are showing emotions, so that I think that was like, er, er, the most helpful.

One aspect of the normalisation of violence in the South African society (Collins & Plüg, 2020) is the denial of the full recognition of the impact of violence on the victim. Part of Mthokozisi's

burden after the shooting was the persistent questioning as to his role in the violence, as if he as a victim was somehow culpable. This issue was identified also by my partner in the listening dyad (see below) or, as Nolwazi reported:

I had a lot of anger especially from brother Mthokozisi's story when he was sharing that people had questions regarding his shooting and the assumptions they had, the reason that made me feel this way is because I had a friend who was raped and she could not open the case because she was scared that people will judge her and asked her all sorts of questions.

Despite the harshness of the experience and of the emotions triggered, hearing an account of violence and thinking through the reactions to this account was a stimulating rather than undermining experience. I had the sense that our students are often preoccupied by such events; their attention is on troubling issues quite distant from our curricula.

In conclusion, though there was no request for people to speak of their experience of violence, there was ample evidence volunteered of the great extent of violence and trauma in South African society. As was argued in the review of literature on teacher education in chapter 4, there is very little response in our formal teacher education to this violence. The fact that teacher education gives this so little attention implies either that focusing on the violence is not the business of teacher education, or possibly that we do not have the means to address it. The effect is surely to further normalise violence and to ignore questions as to its impact on teachers, learners, and, indeed, on those who educate the teachers. This raises troubling ethical issues.

If, though, we allow such experiences into the room, there are further ethical questions that arise. There is a need for specific attention on how to do this in ways that best protect all present. In the case of the session with Mthokozisi, we had framed it in these ways: first, the emphasis on the ways of working (described in chapter 5), secondly, the discussion before the interview on trauma, and, thirdly, asking participants to prepare by reading material on trauma beforehand. The second major theme, on how safety was developed, addresses this point. However, there was a specific development in response to hearing of the violence, which is presented in the following sub-theme.

7.4.1 *Speaking of violence as a form of ubuntu*

There is evidence that the speaking of and listening to experiences of violence created a sense of commonality and fellowship. This was particularly, but not only, evident in the session with Mthokozisi. Despite the pain and the sense of people reliving their own hurtful experiences,

there were positive comments about how the process enabled a sense of mutual support. This is characteristic of the concept of *ubuntu*, referred to by Eze (2000, p. 190) as:

...creative intersubjective formation ...This idealism suggests to us that humanity is not embedded in my person solely as an individual; my humanity is co-substantively bestowed upon the other and me. Humanity is a quality we owe to each other. We create each other and need to sustain this otherness creation.

In the session with Mthokozisi, Nomcebo felt intensely the pain of the account, because, coincidentally, her life and his had closely intersected, but she felt strongly also the positive sense of a commonality of suffering. Nomcebo wrote a long response in the online reflections:

*Seeing Mthoko fully recovered was amazing, I drew strength from his story because, he is someone I knew from before the incident and seeing him brought back so many memories, memories I so nonchalantly ignored. I got a chance to converse with him after the session as well, we spoke about how my brother was killed at the exact same spot he was shot, how my cousin was also killed a few meters away and I do not know, he knew what to say to comfort me. I had been avoiding therapy because because to be honest, It has been a waste of money but our sessions on the other hand are very helpful. Possibly because it's not just you [Crispin] speaking but **we all share stories and feel each other's pain.** [my emphasis]*

She underlies here the significance of 'feeling each other's pain', as a process that develops empathy and a sense of common struggle. Wandile's responses included this one:

I experienced both sadness and anger upon hearing Mthokozisi's story. As I listened to him recount his experience, my imagination ran wild, piecing together various scenarios and attempting to place myself in Mthokozisi's shoes. It was a highly emotional session; however, it also led me to consider how we can reach more people and incorporate them into the advocacy of peace...

Wandile also emphasised the sense of collective engagement in his response: '*This personal story humanized the issues of trauma and violence, making them tangible and relatable to all participants. It sparked empathy, deepened understanding, and fostered a sense of collective support.*' He emphasised not simply the acknowledgement of the violence, but that the way it was spoken of itself developed a sense of safety, a point I return to in the next theme.

Priscilla, as a staff member, wrote:

The way in which Mthokozisi took control of the interview was helpful and made me more comfortable that he was a willing participant. I learnt that dealing with trauma is not a one-off session. This session was a steep learning curve in sharing, but mainly in understanding the steps people go through - Mthokozisi unpacked these with great skill - answering the why me, what did I do wrong? He clearly did not think of himself as a victim.

Thabisa wrote thus:

I felt welcomed, valued and emotional when learning to Mthokozisi's story and that's where I realized that everyone on every go through difficulties but some people go through worse situations and I need to thank God and appreciated life. The session was also funny and enjoyable.

June's comments focused in depth on how Mthokozisi had dealt with the reactions of others to the attack of him:

I am very grateful to Mthokozisi and the team for arranging for him to speak. I gained new insights into why 'we' 'shut down' after trauma and do not feel free to express 'our' selves (dull 'our' selves down) as we did prior to the event. It is as if somehow our stories have been stolen/commandeered /dominated - and not only by the violator - this is perpetrated by those we love and trust most dearly as they try and 'explain' or 'make sense' of what happened each according to their own cosmology or meaning making or sometimes ignore, shut-out or deny 'our' experience altogether - rather than just listen deeply and respectfully - in a safe ongoing way - to what 'we' have experienced and feel without judgement.

Nola wrote: *'I also felt a bit desperate about the need for this kind of engagement.'*

The session thus had a profound effect on those present. There was a sense of participants confronted by their own reactions stemming from their specific experiences of violence, but also a sense of a collective recognition of shared pain, as Nomcebo expressed it. Beyond this specific session, the experiences of being an audience to people speaking of their painful events and of being able to speak of one's own created a sense of mutuality, of being in this together, of recognising the humanity that arises from shared vulnerability. Keet, Zinn and Porteus (2009) advance the case for mutual vulnerability as a way for teacher education in post-conflict societies – their argument is based in part on African philosophies such as ubuntu.

In the final interview, Mathombi spoke of how, ‘...*in terms of safety, it felt safe to be, to want to be vulnerable around other people, for starters, you know that we are all in the same, in the same boat, and, um, you know...*’

Being ‘in the same boat’ asserts the same principle as ubuntu, but with recognition that the spirit of equality and mutuality comes from shared experiences of loss and limitation. There is a possible comparison here with Gandhi’s views on suffering; Gandhi pursued suffering as an act of struggle (Shukla, 2009). In contrast, Mathombi recognises that people have had suffering inflicted on them but can choose to be open about their suffering as an act of solidarity and maybe also as an assertion of resilience.

7.5 THEME 2 CREATING AND SUSTAINING A SENSE OF SAFETY

As with the pilot, the importance of creating a sense of safety was evident. There were different aspects to this – the ethical need to address safety while speaking of violence was addressed above. Another is the theoretical understanding (Walkerdine, 2013) that achieving a sense of safety enables movement and deeper reflection. Kruger and Zembylas (2024) write that, ‘It is in moments of pause and analytic attention—of tuning in and being-in-the-world—those imaginaries of different ways of feeling, doing, and living are generated.’ I would argue that the creation of a space in which people could feel safe and accepted enables the exercise of such capacities.

In the last chapter, the significance of collaboratively developing the ways of working was mapped out, and the evidence from this phase was consistent with that. Here I focus on five additional subthemes: the contribution of relevant theory to a sense of safety, the listening dyads, the sharing of personal experiences, the commonality between staff and participants and the consistency of process. In each case, I set out the evidence that this factor did enhance safety, as well as the significance of the process that unfolded from its presence.

7.5.1 The use of relevant theory

Several comments made the unexpected point that the relevant use of theory enabled a greater sense of safety.

At the outset of the first session, we had an icebreaker that asked people to identify themselves in terms of some life experiences, mainly quite light-hearted. We then presented the theory known as Johari’s Window (Communication Theory.org, n.d.). From my field notes:

The impact of the theory was much greater than we had expected; it certainly connected well with the ways in which the icebreaker gave participants a chance to choose to reveal some aspect of themselves and to hear what those aspects were for others. The theory presentation pushed people to consider further such issues as what information they make available about themselves to others and what they do not make available, and what they are not aware of about themselves. This extended the time well beyond what had been planned.

As we began to discuss the theory in plenary, Priscilla said she felt the need to speak about something that had happened in the family in her childhood that she had never openly acknowledged, an issue that her parents had been unwilling to speak of. She said that she did not know why it came up in this unexpected way, but it felt like addressing a limitation that she had had to live with. (Field notes)

A further example was that, as a way of handling the emotions that we thought would inevitably arise when Mthokozisi Lembethe spoke at the fourth session, we framed the session in a thoughtful and not abrupt way. We introduced theory on trauma and discussed how this could be handled when listening to accounts of violence. Some participants identified the introduction of theory at that point as a way that enabled them to feel more at ease during the session. For example, Mbali wrote that she had been reading what we had asked participants to read in preparation for the session and felt that this had prepared her, so she did not find it emotionally triggering.

A final anonymous comment was made in the evaluation: *The explanation of theories, concepts by Crispin and his other colleagues. They made facilitation simple and they were welcoming and as a participant you would feel welcomed and unashamed or afraid to share your opinions.*

This suggests that there was a way of handling theory that was accessible and that enabled participants to connect it to their own experiences and understandings. It also touches on the fears that arise even in a relatively relaxed educational environment.

7.5.2 Use of the listening dyad

In the session with Mthokozisi, we used a specific technique to enable participants to speak and be heard, immediately after he spoke. This was the listening dyad (Weissglass, 1990, p. 358), described thus:

...a more formal structure where two people (a dyad) take turns listening to each other for a fixed amount of time. In a dyad, the talker has the opportunity, indeed, the

responsibility, to talk authentically about his or her thoughts and feelings. The person might talk about problems or successes, situations that one would like to handle better, one's thoughts about an educational issue, feelings about one's job or prior experiences that may be affecting her or his present functioning. Although a group leader might suggest a topic for a dyad, the talker is always in charge of his or her time. The talker takes responsibility for deciding what to talk about, at what rate to proceed, and what conclusions to draw. The listener is there for assistance, to help the talker focus on feelings, and to reassure the talker that the expression of feelings is beneficial.

This was helpful for those present, as Priscilla reported: *'The dyad certainly also assisted in shifting focus from one individual to many other participants.'* Thandiwe's point was also about the value of the listening dyad, *'The pair activity where we got a chance to speak and listen to each other. I loved that so much because it allowed me to say everything that I was feeling about the whole session.'*

We later realised that we could make much more extensive use of this as a way of ensuring high levels of participation in the complex tasks of speaking of thoughts, feelings and experiences, and listening to those of others.

7.5.3 *Sharing of personal experiences*

Beyond that, a critical element was that of participants speaking openly of themselves and their experiences. For example, in the reflection on the first session, Nomcebo wrote:

Being a socially awkward person, I was able to feel free and comfortable with opening up about social ills that I might have been subjected to in the past. It will take more than 1 session, but I was happy with the outcome.

Thabisile, in the session with Mthokozisi, commented on how this session created a sense of safety:

The most effective aspect was when Mr Mthokozisi shared his story, that's when a safe space for everyone was created we started sharing out stories with our groups that was really helpful and therapeutic for me as I was able to offload things that were constantly bothering me that I could [not?] speak about to anyone.

This freedom to speak of intense personal experience was what Zembylas (2007b) would refer to as an 'emotion norm' recognised within the programme. Collins (2013a, p. 143) writes in

rather similar terms, about a class in psychology that encouraged an exploration of students' responses to issues of violence:

The classes quickly produced a social culture in which these questions were normal and familiar, not only enabling students to understand their reactions to the specific course materials, but to increasingly develop the skill of emotional self-insight and the confidence to express this to others.

Wandile also identified this openness of expression as contributing to a sense of safety, in his reflections on the session with Mthokozisi:

Witnessing the bravery of the storyteller and their willingness to share such a traumatic experience created a safe space for others to open up, ask questions, and engage in meaningful discussions. This aspect of personal storytelling became the catalyst for empathy, connection, and transformative learning within the session. It served as a powerful reminder that everyone has a story to tell, and by actively listening and valuing each other's narratives, we can cultivate greater understanding, compassion, and social change.

Wandile here emphasises the role of listening as well as of speaking. Kealy and Hebron (2024, p. 7) write of a similar experience of active listening, in working with physiotherapists: 'The ability to restrain one's own preconceptions and allowing the person to tell their story without interruption where listening was regarded as the cornerstone of the approach.'

Mbali raised an insightful question about what 'safety' means here:

I learned that opening and maintaining a safe space is important. On the other hand the session made me think that I need to learn more on what the safe space means, does being comfortable mean that the space is safe and the other way around? I just have a lot of questions which some I cannot fully articulate right now.

Mbali here articulates a significant distinction between safety and comfort. This accords with a comment by Kealy and Hebron (2024, p. 8) in researching the lived experiences of physiotherapists working on pain relief, that, '...the ability to ask the hard questions and broach subjects and topics which could be interpreted as uncomfortable or difficult by the person were described as essential in gaining a deeper understanding.' In their approach – the overall theme is 'holding space and sitting with emotions' – the emphasis is on creating safety and being open

to discomfort and pain. Mbali had similarly identified that safety enables openness to pain rather than a numbing of it.

An apparent outcome of the sense of freedom achieved in this way was the evident ability of students on the programme to be very effective participants in dialogues. Increasingly, the skills of knowing how to speak of oneself and how to listen to others were brought to bear, enabling a richness of debate as people entered into discussion without demonstrating resistance or defensiveness.

7.5.4 Commonality between students and staff

Apart from the emphasis on the ways of working, the process was one in which staff members spoke openly of their own experiences and difficulties. In the final interviews, Mathombi related the sense of safety to the degree of commonality between participants and staff:

...we were at the receiving end because you guys were the facilitators of the programme, but to us, or to me specifically, it looked as if we were all in the same position, so it was safe to express my thoughts and my feelings and, you know, about life and without fear.

Indeed, the only point where we made a strong distinction between staff and participants was in terms of the responsibility for the programme; members of the staff group would otherwise participate fully.

One of the more critical comments made by a participant concerned what was seen as a failure to explore sufficient depth the issue of disability:

The one topic, about disability in particular, was quite triggering, for me and many in the group, if not all... and because the main purpose of the session was to analyze the session rather than deeply explore the issue as a group, there was unresolved tension amongst the participants, with many, including myself, withholding. This wasn't really sufficiently unpacked, in my view...

However, the comment continued:

...what did enable the process to proceed in a safe space was that we had established trust throughout the overarching process of the course and that we 'were in it together' learning about facilitating through and amongst these difficult entanglements of inner and outer experiences.

This assertion of us being ‘in it together’ points to the sense of mutuality in the programme that transcended distinctions between staff and students. This echoes the well-known assertion by Freire (1970/2005, p. 68) that, *‘Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students.’*

7.5.5 Consistency of process

As the last comment points out, there was an ‘overarching process of the course,’ that held it together. A similar comment from the anonymous evaluation was this: *‘...the overall success of the session showed how careful and loving space-holding is so NB, and that Crispin and Justine, especially have created that groove from the start to the finish.’* I had been aware in the pilot that we had not been able to sustain a consistent level of safety; in the intervention phase, my sense was that the different elements that contributed to safety hung together sufficiently.

Another comment from the evaluation is of the significance for the writer: *There’s nothing not to like about our sessions. I’m even sad that they are ending cause I have now taken them as my safe space where I get to hold meaningful conversations and sort of open up.*

Thabisa spoke about the whole process in the final interview:

...as the course continued I ended up enjoying the whole process, because I learnt a lot, a lot. And also, the other participants, they were very friendly and kind. I never got myself in the situation where I felt maybe excluded or ignored; we were all treated equally.

Although we did not use the term at the time, these various elements to create safety and openness typify the concept of ‘holding a space’ (Nolan, 2021; Powietrzynska et al., 2021; Kealy & Hebron, 2024). That concept refers to creating, in a physical or virtual space, a set of relationships based on a mutual commitment to ensuring that people are safe, that they can recount experiences and emotions without judgement, and that those present will listen attentively to each other.

7.6 THEME 3 ADDRESSING EMOTIONS AND ENABLING LEARNING

As in the pilot, as the programme progressed there was an increasing openness in speaking about experience and greater ease in acknowledging emotions. This is the third theme. When Priscilla at the first session spoken about her experience and expressed her emotions about it,

it set the tone for subsequent discussion. With time, participants increasingly spoke of emotions as immediate experience, as Nobantu reported after the session with Mthokozisi, *'I felt so sad and emotional when Thokozisi was sharing what he went through, it was so touching.'*

After the same session, Zanele stated:

My feelings from the Saturday session started off as being sad when Mthokozisi shared his story I felt so sorry for him and his family but at the end of his story I felt proud of him and happy that he survived the gruesome violence. I felt sad because I also lost a cousin due to shooting and I had a trauma flashback in my mind when we also received the news of his passing.

Nolwazi commented on the anger she had felt, *'I had lot of anger especially from brother Mthokozisi's story....'* Mbali made a more critically reflective point, *'I learned that I actually do not like to talk about my emotions and I am one person to always encourage people to face and talk about emotions especially the "bad" emotions... am I a hypocrite?'*

Nandi stated something that she had admitted to herself during the session with Mthokozisi, *'That it's okay to feel, I've tried a lot to put my emotions or contain them around issues of trauma and today I felt it was okay to allow myself to feel.'*

These comments indicate not simply an openness to emotions but also a process of starting to work with emotions as a resource and developing new understandings of them. After the 7th session, Thandiwe identified these learnings, *'I liked learning about emotions and how we can use emotions as a resource in facilitation and using them to deeper engage with the facilitated group.'*

Mbali reflected on session 7, which had dealt with the concept of emotional capital explored by Zembylas (2007b):

Talking about my emotions, which is normally not an easy task for me especially emotions I deem negative, but I am learning to name the feeling as I feel it, acknowledge it as valid (sometimes not real but valid) and then express it, which then help me process and understand my emotions better... Understanding of the importance of emotional capital, a resource for facilitation. This made me realise how emotional capital has power to influence every other capital because how you feel is very much closely related to how you behave and how you think.

By 'sometimes not real but valid', I think Mbali refers to the ways in which emotions often do not seem logical but also point to something of significance. She makes a significant point about the relationship between emotional capital and other forms of capital, pointing out, as does Zembylas, the ways in which emotions may shape our behaviour in relation to social or monetary capital.

There was at times a noticeable gender gap with regard to how emotions were spoken of. Men in the group seemed less likely to identify emotions, or they framed them differently; for example, Thuthuka made this comment after the session that focused on emotions and theory, *'Understanding how to harness emotions positively can enhance our productivity and empathy in the work space... The most significant learning was recognizing how acknowledging and understanding emotions can enhance dialogue and inclusivity.'* His comment stressed the workplace utility of harnessing emotions, though he also acknowledged their role in creating harmony.

However, Wandile commented more personally on what he saw as a positive element in the session, *'Discussion on empathetic communication. Learning how to truly understand and connect with others on an emotional level resonated with me deeply.'* In a session after the programme, he said, *'I find it hard to name the emotion because I don't have the language for it. This comes from being socialised as a man; we were not meant to be speaking about emotions.'*

Emotions increasingly came to the surface; I had, for example, not expected the discussion on disability, towards the end of the programme, to become so intense, perhaps because no-one present seemed to have a visible disability. Yet Nandi spoke of her anger at a disabled sister's treatment, while Thenjiwe spoke of her disabled brother's anger, and of her own when she once broke a leg. The discussion revealed the great and often unexpected degree of diversity on a topic that I had assumed would be marginal for most people.

The openness was not only about harsh and negative emotions; there were also many times of laughter from the mutual recognition of what people had been through. One example was in the gender dialogue in session 8, when Thuthuka was facilitating a smaller group including Zibuyile, Nomcebo, Wandile, Mathombi and Nandi, and there was much laughter as people spoke of the situations in which they as small children had to negotiate what they saw as ridiculous conventions imposed by socialisation, such as how to sit as a girl or a boy, or how

to make sense of physical difference. Here, hearing the diversity of experience led to an pleasurable conviviality.

In her final interview, Thabisa commented on such discussions as a form of enjoyment:

People process things and how they, they think about different things. So, it made me realise that there is no linear way of understanding things, or... I could look at a certain thing and think that it should be like this or should be discussed like this, but someone else can come in and say, no, we can take another alternative and I might learn something from that, so, I mean, in a nutshell it was a very fun and very good experience.

This comment also connects with the issues of diversity, as in the theme from the previous phase – diverse experiences and diverse perspectives.

7.6.1 ‘Leave the emotions outside’: negotiating emotion norms

A frequently expressed issue that participants reported was that of how they handled their own emotions in the course and in the context of being facilitators. Zembylas (2007b, p. 444) uses the term emotional capital as indicating ‘the ways in which emotion practices are regulated within an educational context, based on emotion norms that may change but are also reproduced.’ Typically, such emotion norms are not made explicit and thus more readily available for review and change. In this phase, there was open discussion of the emotions participants and staff confronted, though we did have a systematic discussion linked to theory.

For example, in reviewing the session with Mthokozisi, Bhekithemba had continued to struggle with the fact that he had not been able to satisfy his curiosity by questioning Mthokozisi: ‘... there was a large sense of curiosity cause I had questions. I still have them, they still here, but I didn’t get a chance to ask them at the time, but it’s OK.’

He posed the issues in a binary way, between curiosity and understanding as intellectual work on one hand and emotions on the other:

...no offence, Crispin, but you started crying and I was taken aback by the crying. I was never prepared for such a story, but at least like, like Mbali said, like you preparing yourself to not be triggered. But when you started crying and then after the story I was myself, emotional. And then I was actively stopping myself from like you, like, OK, cool. That’s I think we need to separate, leave the emotions outside and let’s concentrate on the work and the content that was supposed to be discussed.

Bhekithemba, in articulating ‘leave the emotions outside and let’s concentrate on the work’, makes explicit what Zembylas (2007b) refers to as an emotion norm. The norm Bhekithemba asserts is one that is seldom directly spelt out but that implicitly governs both formal and nonformal education, that emotions are not relevant; we may feel them, but they are not what we are here for. In contrast, our emphasis from the principles informing the pilot had identified the need to address trauma and the transformation of perspectives (see 6.3 and 6.5), and by implication the emotions involved (6.4). Ironically, Bhekithemba himself expressed personal discomfort at the situation, itself an emotional response.

Bhekithemba continued to struggle during the course, in fact, with the idea that addressing the issues around violence and around facilitation required attending to the emotions. My perspective had been that the emotions and reactions are part of what needs to be addressed for unlearning and new learning to take place. At the final interview, though, he stated:

I think critical in the sense of, of the perceptions of like, of the perceptions of men and emotions... yeah, I guess, it gave me a different insight that I hadn’t seen before, it gave me a different insight that I hadn’t seen before, I guess, the vulnerability aspect...

Bhekithemba here acknowledges the limitations imposed on men by their socialisation, specifically the lack of recognition of vulnerability and assumed irrelevance of the emotions – but in the context of a discussion on facilitation. His discussion implies that engagement on the issue of facilitators’ emotions needs to bring into discussion how they have been socialised.

While Bhekithemba’s initial response had been rather reactive, he and other participants referred to their emotions later in relation to their role as facilitators in terms of ‘regulation’ and ‘management’. For example, Wandile wrote thus in the evaluation comments, ‘*I’d maintain this breadth in discussions [I think he meant keeping a focus on both issues of violence and the process for dealing with them], ensuring diverse themes such as emotional regulation, gender socialization, racism, and other challenges.*’

In the final interview, Bhekithemba, when asked about what he had learnt as a facilitator, said, ‘*I think my role as a facilitator, regulating my emotions.*’ Similarly, Thuthuka in his interview referred to, ‘*...how can we go about, you know, as facilitators, eh, managing that, the triggers, how to manage triggers, for ourselves and that of our participants, in a, in, in a group*’. Mathombi said of the programme, ‘*It also assisted me to be able regulate my emotions better, compared to, um, how I worked before... it is important that I reserve my own emotions for the*

sake of basically getting the work done and continuing with the business of the day, given that I am a professional.'

The term 'emotional regulation' was not discussed in class; it suggests a rather determined policing of emotions. Zembylas (2007b, p. 456) points out that some of the language around emotions can feed into a functionalist approach, for example, when managers seek to control employees. Mathombi's framing of herself as a professional suggests that she has a choice of when to attend to her own emotions and when to attend to those of others.

I would understand the identification of emotional regulation as part of an ongoing process with facilitators' skill development. My own understanding is that a skilled facilitator has developed awareness of their emotional responses, a critical sense of how they have arisen and the ability to use emotion as a resource, within the ethical limits that have been negotiated. My perspective itself reflects an 'emotion norm' (Zembylas, 2007b). One way of understanding the issue of facilitators' emotions within the programme is that the 'leave the emotions outside' stance and the focus on emotional regulation can be understood as moments within a process of development of competence as a facilitator.

I find helpful here the 'four stages of competence' model (De Phillips, Berliner & Cribbin, 1960). At the first, that of unconscious incompetence, facilitators may have no understanding that they need awareness of their own emotions and how to use these as a resource. At the next stage, conscious incompetence, facilitators become aware of the need and of their lack of skill. The third stage, unconscious competence, involves deliberate attempts to address this, while the fourth stage is the one I describe as that of a skilled facilitator. My perspective is that many participants were at the second stage, where the difficulties of facilitation were becoming more evident, or at the third stage, where such issues as managing one's emotions become dealt with more effectively, though not yet with ease.

We had not theorised this sufficiently within the programme and it needed a theory presentation that linked with the whole question of emotion norms.

7.7 THEME 4 THE VALUE OF QUESTIONING

In the analysis of the pilot, the focus on questions was identified as a theme, and there were further positive responses in the intervention phase to this. First, we encouraged participants to work with question as a way of developing their thinking about facilitation. As is typical in education, we asked participants to respond to questions; these were designed to be open-ended and to provoke reflection. These were generally seen as useful, as in this anonymous comment

in the final online evaluation: *‘I liked the reflection questions that we had to answer at the end of the session, they were a great insight to us.’*

This emphasis on searching questions is in line with the Freirean approach of problem-posing education (Freire, 1972/2005). We put greater emphasis though on getting participants to generate questions themselves. Tofade, Elsner and Haines (2013, p. 6) state: ‘Most questioning approaches focus on the teacher asking the questions. However, student-generated questions also can lead to deep learning. Requiring students to create their own questions can elicit a greater understanding of the course material.’

We asked participants to identify questions about a specific topic as a way of exploring the topic; another task was that they formulated questions that they would use as facilitators within the context of a specific dialogue. It was striking how participants described the emphasis on questioning as contributing to their understanding of facilitation, especially in the second case. For example, in the 7th session, Zinhle wrote, in response to a question on the most significant part of the session:

It has to be when we were asked to formulate questions around gender-based violence in a very short period of time. It interesting that we had so much discussion just to come up with 3 questions. It was challenging to want to narrow the topic while others want to broaden it’s because it’s a very engaging topic.

In the reflections on the gender dialogue in the 8th session, Nolwazi wrote, *‘The importance of asking the right questions and probe where necessary.’* The implication is that some questions in a discussion are more effective than others (possibly she was thinking of rhetorical questions or those inviting a yes/no response). Thuthuka also wrote about the work on questions in this session:

What I liked most about the session was the way reflective questions were employed. They encouraged us to delve deep into our thoughts and feelings regarding the issue of looting in South Africa. The use of open-ended questions proved particularly effective in promoting constructive dialogue, sharing perspectives, and guiding us on how to design goal-oriented questions as facilitators. It fostered a more meaningful and insightful evaluation of questions used.

In the final interview, he referred to the activities we had set participants such as designing a dialogue, and said, *'You know, someone might take them lightly, they really do make an impact to us, er, er, especially, er, where we had to, to develop, er, or to formulate the questions.'*

Mathombi spoke in the final interview of the ways in developing questions led into deeper reflection about herself:

... the importance of asking myself questions that are really hard. You know when, for example, you are planning a session and then you formulate the questions that you want to ask your audience. Ja? And then, when they answer those questions, you realise in that moment that actually I should have answered these questions myself, myself, before coming here.

Mathombi's comments are important as they imply that effective facilitation cannot be reduced to a generalised skill; it requires thinking and learning about the issue under discussion. I see this as a recognition of the seriousness of the task; for example, in facilitating discussions across race, it would be essential to have a strong historical understanding of how race had been handled across recent centuries.

Burbules and Berk (1999, p. 57) emphasise the significance of challenging questions in promoting critical education: 'To try to bring someone to criticality necessarily precludes identifying any fixed set of questions about particular social, moral, political, economic, and cultural issues, let alone a fixed set of answers.' Thus, while questions posed by the educator may be very helpful, encouraging students to ask questions that the educator has not predetermined may help achieve depth in critical thinking.

This second form of questioning that we used was what Tofade et al. (2013) refer to as 'questioning as thinking'; generating questions as a way of stimulating thought. At various points in the programme, we asked participants simply to generate questions that they had about a topic (such as facilitation itself); this provided much information on what participants were thinking of, including some questions that we as staff had not applied our minds to. We would provoke different perspectives on an issue. This recalled my involvement in teaching a group of political activists during apartheid. They faced immense challenges of extreme violence and intimidation, with the constant threat of imprisonment and torture. My colleague and I decided to help them deal with the complex political issues of the time by getting them to list their key questions. We then invited two political scientists to come to give their responses to some of the questions. As it happened, one was a liberal and the other much more radical, who

proceeded to get into debate with each other. We had not anticipated what the students saw as the most significant element – that questioning and disagreement were acceptable in education and in politics. Their own history of what Freire (1972, 2005) would term ‘banking education’ has taught them that there is only one right answer; that pattern was being established even within some approaches to liberation, in which a particular model, probably of dialectical materialism, was taught as the correct model. The approach we were using in this research was to use questions as a way of keeping open a sense of possible responses.

This approach is very similar to one in the Quaker tradition (Burson, M., 2002, p. 22): ‘From this point, members of the committee have only one option: they can only pose questions. They may not offer advice or opinion, make judgments, or even “follow up” on responses made to previous questions.’

7.8 THEME 5 BEYOND FACILITATION: THE STRENGTH OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The last chapter reported on the depth of change and the multiple forms it took. This theme goes somewhat further in identifying some fundamental learnings about themselves reported by some participants. The original aim of the programme was ‘To develop a cohort of facilitators who can competently and ethically lead dialogues and other participatory learning events.’ Despite that relatively focused aim, participants reported a wide range of learnings that extended beyond this specific aim related to facilitation. This theme thus explores what was included in this range.

Some of these changes were more limited in scope. Ayanda, for example, reported that, ‘*I always find speaking in front of everyone difficult as I am naturally shy but this facilitation program is starting to help me overcome my fear which is public speaking.*’ Similarly, in the final interview, Thandiwe said:

We were not taught only about facilitating but also about public speaking and being able to, um, er, to articulate yourself very well when you speak to a group of people, to allow other people to engage in whatever discussion you are leading. So, I think that it went to other things other than facilitation ...it really shapes how you see the society and how you view other people’s opinions and how you learn to deliver your own opinion for other people to consume. being able to voice out your opinion about things, without fear that someone might disagree or be offended, that I think that is a skill that I learnt.

Thabisa reported a change in the way she understood herself in a group context:

...at first, I thought I was an introvert and did not like to be around people, I really like being around people, especially people who make you feel welcome. I was also given the opportunity to speak, to express myself, to speak in a room full of people. If ever I get an opportunity to speak... The way we were engaging, to speak with confidence.

In the final evaluation, one anonymous comment on the programme was this:

Holistic Learning: The program was an incredibly enriching experience that not only enhanced my understanding of facilitation skills but also broadened my perspective on various crucial social issues. It wasn't just about learning to conduct sessions but delved deeply into understanding diverse perspectives, social challenges, and the nuances of human interaction.

In the final interview, Bhekithemba, speaking about the work of being a facilitator, stated, 'I always assumed there was a passion thing, but even more it seems like something spiritual.'

Thuthuka, in the final interview, stated:

Being in the programme was very, very impactful on, on, on my professional as well as my personal development... I will be more positive about myself and being in the programme, having this sense of belonging, of which is something that I was really striving to achieve, so that I could feel comfortable and contribute and being productive in the programme entirely.

In her interview, Mathombi spoke in depth about the nature of her learning:

*I found that after the programme I was more self-aware, more able to be able to detach myself from something that before I found myself, I was attaching myself to for no good reason and for no valid reason. [Crispin: Any other thoughts that spring to mind?] ...it was **beyond facilitation**; do you get what I mean?*

She then gave examples of different contexts, such as church, community or school settings, where she would draw on the capabilities she was referring to, which were not limited to skills in or understandings of facilitation. Mathombi then gave an example of Grace teaching a class and referring to a physical scar which she showed her students; the students then began to

reveal their own scars; she said, *‘what do you say that validates their feelings and what they shared about their scars?’*

[Crispin: Do you mean something like the depth of thinking about our human context?]

Exactly, exactly! It just equipped us to, you know, not only to be facilitators, but also, to be able to look at, um, the experiences of others, you know, in a level such that we are able, however, to have just normal, um, calm conversations with them... they leave the conversations feeling like, they made a difference in their lives.

Here Mathombi articulates an understanding of self and others, an openness to hearing fully the experience of others.

If we view this from the perspective of Bourdieu’s theory of habitus and fields of practice (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Zembylas, 2007b), what is striking is that Mathombi is describing a disposition that cuts across different fields, rather than ways of being in a specific educational context. As with the other participants reported here, this is about a more general openness to others who may be very different to oneself. In discussing Bourdieu’s concept of habitus in relation to emotion, Zembylas (2007b, p. 449) states, ‘There is room for different ways of inhabiting the world, for instance, if individuals stop considering others as threatening and fearsome and instead engage in alternative networks, relations or connections with them.’

When I reflect on the significance of the re-assessment of the self and the expressions of personal efficacy, this provides evidence for a strongly transformative process. It was as if there had been so few chances for the self to have developed as it should; the programme provided what seems to have been a rare opportunity, communicating much more than a training programme. We had facilitated growth and not simply taught the abilities of facilitation.

7.9 THEME 6 THE NEED TO SLOW DOWN: RESISTING THE PRESSURE TO PUSH AHEAD

In the previous chapter, I noted how there had been some frustration over the time taken for the process. This pointed to two elements – both what make development slow, if it was, and what made staff frustrated, possibly wishing to rush to a point of closure.

By the end of the programme, we had spent a total of perhaps 33 hours working together, from April to October. By the conclusion many participants were reporting significant changes in the understanding of and skills in facilitation, such as a greater sense of ease at being with

others – I report above the ways in which developing as a facilitator seemed also to entail developing as an effective participant in discussions.

Yet the theoretical framework, in particular Bourdieu's work (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) made me very aware of how unlikely or how difficult change could be. Fanon had likewise stressed how deeply we internalise negative views of oneself and others in a context of violent oppression. Yet the comments from participants indicated that they would have liked more time – the most repeated criticism was that we did not give sufficient time to any one topic to learn sufficiently about it. Such comments were made in the final online evaluation:

...there was not enough time to have deep discussions on the content matters.

It's a time constraint for me given the depth and complexity of the topics, more time for discussion and interaction would have been appreciated. It felt like there was so much more to learn and share, and I believe that an ample time would have allowed for a more comprehensive exploration of these crucial and multidimensional topics.

I would increase more time spent on the dialogue because the more time spent on the dialogue the more information and solutions comes up within the group.

I absolutely loved the programme. I would definitely do it as a Higher Certificate cause I believe being a facilitator needs attention and focus in learning and it can't be done just in a short period of time.

There was an inevitable tension between going more deeply into the issues at stake and learning; at times we would interrupt an intense discussion to ask participants to reflect on what they were noticing and learning from the process. This was a balance that we no doubt did not always get right.

What became clear is that moving more slowly enabled greater depth. We had in fact responded very fast to the identification of the need for facilitators of sensitive issues and indeed mentally complimented ourselves on knowing how to respond readily. But I was increasingly aware that slowing down at key points in the programme enabled us to get fuller information and explore an issue in far greater depth. In my mind, I contrasted this with the aspects of university life that my colleagues in the work truly hated – performance management, with its emphasis first on ever-increasing production and efficiency, that served always to demand time and to distract us from our work, and secondly on the assumptions that were foreign to the ethos of our work.

Success in that approach had to do with quantifying readily measured outputs; our understanding of our work was that significant learning was only crudely captured in such outputs.

It was only recently that I realised that others had written about the need for slowness (Holt, 2002; Harrison-Greaves, 2016; Taylor, 2020). Harrison-Greaves (2016) comments that, in this approach, *'The process of learning is stressed, ensuring that the learner has space and time to engage with the knowledge and skills.'* Raelin (2006, pp. 84-5) writes, *'Learning teams assemble practitioners who wish to slow down sufficiently to reflect together on their individual and team goals.'* I became aware that my impatience, when a participant took on the role of facilitator in a dialogue and seemed to me to be struggling to get the role right, was a distraction; I was failing to recognise the complexity of what I was witnessing, yet the participants and facilitator probably simply needed more time to develop more effective responses and did not need my intervention to do so.

7.9.1 Living with discomfort

An example from this phase of the need to give sufficient time and to delay closure arose in relation to a conflict in the discussion. These issues were well demonstrated in a dialogue on sexuality in the September session.

Thandi was facilitating the session, and asked, *'What comes into your minds when you hear the words 'sexuality' and 'discrimination'?' Again, the dialogue turned towards how we address our own sexuality and that of others. Thandi then asked, 'Based on what has been said, do you think you have contributed directly to discrimination?'*

At this point Bhekithemba said, *'I think I have.'* He reported that he would say to his younger nephew such things as, *'Why are you doing this? Are you gay? Just jokingly, 'are you gay'? ...I can see where I may have directly or indirectly impacted on his thinking.'*

Sinenhlanhla, a staff member, responded that this was like speaking negatively about the horror of being HIV positive, in a context where so many people living with the virus had not felt free to speak about it – by implication, this would be crudely thoughtless. Bhekithemba said that he would feel freer if he knew no-one present was gay, then suggested that this was the case in the class – the response from others being, *'How do you know?'* Sinenhlanhla argued that things he had said were not right. I sensed that many present agreed with her; at the same time, Bhekithemba had brought the issues of discrimination directly into a context where people had

the maturity to engage in a productive discussion, making it available for challenge. As Justine asked, *'What if someone like Bhekithemba had not jumped into the discussion in an open way?'*

The issues were complex. Bhekithemba acted with an explicit assumption that those present are all heterosexual, potentially silencing those whose orientation or experiences differed. He was challenged on this. However, the fact that he was reflective and open about his homophobia kept the discussion open, though Snehlanhla, in drawing attention to the ethical problems of homophobia, could potentially have limited the discussion.

There was a further development in the discussion: Bhekithemba said he would expect his own son not to be gay, but if he was, he would have to deal with *'...my dreams and aspirations I have for them, what could have been... and having to mourn'*; he would though fully accept his son. His use of 'mourn' made a good point about having to let go of something he fully expected to enjoy.

In reflecting on this later, I realised that Thandi's challenging question had led into an uncomfortable yet productive discussion. Bhekithemba's openness about his homophobia gave us insight into the processes of unlearning; it opened up the complexity of both his collusion and his reflective capacity and openness. While Snehlanhla was right to raise the ethical issues, the fact that Bhekithemba was in fact given more time to speak meant that we had a chance to understand more fully how he felt and how he was thinking through his way to what seemed a more inclusive approach. Taylor (2020, p. 625) makes this point about *'slowing down'*, *'...slowing down can generate deeper meaning, more careful questioning, and richer engagement with knowledge production...'* Such slowness, though, runs counter to so much of our experience as educators who learn to become impatient and often punitive in relation to 'failure'.

In working with a large group of tutors, including many of our participants, three months after the conclusion of the programme, two of us set a task for groups that went beyond what they had learnt to do as facilitators, as it required them to do some design work that they had not had a chance to learn. We didn't notice our mistakes until we realised that the groups were not addressing the task well. In my own impatience, I was fairly harsh in giving comments on the work presented. Fortunately, one of the staff intervened and we had to confront what had happened. We decided to discuss as a staff group in front of the participants how this had developed and what we needed to learn from this. I could see that my own habitus as educator

still had areas of rigidity and harshness. While the ‘solution’ was hardly elegant, it slowed down the process, enabling all present to understand more about how things had gone wrong.

A final point about time is that the timing of the final interviews, nine months after the programme’s conclusion, was helpful in that those interviewed had clearly given further thought to the lasting impact of the programme; for example, the emphasis on personal development had not previously been so clearly articulated.

7.10 FURTHER REFLECTIONS

Inevitably, not all the learning from engagement in this phase is captured in these broad themes. For example, towards the end I realised that we had not allowed participants enough opportunities to practise facilitation. It may have been that we were insufficiently willing to trust them with the task, arising perhaps from a desire to protect those in the student role from poor handling of sensitive issues. Whatever our lack of awareness, this limited the ability of participants to develop the necessary skills that we aimed them to achieve. Raelin (2006, pp. 86-7) comments on this tension:

In some action learning settings, for example, it has been found that the more active the facilitator, the better the project outcomes on the part of the participants. Yet, there is a paradox in this view of project outcomes. Admittedly, the facilitator’s advanced technical skills might lead to a better ‘economic’ outcome, but may at the same time deprive the project team itself of some less tangible benefits or competencies, such as the use of judgment, deployment of balance and perspective, and the handling and creation of change.

Again, it could be that our sense of urgency got in the way. One unintended result, though, was that some participants were keen to continue developing their skills by returning to any future programme.

A second point is about the repeated stages of an action research cycle. We had gone to a second iteration of action, and it is noticeable how it was possible to get clarity and depth of understanding than in the first phase of action.

A further point is about the sequence of dialogues. In the intervention phase, we started with the areas most constantly discussed, gender and race. These are such salient features related to violence in the South African context; for example, when people complain about the lack of social cohesion, they very often are referring to race (Ngam, 2024). These are also areas in

which there is the greatest defensiveness and already entrenched positions; in contrast, the session on disabilities revealed not just how significant an area it is but also how readily people could engage; they spoke very freely and without defensiveness. It may make sense to take first those areas where people have taken less rigid positions and develop the ways of working there.

7.11 CONCLUSION

The intervention phase of the research took place under more favourable conditions than did the pilot. As is evident in the themes presented in this chapter, there was nonetheless considerable consistency in what we learnt from both phases.

If we take as a given the violence of the context, what is surely the core theme must be the significance of creating a common sense of safety in which experiences and emotions can be spoken of freely and without fear. At its best, and in fact frequently, the programme achieved what some refer to as ‘holding space.’ Reporting on their work with physiotherapists, Kealy and Hebron (2024, p. 1) report, ‘Participants described a journey toward holding space and sitting with emotions. All themes were interwoven and profoundly connected in the essence of a safe “space,” where persons can voice their emotions in a non-judgmental environment.’

From the perspective of decolonisation, Kruger and Zembylas (2024) assert that:

...efforts towards decolonising peace education should necessarily entail curating atmospheres that allow for engaging in new affective relationalities that seek to “undo the emotive lessons in the habits of mind and memory that continue to sustain the legacies of empire in various sites (Zembylas 2023, p. 309).

While not explicitly conceived of as a decolonising initiative, the programme did succeed in creating ‘new affective relationalities’ that foregrounded not the concerns of conventional peace education, but the experiences and emotions of participants that had been shaped through long periods of oppression. The creation of such ‘affective atmospheres’ in a context of violence is, I believe, the essential element in constituting peace education in such contexts.

CHAPTER 8

REFLECTIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to locate myself within the study and to problematise my own development, personally, as an educator and as a researcher, in the same way in which I interrogate the development of participants on the programme. The need to enable the reader to understand my motivations, my perspectives and my biases more fully is a major reason for this chapter. It raises also the question as to what pedagogy was helpful for my learning.

The chapter divides into three sections. The first addresses two areas of central relevance to qualitative research: positionality and reflexivity. It raises questions that are helpful in exploring the relevance of these issues. The second to some extent answers these questions; it brings in an element of auto-ethnography, an account of the social forces and interactions that shaped me both personally and as an educator. The third explores critical incidents in the programme and the ways in which the action and the research developed me.

The theoretical work of Freire (1972/2005), Bourdieu (1977) and Galtung (1969, 1990) are all relevant here. These direct attention to the violence of the context, including the structural violence that positioned me in certain ways, as well as the dispositions that were shaped by my social identities. In the second and third sections, I pose for myself whether, to what extent, and in what ways, I was able to reshape my habitus so as to enable ‘different ways of inhabiting the world’ (Zembylas, 2007b, p. 449). I explore in this section also the extent to which my teaching has over the years reproduced the violence of the society or enabled peace. This requires casting on myself the critical eye that I direct in the research to the learning and development of the participants in the action research study. I will argue that minor changes resulting from the conflict between the habitus of society and my own convictions led in an evolving process to a growing, though never complete, divergence between my personal habitus and that of the social group from which I came.

8.2 POSITIONALITY AND REFLEXIVITY

According to Pillow (2003, p. 178), reflexivity is ‘...understood as involving an ongoing self-awareness during the research process which aids in making visible the practice and construction of knowledge within research in order to produce more accurate analyses of our research.’ Thus, this is intended as a means to strengthen the quality of research, through

revealing ways in which the self of the researcher is implicated in the research process. Pillow further (2003, p. 176) refers to the development in qualitative research of ‘...increased attention to researcher subjectivity in the research process – a focus on how does who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and how I feel affect data collection and analysis.’ The next section helps answer the indirect questions she poses.

Gani and Khan (2024, p. 2) assert the value of reflexivity in these terms, that its purpose, ‘...is to restore rigor and accuracy assumed to be lacking in positivist methodologies by accounting for limitations and biases – in other words, we argue reflexivity is encouraged for its truth-gathering.’ This approach sees reflexivity as a corrective, as it enables the reader to understand the extent to which data generation and analysis might be skewed by the researcher’s limitations and bias. The two concepts of reflexivity and positionality are closely linked, in the sense that one needs to embark on a process of reflexivity to address one’s positionality. The self-awareness that reflexivity requires includes, though is not limited to, thinking through the researcher’s positionality, the various ways in which my own identities – of class, gender, sexuality, race and so on – influence the research process, from the choice of topic through to processes of analysis and generation of findings. According to Wilson, Janes and Williams (2022, p. 43), “Positionality is normally identified by locating the researcher’s position in relationship to three areas: the topic under investigation; the research participants; and the research design, context and process (Holmes, 2020).”

This is often raised as an issue when a researcher comes from a different background to those researched, especially when the power relationship that arises from the privileged position of being a researcher may intersect with issues of societal power (Pillow, 2003; Gani & Khan, 2024). For example, in this study, I was both the lead educator in the project and the researcher leading the action research. I was also a white middle-class older man in a context where people privilege those who are white, older, a man and middle-class and where the great majority of participants were much younger, black and working-class, and where many were women. This obviously raises questions as to whether such a perspective may skew my understanding of what is happening, perhaps through falling back onto conventionally white attitudes that ‘explain’ the words and actions of black people. It may also rely on attitudes of rescuing or helping the black ‘other’, thereby legitimising myself (Gani & Khan, 2024). These factors are clearly important to consider.

However, the issue of positionality is also inescapably there when there is **not** a difference between the researcher and researched; for example, in the intervention stage almost everyone was South African, and we may have failed to take into account the possibility of there being shared areas of unawareness – for example, our familiarity with violence as the constant backdrop to our society might numb us and stop us questioning sufficiently how this happens. If I was working with white South Africans, I would need to keep in my awareness the ways in which complacency could impair our ability to question deeply what is happening and to challenge what I perceive as a norm that, even when we acknowledge the impact of racism on us, we fail to explore exactly how that worked on and through us.

Gani and Khan (2024) raise major criticisms over ways in which the use of these concepts by white researchers (in particular) may entrench rather than to undermine colonial relationships, despite the intentions of critical researchers. Their criticism is that positionality is often used as a way of stating one's privilege as a kind of confession, in ways that suggest that nothing further needs to be done. 'In other words, reflexive positionality, when declared (even if well-intentioned), can be an extractive methodology with colonial epistemic origins.' (Gani & Khan, 2024, p. 2). They quote Pillow (2010, p. 279) as acknowledging that certain "entrenched, hegemonic social categories, such as gender and race, may remain untransformed by reflexivity." Indeed, Pillow elsewhere (2003, p. 185) states, 'Reflexivity then always occurs out of an unequal power relationship and in fact the act of reflexivity may perpetuate a colonial relationship while at the same time attempting to mask this power over the subject.'

According to Gani and Khan (2024), positionality statements often echo the colonial division between the powerful researcher and the subordinate researched, recreating the image of the racialised 'other'. However, the authors (Gani & Khan, 2024) offer a way ahead for researchers to address the issues of positionality and reflexivity through auto-ethnography (Ellis, 2004). Their argument is that this does not implicate power relations between researcher and researched. 'Autoethnography is a methodology that draws primarily from the self and their experience as the main site of observation and learning; this largely precludes it from charges of extractivism.' (Gani & Khan, 2024, p. 8). In addition, they argue that this form of storytelling is a universal methodology that does not privilege one tradition over others.

In this section I have acknowledged the role of my social identities – being white, middle-class and male are identities that are granted privilege. However, in line with the argument I am

making here, and in the interests of greater complexity, I work in the next section with autoethnography to set out a reflexive account of my own development.

8.3 AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH TO POSITIONALITY AND REFLEXIVITY

The purpose of this section is to outline how my life has been shaped over the years through both violence and peace, and how my own role as an educator has either colluded with violence or worked for peace.

Autoethnography is a way of addressing the focus of a research process by using a lens on one's own life (Ellis, 2004). It requires that the researcher draws on their own memories, supplanted at times by checking with others, possibly drawing on diaries and other documentation, such as photographs. In this case, I take the perspective of the theoretical framework in selecting events and developments in my life that speak to the research questions, as well as to my role as a researcher. Autoethnography has the advantage that it '...is one of the approaches that acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist' (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011, p. 274).

This raises certain methodological issues. Ethical issues may seem much simpler in that the study typically does not require collecting data from others apart from the researcher, but others are present in the recollections and are potentially harmed by them. Ellis et al. (2011, p. 281) argue that these "relational ethics" are heightened for autoethnographers (Ellis, 2007). In using personal experience, autoethnographers not only implicate themselves with their work, but also close, intimate others (Adams, 2006; Etherington, 2007; Trahar, 2009).' In this chapter, I have taken the view that I can write rather freely about people who are no longer alive, though taking care to check my own perceptions and bias. I think it important to provide enough information to enable the reader to form their own judgements and interpretations. Many of those of whom I write have deceased, but I have a responsibility to be fair to them. Where others are identified and are still alive, I will check with them about how they are described; these are mainly close family members.

A further methodological issue is that of credibility. Ellis et al. (2011, p. 282) state that, 'For an autoethnographer, questions of reliability refer to the narrator's credibility. Could the narrator have had the experiences described, given available "factual evidence"?' Here I have the advantage of having diaries that record most of the specific events described here and have

checked years and dates where necessary with the diaries or with other records, such as documentary evidence online.

What follows is the exploration of how I was shaped as a person and also as a teacher; it attempts to capture the role of social identities and of personal happenstance and major social events on this development. It attempts to provide some understanding of how I came to develop what Bourdieu (1970) would see as my habitus, shaped through social forces but also through my agency in response to the events of the years – from when I was at school to the present, when I am in a continuing role of teacher and theorist.

8.3.1 A partial account of my life

My initial upbringing was that of a typical English-speaking white South African, perhaps slightly different because my parents had emigrated not long before my birth and that of my twin brother, Jonathan. My great-grandparents on both sides were of humble origins. On my mother's side, her one Welsh grandfather, a fisherman, died at sea, while the other had been a sailmaker on the railways. Her father had though succeeded in entering the Royal Navy and became an officer despite his Welsh origins. My mother was born just before the outbreak of the First World War. When she was two, her four-year-old brother died of meningitis. Her parents' grief, often mournfully expressed, was hard for her to bear and I think shaped her complex attitudes to gender; she took on a forceful role in the family, not least because her father was often absent, and her mother was a gentle person.

My father's one English grandfather had been a London cab driver, the other a domestic worker, and his parents had both been in domestic service, though his father had then become a distributor of Bibles and a pastor of a non-denominational mission. In my grandparents' generation, both our families had made a decisive move into the middle class. This history came with a strong identification as being British, an identification that was still present when we were growing up on another continent. I recall reading Arthur Mee's *Children's Encyclopaedia* (Mee, 1956) and noting with pride the extent of the world coloured red for the Empire.

A major formative experience of our family life was the Second World War, though my twin and I were born after its end. My parents married just after the outbreak of war, in Plymouth. Their first child, to my mother's chagrin, a girl, was born in July 1940; perhaps because of the history of her lost brother, she was desperate to have a boy. According to my aunts, my mother was very harsh towards her. In March 1941, my parents' home and that of my mother's parents

were destroyed in the same bomb blast. My mother had been deeply traumatized by the bombing even before then; for many years she would retell the events of that night; only much later did I understand such experiences as one source of her anger. Despite the apparent complacency of our lives as a family, there was a recurrent sense of potential doom. My father had been working in the dockyards of Devonport; in September 1942 he was sent to Simonstown and then to Durban to build the first radar installations. My mother sent most of the family's remaining possessions to South Africa by sea, but the ship was sunk by enemy action. At the end of 1943 she sailed with my sister on a ship with huge numbers of Italian prisoners of war, through the Mediterranean and along the east coast of Africa, to join my father in Durban.

At the conclusion of the war, my parents decided to stay in South Africa as prospects for young white professionals were promising. The family moved to the leafy and fashionable area of Kloof and later to Botha's Hill, in the hills inland, and my father's practice as a quantity surveyor prospered. In 1954 my parents went with the whole family to visit relatives in England for six months; Jonathan and I were put in a boarding school for perhaps three months. England and its smells and associations with countless relatives remained for a long time as a connection I wanted to regain.

My twin and I grew up with a disability, a shortened left leg and slight club foot, and a sense of being a disappointment to the family, unlike my older brother David, the blue-eyed boy. Jonathan and I spent much time indoors rather than playing with friends and learnt to read early, unlike David, who was popular with his friends. At times the twins would go into the garden, though, and would tend to damage the building work – once dislodging a line of newly laid tiles from the top of a garden wall. We were called 'the breaker boys'. There were always servants; a woman working in the house and at least one man in the garden. Maybe we as children raised some questions about their lives, but, if so, these were not discussed, with our parents or with them. We twins had a nanny, a young teenager from an Indian family; once, after she had left, we went to a place where a long line of Indian people, one of whom we were told was Nanny, were being baptised in a stream, which scared me. An aging Zulu man, somehow named Olden, cared for us gently. We never learnt the correct names of the workers. My mother would frequently get angry with the woman working in the kitchen. My father's leisure time was mainly spent building extensions to the house.

So much of our life revolved around the Methodist Church. The building was fashioned from bricks and hewn rock; it had stained glass windows, pews and an electric organ – my mother was the organist. Its congregation was entirely white. Next door was the home of a wealthy benefactor of the church, from one of the Natal ‘sugar families’, set in a forested garden. I recall sitting once in a room with antiques and lavish furnishing, in complete stillness; we could be so far from any sense of the harshness of society. The men of the church at some point decided to build a wood and iron church for African people a few kilometres away, with a concrete floor and wooden benches. To me it felt crude and unwelcoming.

At school we would give a penny or so every week for the cripples. My mother encouraged us to feel sympathy for them and frequently reminded us that other people had worse disabilities. One day in the playground I was, for once, engaged in a soccer game when someone tripped me. A boy from our church reprimanded him and said, ‘He’s a cripple.’ I was deeply shamed.

So far in my life, little disturbed the conventionalities of race, class and gender. We were not rich, but we were highly respectable; we felt a bit superior to the white people, closer to the city, we would visit when my father, a lay preacher, led the service there, and whose churches were not as fancy as ours. We took our sense of superiority over other races for granted, though our family were hostile towards the National Party government, whom we judged both for being Afrikaners and for their cruelty to black people. I remember the disappointment at the 1958 election result, and my brother David questioning why ‘we’ had lost.

We would go shopping with our mother in central Durban, then the zenith of fashion. At that time, African people would step aside to accommodate our progress along the pavement. We would be taken at some point to tea at Greenacres or Stuttafords, the department stores. The one had a series of Indian men with turbans as waiters who would bring holders of cakes to choose from. Women, all white, wore hats and gloves, even in the heat. Occasionally a fashion model would sweep through the tables, as if this was a catwalk. These experiences all fostered in us a sense of ‘natural’ superiority, an expectation that we should be treated better, an expectation firmly endorsed by the newspaper my twin brother and I pored over, which presented a view of society in which the Zulu people or those of Indian descent around us were marginal to the mainstream of white society. In some ways, we claimed even a higher status than many other white people, as we were not, in our minds, as racist as them and that we were helpful to others. This contradiction was exposed in an incident at Greenacres that completely embarrassed me; the shop assistant turned to serve my mother, who, being fair-minded, pointed

out that she was not next in line but ‘Mary here was next’, pointing to an Indian woman. Instead of the dutiful gratitude I expected, the woman in fury said, ‘My name is **not** Mary!’ This term ‘Mary’ was simply a racist way in which whites referred to Indian women.

My brothers and I went on to an expensive private Methodist school. My father had been involved in the construction of the chapel and of the hall that was built while we were there. This was an experience of hierarchy; I was thoroughly unhappy for the first couple of years, as I was always unsure of what I was doing and would be beaten by a prefect for things like leaving something at home. I once walked past the headmaster, a kindly man, in the road, but I was so overcome with terror that I could not speak. I was an unexceptional student, doing only moderately well academically. My approach to study was not nearly as competitive as that of some of the boys.

I would ride my bicycle there and leave it in a shed near the area where workers on the large and lavish estate were based. One day I saw all the workers gathered around, with the white foreman standing there. A worker was on the ground, and the foreman was kicking him. I was deeply shocked; I had believed in the language of Christianity and goodness, and this did not fit. I did not speak to my parents or indeed anyone about this for many years. I felt that both family and education were, for us, territories dominated by the demands of respectable white society; critical questions and troubling emotions were not to be raised. When an issue arose (and an issue that I would now consider minor) that my parents felt brought shame on the family, there was no information or discussion at all, leading us to feel very anxious, but also completely unclear as to what the issue was.

In chapter 5, I outlined the systems of imperial and then modernist forms of population control developed in Durban, through the work of men like J. S. Marwick. As it happened, J. S. Marwick’s daughter, Vivian, was a friend of my parents; her husband was our mathematics teacher, and her son was my brother David’s best friend. Many years later, David gave the introduction speech to explain the significance of the Durban System at the opening of the Kwa Muhle museum, the building that Marwick set up to exercise the new system of labour control adopted nationwide by the National Party after its victory in 1948. It was remarkable, in fact, how close we were to the forces of systematic oppression in the country, the closeness concealed by the patterns of middle-class respectability.

We were influenced by our brother’s growing radicalism, after he had spent nine months in the USA, and encountered Marx in a rural Minnesotan school, and after months as a conscript in

the South African Defence Force, where racism was always in his face. I recall arguments with other boys, always about race. By the time I ended school, I had only a vague idea of what to study and accepted the idea that I could get a teacher's bursary to fund my studies. Through the most unclear of motives, I had embarked on a teaching career.

In 1965, my brothers and I entered first year and became caught up in the heady conflicts of student life. I enjoyed English, less so Latin and Greek, which I took also. I was a fairly dutiful student, but I deferred too much. The lecturer told me that my first assignment had been plagiarised; I had not in fact read anything and just wrote it from my own speculation but was too intimidated to say that. This was a time of growing student activism, not least in Durban, as the University of Natal was the only white university with a black section, primarily the Medical School, which took in no whites. Steve Biko, who became the leading theorist of black Consciousness, and Ben Ngubane, an activist who became a leading politician, were on the Student Representative Council there while I was on the SRC at the Howard College campus. We came into conflict with the Vice-Chancellor, who then brought disciplinary cases against four of us, including myself and David. These cases failed; he subsequently left academia and became Minister of Finance in the apartheid government. In July 1967 I attended the funeral of Chief Albert Luthuli at Groutville, witnessing a marching brigade of men, my first sight of organised African resistance, emboldened by the presence of foreign television cameras. In April 1968 I organised a weekend seminar at the residence for medical students on the Bluff, and Steve Biko gave up his bed for me to sleep in it – though the weekend also saw the first stirrings of black consciousness when all black students moved out for a time. Our protests against apartheid and segregation were intense; the campus became increasingly a centre for anti-apartheid activity with the arrival of Rick Turner, a philosopher and political scientist who attracted a large following.

By then, though, I had left university and did my first teaching for six months in a primary school in Pinetown, to a largely uncomprehending class of 11- and 12-year-olds. My employer was the Natal Education Department, which was responsible for segregated white schools only. I had in fact very little clue as how to teach. I had my unfortunate pupils copy out long descriptions of English novelists, for example. I had to teach all subject, including Afrikaans, but my command of the language was appalling, so my lessons relied heavily on the assistance provided by a pupil from an Afrikaans family, on whom I relied for everything I was unsure of. At least in this way, I began to grasp the principle that a teacher should begin to think about the existing skills and understandings of those they teach.

I went on to Cambridge to take my teaching diploma in 1969-1970; if anything, this reinforced my complacency, and I had some comments about my assuming an air of superiority. On my return, though, I found a ferment of political activity. My older brother David had started the Student Wages Commission with other activists and was founding trade unions for black workers, attracting increasing attention from the security police.

I had, though, no chance to stay in Durban, and in mid-1970 moved instead to teach at Mooi River at Weston Agricultural High School, a school for boys, many of whom were sons of farmers. This was far removed from my recent experiences of British academia; I was a hostel master and taught English. Part of my duties involved caning rather frequently, fortunately not very forcefully. It now feels to me to have been completely abusive, both in the fact that I was inflicting pain on someone with less power and in the symbolism of its acceptance as the way things were done. The teaching I found acceptable. The best I did was perhaps to encourage very open discussion in class, and I read the whole of Huckleberry Finn in a fake Southern accent to my class; they listened silently and clearly enjoyed it.

Though the principal was friendly enough, the school was a violent place; perhaps worst was the intense and insistent racism of a couple of the teachers, who delighted in emphasising their views to those who did not share them. Youngsters coming in were badly treated by senior boys and the school had a history of boys running away. One opportunity for the bullying was in part that boys were out on the lands much of the time. A couple of years after I left, a boy was branded with a cattle branding iron, and later I discovered that a boy had died before I came. This was allegedly an accidental drowning, but effectively he was being tortured after being caught in some sexual activity with another boy; his parents never knew the truth.

I was becoming depressed within this environment. The social events were of desperate boredom, such as the braai (barbecue) with men by the fire and women separately. The environment was stifling for my growth and learning. I began reading about radical school reform and thinking of alternative ways of teaching. I secured a transfer to Queensburgh Boys High School from the start of 1972, another white school of course, in the Durban area. Jonathan and I bought a wood and iron house, David and a couple with their two children shared with us. A close friend, Veronica, was living with her husband in the outbuilding of Rick Turner's house, a few kilometres away and got a teaching post at the same school as me. I often visited the house, where there were reading groups and debates, including people like David and Steve Biko, which I did not join in. I no longer felt part of the academic and

intellectual circle as a teacher; in some ways I think I found it hard to create a space for myself, rather deferring to others. I would, though, talk with Rick while he fed the turtles he kept for his daughters when they visited, and I helped him plant a macadamia tree I had bought for him.

I felt plunged into direct conflict with white society. The ways in which Veronica and I were teaching were influenced by our readings and discussion of more radical approaches that felt truer to our personal commitments. When I think back, I realise that I knew how to be different from the hierarchical norm – I allowed the youngsters to call me by my first name – but struggled to integrate that into a competent way of teaching. Our relaxed approach to discipline and openness with students meant that we soon experienced constant surveillance by the principal and deputy principal. I encouraged students to articulate their concerns and read them the education ordinance that governed the school. They were wanting to form an SRC. This led to disciplinary action against me and Veronica. I recall sitting at home, feeling the sense of anxiety and fear about my future; change could be deeply disturbing for the person who initiated it. Apart from my anxiety about my future, I think another element was that I struggled to act independently. I appealed to the teachers' union, and the two senior officials, both school principals, met with me, accused me of 'white-anting authority' and insisted that students had no right to know the regulations that govern their discipline. By the end of the half-year break, I was informed that I must move to Greytown High School, again in the interior, and Veronica had been fired. It seems that two things protected me – the preference given to men as teachers and the fact that I had a bursary.

The time at Greytown was bound to be eventful. I was again a hostel master, but I had now resolved not to cane. On my first evening on duty, the two prefects brought to me a line of about 14 boys to be caned. This time I was more prepared. In my hands I had The Natal Education Ordinance 1942. I explained to the incredulous prefects that I was not allowed to cane in terms of the law. They were furious and phoned the principal but there was no way he was going to tell me to break the law. About 45 years later, I went to the 60th birthday party of a colleague from the university I was at; he spoke about those present from his more distant past and recounted this incident. He had been number two in the queue and had asked me to just hit them so they could go to sleep but I had refused. In contrast to the positive comments I got at the party, at the time I had felt completely isolated and fearful. It was the first planned action I had taken directly against violence, and I had no sense of the triumph I could feel so many years later. Perhaps because of my disability and possibly also my sexuality, I found it difficult to feel connected to others in my actions. The rest of the time at the school was

uneventful, but I yearned to go back to Durban and to be among friends, so managed to get a transfer to a primary school.

In January 1973, strikes started at the Frame Group of factories in New Germany and spread rapidly to other industries. David was up early each morning to drive to the factories; there would be security police in a car parked outside in the street watching overnight and ready to tail him during the day. While the strikes were on, I had to attend a history workshop for primary school teachers. The subject specialist asked us to teach youngsters the significance of the names given to streets and towns; he showed a slide of a sign showing Philip Frame Park, the industrial area, and complained that he had to wait as strikers were blocking his view. It was a remarkable assertion of what did and did not constitute history. The strikes were in fact largely successful in raising wages and in forcing the government to bring in more equitable labour legislation, but the reaction from government was harsh. When, months later, I went one day to James Bolton Hall of the Garment Workers, the union headed by Harriet Bolton, who had supported the activists' work completely, security police arrived and served banning notices on David and Halton Cheadle. Rick Turner and others were also banned. All were sentenced to house arrest from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., were prohibited from attending any meeting of any kind, were forbidden to enter a school, factory or university, could not be quoted and were prohibited from doing a wide range of occupations. David was staying with the Bolton family, and we had to take constant precautions to avoid being seen having a meal with him. A small group of us went to visit Halton and his wife at the Bluff. We had tea outside a window while Halton was inside, but at one point he came out and we were confronted by security police. Halton was charged with breaking the banning order and sentenced to six months prison term, suspended for some years. In the next few months, a range of other activists were also banned, including black consciousness leaders such as Biko and groups allied to the Natal Indian Congress, including later Ela Gandhi.

After six months at the primary school near Rick's house, the conflict with the authorities was too much for me and I resigned. I was then asked to produce educational booklets for a Catholic youth organisation on small-scale agriculture, on crafts and on health issues. This I undertook from home. At this stage my brother succeeded in having his house arrest moved to our parents' home, where we had to take care to draw curtains to conceal his presence over tea or a meal, which could constitute a meeting. My mother decided to seek a relaxation of his banning order and took my father to meet Colonel Steenkamp of the Security Police at their Durban headquarters. He resisted any relaxation. My mother then invited him to join them in prayer;

she, and then my father, knelt. Compromised by this, he then knelt on the floor. My mother turned the prayer into a poorly concealed attack, to his suppressed fury, asking God to forgive him.

Around this time, I was drawn into the work of the Christian Education and Leadership Training (CELT) organisation which ran weekend workshops at Botha's Hill, near our home. This work was directly influenced by Kurt Lewin's psychology and took a strongly experiential approach. Whatever its limitations, it was far advanced of what remained the educational mainstream. I found its emphasis on emotions and reflection very stimulating, and it provided a foundation for a much more participatory approach in my work. I also became drawn into a peer counselling network that focused on overcoming one's own rigidities and patterned behaviour. It encouraged the practice of listening attentively and taught theory that explained how we – for example, educators – and those we work with need to create a relationship of trust for such work to enable movement. This discipline was helpful. I began to internalise in my way of being a teacher a way of thinking on my feet, of directing my attention to what students said or otherwise communicated, what Argyris and Schön (1974) would refer to as 'reflection in action.' I felt part of a community whose ways of working were a well-articulated alternative to the conventional teaching I had experienced my whole life. My own habitus as an educator had shifted to a more reflective approach, one more attentive to how students thought and felt.

David had fled the country in 1975 and gone into exile. In 1976 I moved with a friend and her family to a rural village of Impendle, which at the time was part of the KwaZulu 'homeland' in the apartheid structure. The village consisted of a few white families, mainly traders who had originally come to serve a farming area, and a couple of Indian families. My teaching career was resumed, this time teaching my friend Annette's three children at primary school level. In the village we would see two small white children speaking in IsiZulu with their carer; they were the children of a brutally racist police officer. I would wonder what would happen when they lost their nanny, and how they would respond to losing the love they felt from a black person. This was a pattern of interaction very common for white South Africans, though so little remarked on to this day. I think a characteristic of white South Africans, then and now, has been not to explore what the experience of being white has brought us in terms of both rewards and costs. In later years I began to articulate some of these thoughts; how being constantly pulled away from others developed a sense of isolation and even shame at having been forced to accept this isolation.

In June 1976, the month in which student resistance burst into revolt, I was asked to undertake training work with members of the youth organisation in the Orange Free State province. What I was meant to teach was not that clear beyond being Christian. Fortunately, my response was to ask the people, mainly young adults and all black, to take scenes from the Bible that they found meaningful and to act them out. This they did with remarkable skill and humour. Soon after I had to attend a meeting of the organisation in a township in Bloemfontein. The one evening, two priests invited me and a young woman in the group to make some purchases at a local shop. As we left, I stopped and pointed out that we were three white men with one black woman and that this could be misunderstood. No, I was wrong, the one priest said, and I deferred to him. Our presence did create a stir in the shop; on the way back, two men ran up to us, asking why we had come to the township to get black women. A priest said, 'It is nothing to do with you,' so in frustration I stepped forward and tried to explain. One man shouted at me, 'You are my oppressor' and hit me in the head with a bottle; fortunately, the lens of my spectacles had been hardened and did not break, though I had a nasty black eye. The young woman was anxious that I would respond to these events with racial hostility; in reality I was really angry with the two priests, and I guess with myself for not trusting my own thinking.

My work with the youth organisation finally ended. I was unemployed for a time and moved to stay with my parents. At this stage I began to do some work with Diakonia, an ecumenical organisation led by the young Paddy Kearney, a caring and deeply committed person (who years later chaired the Board of ICON); it became a bastion of anti-apartheid struggle. One day in September 1977 I was in his office and the phone rang. He spoke, ended the call, and said to me, 'Steve Biko is dead.' I left in shock and found myself in a nearby shopping arcade, weeping copiously for a long time. His death affected me more than I might have expected. That year, my brother Jonathan and I went to a deserted beach in Durban to fly a kite, with a friend, an Indian builder. A beach inspector arrived and told us that our friend could not be there because it was a whites-only beach. I told him that I did not blame him for the bylaw, but that it was totally wrong. He said, 'There is nothing you can do about it,' I said, 'Yes, there is.'

In early 1978, Rick Turner was shot dead, presumably by agents of the security police. It was a time of grief and deep alienation; I was caught up in trying to care for his two daughters in the chaos and in writing on the funeral. Arising from discussions with my twin brother, I decided to enter conventional white politics and joined the (not very) liberal opposition party, in part to address the statement I gave the beach officer. Later that year, I stood in a ward for the Durban City Council and was elected in the Greyville area, representing only white voters,

given the system. We were all independents, but a few of us formed a more progressive group. I ran again in 1982 and left at the next elections in 1988. Although I was politically quite far to the left of most voters, I related well with them personally. In some ways, I think this also appealed to me because it provided legitimacy for my political work. I had to earn a living and did my first post-school teaching, at Natal Technikon, a class in Communication to a group of bored white students. In January 1979, I became the first person to teach at Mangosuthu Technikon, taking the initial class of 13 black students early one morning. This work I enjoyed; for the first time I began to hear of the difficulties and aspirations of their lives as black students. I began developing a sense of being committed to helping them realise their potential. I taught there, part-time, for a couple of years, but was denied a full-time job when I applied – I later heard it was because I was, it seems, a ‘communist’!

In mid-1984, through my friendship with John Aitchison, a clergyman and adult educator who had himself been banned, I secured a part-time post in adult education at the University of Natal, with the responsibility of running workshops for community organisations. I was able to apply the approaches used in CELT and began to read about adult education theory. With time, this became a more academic role, and then full-time. From 1985, there was turmoil in the province, with violent police repression and co-ordinated attacks by Inkatha, the organisation led by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, on those groupings linked to the United Democratic Front. In 1987 and 1988 John asked me, Paul Graham, an educator from the same CELT tradition, and Fana Zungu, to run a programme of civic education to develop skills and understanding that would strengthen the roles of young activists in the areas of greatest violence. This meant almost daily travel to Pietermaritzburg in the first year, though the next was in Durban. We operated together from a small office, constantly designing practical exercises such as group discussions, role plays and even extended simulations, which served to develop greater flexibility in the activists’ handling of situations. Ironically, those playing the role of police in one simulation decided on the mass detention of activists, which was exactly what happened two months later to the participants in Pietermaritzburg; they later reported that they were completely unsurprised. We had a sense of enjoyment in the flexibility of adult education and its use of whatever method worked for that situation. In retrospect, I identify a major limitation in our inability to deal more directly with the violence our participants experienced in their everyday lives. For example, one lost his whole immediate family in an attack. In Johannesburg, my sister Gille was put in detention; my mother phoned the station commander and demanded that she be detained in her place. My mother was

developing an increasingly independent approach of her own, linking with community struggles against removals, visiting townships on her own. meeting with activists and publicising the atrocities they experienced.

Through one of the participants in Durban, I got to know a remarkable youth leader, Thulani Ncwane, from the Inanda area of Durban and became drawn into directly supporting the work of the Inanda Youth Organisation. Thulani had had very limited formal education and a life that had been extremely harsh, not least because of his confrontation with white authority, but had developed a reflective and thoughtful way of analysing people, including those determined to kill him. I could provide transport and sometimes shelter; my role was supportive rather than taking on leadership. It was a precursor, I think, to the role I later took as mentor. This meant exposure to constant accounts of violence, with deaths weekly at the hands of police or Inkatha vigilantes, and constant attendance at tense funerals. For a time, I became ill and unable to do much; I think a reaction to the sense of extreme stress. Later, I interviewed Thulani on his life history and this account was widely published. I began to develop a sense of my ability as a writer – and later as a researcher – in capturing meaning from the experiences I had that were distant from those of most white academics.

In 1990, freedom of political activity was gained and my brother returned to South Africa. Conditions were unclear and the future very unsure. I became part of a surf lifesaving club, Durban African, as its one white member, and introduced wave-riding to its members, becoming drawn into the lives of its members from Lamontville, a suburb to the south. Increasingly I was exposed to the lives of black youngsters, including their vulnerabilities to violence against them and that sometimes committed by them. I later conducted a study of masculinities amongst 11 black lifeguards, identifying the capacity for relationships based on self-affirmation and care, then 15 years later a second study that revealed, instead, how their lives had been marked less by those positive forces and more by their closeness to violence. I was less than ever seeing society as divided between good and bad people; instead of seeing it rather as driven by attitudes and practices that were either destructive or life-sustaining. I began to face the fact that, in this context of imbalances of power, my own practices could range from empathy and commitment to being coercive and even abusive. The society we had come from was characterised by destructive ways of living, and the forces for liberation aimed to sustain life, but were highly fallible – as Fanon had so accurately predicted in his understanding of how internalisation would operate with the new elites (Fanon, 1963).

I was increasingly teaching schoolteachers at the BEd Honours and Master's levels, with the main focus being adult education. Part of my approach was to require students to write of their life experiences and how these experiences enabled learning. In 2001, I became Head of the School of Education, at the time when the University took over the Edgewood College of Education with over 50 staff members. This was difficult to manage as there was no clear plan to follow and the existing staff, established academics at the Howard College campus, were not pleased with the merger. In my second year, I drifted into the role of mentor of a young student who showed commitment and enthusiasm. His life had gone, and continued to go, through many vicissitudes, but I maintained a strong belief in his potential and found ways of communicating that to him. I think I gathered from this the significance of creating even one small island of safety; he later emphasised the role this support played in his growing success as a student, researcher and then academic. I initiated a relationship with the Social Justice Education Program at the University of Massachusetts (Adams et al., 2007) which led to new courses, including one for all Education students. The one course I had developed at Honours level aimed to develop educators as facilitators of learning within a social justice education framework. It was a forerunner of the work undertaken in this study, but I think I was still much in the 'expert teacher' role that I have subsequently come to mistrust. With others, I began more systematically researching the practice we had engaged in, and we published articles about this work (Hemson, 2008).

In 2003, I decided to provide care in our home to my mother, who had developed dementia. Family members said that I would not manage to do this, but I did and did it well. From 2004 I also brought in my aunt Betty from Cape Town, as she had had a serious fall and needed assistance. Their interactions were weird and wonderful; I would write up in my diary some of the things they would say. The irony was how long they lived and how precarious the lives of their carers were. Two of them died, presumably of AIDS, and another was extremely ill at times. My mother died in 2010 at the age of 96, four years after Betty's death.

I retired from Natal at the end of 2008 but had been offered the post of Director of the new International Centre of Nonviolence at Durban University of Technology (DUT). It took me some time to find my feet. Initially, it was an NGO based on the campus with a tenuous link to university teaching as I helped develop a programme in general education that was to be taken by all students at the university. One worthwhile community engagement initiative was to develop and run a weekend course for student leaders from three schools, two in Lamontville and one close to the city centre, where my one godson was a student. They responded

immediately to the sense of safety we set up in the group by telling their stories and learning from each other. They identified themselves as marked by this process; some told me that they were 'members of ICON.' One of them then confronted the school principal over his sexual harassment of girls in the school, initiating a process that led to the principal having to resign. In occasional work with youngsters in schools, on projects being run from DUT, I would be asked to spend time with a young person in distress. Once I spent perhaps 40 minutes with a teenage girl who wept and wept. She didn't tell me what she was dealing with, and I had almost nothing to say except to reassure her. I felt that, whatever my own limitations, I provided a sense of safety, and she could draw on that.

Our strongest impact was in helping develop a compulsory course for first year students similar to the social justice education course at Natal. I recall clearly my first day of teaching – ironically, to a group of students some of whom later worked at the orthopaedic workshop where my shoes were made. I learnt so much from an exercise I had set the class, when I sat with the one group who began to speak of the often-brutal realities of their lives. Increasingly in my work, I was learning from my students. There was such richness in experience, but it was also so rewarding to witness the meaning that students created in their reflections on these experiences– at its best, my practice was coming close to Freire's notion as the teacher as the student (Freire, 1972/2005). I was coming to see increasing closeness between my role as a teacher and my role as a researcher, creating opportunities in my work for my own learning and theorising, as well as encouraging this in others.

I became increasingly interested in the training of tutors for this and related courses in general education. Under the benign guidance of the Vice-Chancellor, whom I had known in his previous position at Natal, ICON became a research centre and was successful in attracting large numbers of postgraduate students and in extensive publication. I worked with Jairam Reddy, formerly Vice-Chancellor at the University of Durban-Westville, which had merged with Natal, and other staff in ICON to develop a nonformal leadership programme for students, which was popular. A change of focus meant that we redesigned it to become the programme for facilitators that is the focus of this study.

I have not previously attempted to theorise my own development as a teacher; I can see in this account not a steady progression from reaction towards enlightenment, but rather an uncertain and sometimes not very competent movement. In thinking that through, I am struck by the negativity of Bourdieu' reading of habitus; as reported in the chapter on the theoretical

framework, Goldthorpe (2010, p. 2) sets out a description of Bourdieu's understanding of habitus as:

...a set of socially constituted dispositions and competencies which (i) are acquired by individuals in early life, primarily through the families into which they are born; (ii) reflect the 'class conditions' under which their families live; and (iii) subsequently determine individuals' orientations to the world and modes of conduct within it in ways of which they may not be fully aware and that are highly resistant to change - whether through individuals' own efforts or those of other agencies.

I can however see that my own habitus as a teacher changed over time, taking on elements that challenged what I had previously taken for granted. As Zembylas (2007, p. 448) writes:

This generative view of habitus may constitute a site of transformative emotion practices; that is, while an agent might be predisposed to act in certain ways, the potentiality for innovation and new affective connections with the world is not foreclosed (Emirbayer and Goldberg, 2005; McNay, 1999).

On a series of factors, I sensed that I had moved – a greater sense of confidence in my thinking; much less anxiety over what I do and do not know; a greater openness to the lives, experiences and perspectives of others; ways of checking on my own emotions; greater understanding of what I could do that could be of genuine help to others, rather than a desire to be seen as helpful; a readiness to appreciate in the life of someone else events of great significance that they may themselves not have recognised. Much of the development has been away from the rather colonial mindset of 'helping' towards a sense of satisfaction and relevance from engaging thoughtfully and critically with students and their lives, as both a teacher and a researcher. On reflection, I realise the extent to which I would defer to others, often at times failing to take seriously my own thinking; with time, I have come to be more confident in my own perceptions and judgement. The hardest part to recognise has been seeing in my childhood experiences of disability a kind of numbness, a lack of awareness that I could, instead of being a victim, at times act out power over others.

A central element in these shifts has been the reflection on myself, seeing myself in the shoes of the other. I question what they may not notice about themselves but also question myself as to what I am missing about myself, that they may notice. Like the participants in the study, I find Johari's Window to be still thought-provoking (Communication Theory.org, n.d.). A

phrase that remains in my mind is that of George Eliot in *Middlemarch* (Eliot 2003) of seeing others as ‘equivalent centres of self’.

8.4 TWO CRITICAL INCIDENTS FROM THE PROGRAMME

In this section I review two specific incidents from the programme of action research. There were certainly other moments that were significant to me; these were though two that struck home in different ways. In the one, I mishandled a situation from lack of attention to the feelings of a participant and to my own feelings and had to learn from that. In the other, I was able to resolve, at least in part, an issue that was of deep importance to me, arising from a dialogue which plunged me into a confrontation with an area I had long struggled to address.

In 4.5.10 I noted the lack of scholarship related to the education of those who educate teachers. The focus of this study is on those learning to become educators, and I would include in that the teachers of the teachers, and that includes myself.

The first critical moment refers to a difficult interaction during the pilot, where the focus was on addressing race. This was an online session, and we were having major problems organising ‘breakout rooms’ for small group discussions. Participants could choose to be part of either a same-race or a mixed-race group. Dhaya had opted for a mixed small group discussion; however, something went wrong that scrambled up the carefully intended allocation. In the subsequent discussion, he reported that he had ended up in a small group with only one other person, that person being of the same race. He complained about being unable to learn anything as he was with another person of the same race. I was facilitating at this point and reacted with some frustration against the implied assumption that learning about race entailed only learning about the ‘other’ (Kumashiro, 2000, p. 31). So, I asked him what he, as a youngster, had been told about his own or any other race. He took offence at this and stated that I was trying to get him to say that people of his group were racist. Despite my assurances, he remained unhappy.

I wrote an email after the class to him to say that I felt I had pushed him too far, by making an assumption that he must have been told things that were racist. He reiterated his unhappiness, and I wrote again in full, explaining that my question had arisen from an understanding that in South Africa all of us are presented with stereotypes, negative and positive, based on race, and I just wanted to know what his experience of this had been; he responded that what I had written made sense. However, I think he continued to feel in some way judged, as he did not participate so freely afterwards. In discussion much later with staff, I suggested that, after his initial reaction to my question, I could have instead opened up a dialogue with him, possibly with this

approach: ‘The question that I asked was.... Would there have been something more helpful to you?’ Alternatively, I could have simply asked him to say more about how it felt when I asked the question. These possibilities would have involved slowing down the process to gain greater depth of understanding, a point made in chapter 7.

This was an area in which my own emotions had obstructed a more empathetic response. I was irritated at the idea that we cannot learn from thinking about people like us, and too confident in my opinion that people should be direct about race, failing perhaps to recognise how hurtful some experiences have been. My approach generally would be to use the safety to explore in particular the more uncomfortable and troubling areas, a stance I strongly agree with, and a point made so well by Mbali in her comment in 7.4 about the difference between safety and comfort. However, when someone who is granted privilege – as I was around race – pushes on this, it may feel intimidating and judgemental. As Bell, Love and Roberts (2007, p. 123) argue, ‘Participants from all racial groups may be reluctant to explore racism, especially in mixed groups, given the complex and often painful web of emotions that discussions about racism inevitably raise.’ It may well be that exploring experiences of race in the South African context, where defences are already so strongly marshalled – as in this engagement – should be undertaken only after the exploration of other areas where people may assume (even wrongly) that their emotional investment is not so intense and the social relations so divisive, such as language or ethnicity or nationality.

The second incident was in the final session of the intervention phase. Justine initiated the second dialogue of the session, which was on disability. I did not want to facilitate this, given my own history of disability, and was a participant in the discussion. I quote from my field notes:

When Justine asked, ‘What image comes to mind when you think of this topic?’, words like ‘wheelchair’ and ‘crutches’ were said, I said ‘metal rod’, thinking of the rod that linked my boot to the brace around my shin for a time when I was in primary school. Then Zinhle spoke about her experience of having a brother who had one leg and of the discrimination from school mates against him. Instead of having a brother to protect her, she said, she had to protect him. One day when a boy taunted him that he would break the other leg, she got angry and hit him hard, then burst into tears. Her classmates now turned against the boy and told him how wrong he was. At this point my feelings became too intense; I could not participate in the state I was in. I was

sitting next to Penny, who had had some experience of peer counselling, so I asked her if we could go out. She knew what to do; I cried hard while she held me; I cried a lot, then began identifying what was happening with me. Zinhle's account had triggered strong feelings, not because of the sadness of discrimination but because of the affirmation provided by an ally who was prepared to take the risk of hitting a boy to protect her brother.

As I wrote this, I was thinking of the one reading (Sweeney, 2017) that we had used, in which the writer reports leading a workshop on resuscitation and then having to flee as she dealt with the turbulent emotions from losing her mother in a road accident, the topic of the workshop. There is a logic running through this work; if our understandings and theory require that those we teach to become teachers grapple with their emotions and their own dispositions, so much truer it must be for us as educators of educators.

This work requires that people take on the perspective sometimes of a participant and sometimes of a facilitator, just as teacher education requires the shuttling between being a student and being a teacher. It was a moment that revealed to myself as much as to anyone else that I had much to unlearn, perhaps my sense of loss through the experience of disability and the isolation of my twin and me having to cope with this, alone. What struck home for me was the sense of breaking through isolation, of being together with others in struggle, instead of my sense of isolated action that I had experienced in the past.

Whatever the limitations of the programme, at this point I knew much more fully its ability to confront our dispositions. I noted in my mind that the one issue where I most lacked empathy, where I felt least at ease, was around issues of disability. I wonder how much my own teaching had been limited by my numbness around this aspect of my experience, a numbness that I identify above as feeding into my potential for harshness and domination. This naturally placed our work fully in the Freirean tradition, as in his statement “Whoever teaches learns in the act of teaching, and whoever learns teaches in the act of learning.” (Freire, 1998, p. 31).

8.5 CONCLUSION

In 2.3.1, I recalled a comment by Rick Turner to me that I and my friends would become teachers like all the others. Potentially, positionality becomes a matter simply of recording one's social identities, with the resulting habitus. Yet I regard positionality as more than fate and hold to the possibility of a generative habitus (Zembylas, 2007b). Paradoxically, being aware of how determined we have been by our social conditions may serve also to make us

identify more readily the ways in which we have changed over time, and how those changes took place.

Tina Röck (2024) argues for process ontology; from this perspective, a small change may initiate a process that continues to unfold until what now applies is distant from the original conditions.

Every present re-enacts its past and by re-enacting it transforms it. This temporal extension opens up room for creativity and novelty. In every present re-enactment or representation of the past there is room for creativity and newness, new experiences, new influences, and new forms of engaging with the virtual past or of anticipating the future. (Röck, 2019b, p. 42)

One of the greatest learnings was recognising more fully this thought that one change – such as setting up a space of safety in one small context – could sustain ongoing changes towards peace from there onwards. This is an idea that accords with some thinking in chaos theory (Lorenz, 1993). Crucially, the ‘small change’ is a change in a human system; what creates the possibilities for ongoing change is the capacity of that change to trigger further changes. For example, if such a change leads to new learning by the people present, that has a chance of influencing their behaviour beyond the classroom. Taking the perspective provided by dynamic realism (Röck, 2023a), we may see the work of peace education as our involvement in enabling an unfolding sequence of processes. Of course, we do not know which small change will have ongoing positive results, but it sustains us to know that it is possible.

I recognise in myself so much that was there in myself as a five or 15-year-old. My habitus as a teacher has, though, shifted considerably from what I once took the role of a teacher to be. So, shaped though I was by my South African context, my race and gender, I hold to the sense of breaking through practices and dispositions trapped by emotions. I end this work with a greater appreciation of what I have done that has been of significant value and of what I have done that is caught up in my own rigidities.

In the final chapter, I conclude the study with an overview of findings and a focus on the implications for the education of educators.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION: TEACHER EDUCATION AS BENIGN ORDER, AN OASIS OF PEACE



Figure 9.1 Image of an oasis of peace

This image, generated by AI, represents some of the themes of the thesis. The desert represents the harshness and violence of the context; in sharp contrast, the oasis is a place of safety and peace. Three travellers have arrived from the violence into this peace. The safety is productive – it has produced growth, nourishment and beauty. The travellers have stopped their movement, and the image suggests that they will take their time here. The whole image is bordered by a tapestry, reminding us that this is a human construction; it is a creation of the imagination and conveys a sense of hope. What sparked the image was the news of heavy rains in the Sahara in late 2024 that led to bodies of water developing for the first time in decades. The potential is that, over the long term, water will spread further across the desert.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to generate an understanding of the pedagogy that would be effective in developing educators so as to advance peace, in a context which has long experienced high levels of violence. The overarching research question posed in chapter 1 was as follows:

In a society that has experienced historical violence, how can understandings of contexts, of students and of ourselves inform the pedagogy of a teacher education that aims to build peace?

This was supplemented by the following research questions:

In a teacher education project that aimed to build peace in contexts of violence:

What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about **violence and the possibilities of peace**, and how did we learn about them?

What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about **a pedagogy** that would address violence and the possibilities for peace, and how did we learn them?

What did we (researcher, staff and participants) learn about the nature of a **pedagogy for teacher education** based on these learnings, and how did we learn that?

Rather than my responding separately to these questions, the response to these research questions is made through the presentation of the major themes, which is largely a recapitulation of the themes set out in chapters 6 and 7. I explore some of these points more fully in the section on the implications for teacher education.

The structure of the study was that of action research, with a pilot followed by an intervention phase. Each phase consisted of a programme of teaching educators – tutors, academics, community activists – with a specific focus on one aspect of teaching, that of skills in the facilitation of discussions and dialogues on issues that are often sensitive and potentially divisive.

As someone who first taught in 1969, my understanding of the topic is inevitably shaped by the years that preceded the study. At times this work represents a sharp divergence from my early experience, for example, when I first became a teacher, at other times being a continuity from some early realisation. I would suddenly recognise in some incident in the programme a pattern that I had observed years before; this study has given me a much deeper sense of how such patterns are interlinked.

The chapter begins with a full review of the major themes drawn from the analysis of the pilot and intervention phases, followed by an exploration of the implications of the findings for the education of teachers in contexts of violence. A section on the contributions to knowledge then follows, during which I engage some recent theoretical work. The issues of delimitations and limitations is not addressed here, as they were fully addressed in 5.11, thus the chapter addresses recommendations for further research before concluding.

9.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE THEMES

In coming to the major themes of the whole study, I reviewed critically the themes from both the pilot and intervention phases. As I probed, I realised how pursuing in depth one theme would often connect through to another. An example is the distinction between safety and comfort that appears as a sub-theme in chapter 7. This clearly extends the discussion on creating a safe space; it also concerns the need to be open to emotions in the process of change. The implication is also not only that we feel the discomfort but that such an approach requires slowing down to attend sufficiently to processing the discomfort. In this case, three of the themes are relevant.

Not all the themes connect as strongly as this; for example, the theme of questioning makes points that could be drawn on also by educators making use of more traditional approaches to pedagogy.

	Theme	Sub-theme
1	The pervasiveness and costs of violence and trauma	
		Violence as a norm
		The personal toll this has taken on lives
		Speaking of violence as a form of shared humanity
2	The significance of a safe space	
3	The centrality of emotions	
		Challenging emotion norms and colonial affects
4	The value of questioning	
5	Embracing diversity	
6	Beyond facilitation: The strength of personal development	
7	It takes time to develop depth	

9.3 THEME 1: THE PERVASIVENESS AND COSTS OF VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA

Violence and trauma were the constant backdrop to both phases of the programme, whether there was a specific focus on it or not. Kaminer and Eagle (2010, p. 2) comment that the term ‘trauma’ has a dual meaning as it gets used for both the original event and the effects of it.

They refer to traumas as the ‘psychological wounding and the penetration of unwanted thoughts, emotions and experiences into the psyche or being of the person.’ Seldom, in fact, was violence spoken of without reference to the resultant trauma; the presence of the trauma at the time of speaking made the challenge of violence a constant issue.

Although most sessions did not aim to raise issues of violence, a few sessions gave specific attention in theory and discussion to violence, for example, the session with Mthokozisi, leading to revelations of many different experiences of violence, reported on in chapter 7. However, even when it was not the focus, the consequences of violence would be evident in students’ reflective comments, indicating just how pervasively the society has been marked by it.

The many personal examples shared attested to South African society as being caught up in chronic violence (Pearce, 2007; Adams, 2012), one of the indicators of which is where ‘rates of violent death are at least twice the average for the country income category’ (Adams, 2012, p. 3). I was struck in a recent programme, not part of this study, by how often people were speaking of violent deaths in their family. Generally, there was ample evidence of what Adams (2012, p. 4) describes as a feature of chronic violence, that it ‘undermines social relations and provokes perverse social behaviour that is naturalised among vulnerable groups’, in accounts of its presence in families, in communities, in economic activity and, not least, in education.

As addressed in 2.2, Galtung (1969, 1990) categorised different forms of violence: direct, such as threats, assault, sexual violence and homicide; structural (or indirect), such as the institutions of society that operate to expose specific groups to violence; and cultural, the aspects of culture and language that serve to naturalise and justify both direct and structural violence. Indeed, there were frequent examples from participants of all these forms of violence - direct, structural and cultural.

African participants from South Africa itself were clearly very exposed to violence in all its forms, as became evident in the session with Mthokozisi Lembethe. The structural violence of the society was often referred to, in accounts particularly of the burden of racist or sexist treatment. Judy spoke of how being ‘Coloured’ was a source of reproach from those of the family, white or black, who were not Coloured. There were frequent references to the specific challenges faced by women, and the harsh socialisation of men.

Clear examples of cultural violence were provided, for example in the discussion on gender early in the pilot. Zamokuhle identified clearly the role of cultural violence, around gender in

particular, in his upbringing in a rural area: *'...those stereotypes are literally enforced on you from birth, and really you do not have a choice because you see yourself also saying the same things.'*

Had staff unintentionally created a subtle norm of speaking openly about violence, perhaps through the ways of working? The only reference to this issue was at the start of the intervention phase, 'Honesty to share what they want to share, honesty to say what they don't want to share.' One form of violence seldom spoken of was where participants were the perpetrators, except obliquely, such as Thuthuka's references, to *'my own chain [he then used the word 'continuum;] in terms of experience, violence. When I was young, growing up, doing stick fighting and seeing faction fighting in my community...'* Some of the men's references to experiences around gender-based violence were similar.

Instead of a norm of speaking of violence, initially, in the pilot, we as staff noticed a reluctance to speak of violence, a sense of avoiding it. However, once there was sufficient safety, there was a sense that there were pressing issues that needed to be spoken about, and a participant would speak of a traumatic event. This was evident when Priscilla spoke in the intervention phase, immediately after we had dealt with ways of working, of an unresolved situation in her family.

9.3.1 Violence as a norm

A sub-theme here is that of the normalisation of violence (Collins & Plüg, 2020). The taken-for-granted nature of violence in such a society was evident in the discussion on gender, when Mfundo spoke thus: *... it has resulted at some point where the issues of, of using violence as a solution which seemed normal, you know, and it took me a long time to be able get out of that space... In the same session, Zamokuhle said, '...from the time I was still there it never felt like most of these things are wrong, or they feel off to me, I just had to, sort of, go with everybody and go with the flow.'*

There were references to how the normalisation of violence leads to perpetrators and victims being seen as equally culpable. In the intervention phase, after Mthokozisi spoke of his family demanding that he explain why he was shot, Nolwazi was reminded of a similar event and wrote of her anger: *'I had a friend who was raped and she could not open the case because she was scared that people will judge her and asked her all sorts of questions.'* In this case, the normalisation of violence entails that the victim is held to account through such questioning; what is not questioned is how why there is such violence or how it is being reproduced. This

emphasises the need to raise awareness of the significance and use of questions, as addressed below.

An implication of this theme is that part of our work is to provide sufficient safety so that participants can give attention to the reality of what happens in their lives and not simply take the violence for granted.

9.3.2 The personal toll this has taken on lives

Late in the analysis I realised that I had failed to recognise one simple aspect of the violence and trauma – that being exposed to extremes of violence has entailed that much of the population experience a wide range of impediments to what we tend now to call ‘mental health’. My failure here is perhaps because I was too focused on issues of power, at the expense of attention to people’s individual development and also perhaps because participants spoke of it in terms of what first seemed just personality traits, such as not being confident.

For example, in the final interview, Thabisa said, *‘I was an introvert and did not like to be around people.’* Thandiwe reported in reflecting on when she joined the programme, *‘...at first um, it was really scary to be, um, to be in a group of people and having to state your opinion and share what you think.’* Such comments about not feeling free to participate came up often. One could argue that these are personal issues unrelated to violence and trauma. Yet we know that one of the manifestations of trauma in education is withdrawal, a phenomenon teachers often observe (Koslouski et al., 2023).

Tankink, Bubbenzer and Van der Walt (2017) criticise western approaches that individualise trauma in contexts where people experience severe conditions as a collective, as in the life experiences of the majority of South Africans. I would argue that we need to see these issues from both an individual and a collective perspective; otherwise, we may make the mistake of creating an unhelpful binary, a mistake that Bourdieu’s concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1977) overcomes. At a recent conference at a neighbouring university, Mngomezulu-Dube and Zengele (2024) spoke of how attempts to address the failing performance of agricultural students led to the realisation that so many were unwell, not coping in life or in their studies and feeling uninterested in their studies. The agricultural lecturer realised that the way ahead would be to spend time first working with students about how they felt and what they were struggling with in their lives. She thus brought in a lecturer in social work to assist in a process of emotional support based on an ethic of care, enabling a strong sense of common endeavour.

The implication of this sub-theme is an understanding that our task as educators in such a context cannot be divorced from processes of healing (Global Monitoring Project, 2019) and that, given that educators and students are coming generally from the same society, such processes need to include both. There may be different routes to this healing; the next sub-theme deals with one such route.

9.3.3 Speaking of violence as a form of shared humanity

The focus on the sharing of experiences, whether positive or negative experiences, was a central element of the programmes. There was as much shared humour as shared grief. However, what participants reported as the most significant was the realisation that is generated through speaking of violent experience and listening to those of others, what Nomcebo referred to in her reflection on the session with Mthokozisi: *'our sessions... are very helpful. Possibly because it's not just you [Crispin] speaking but we all share stories and feel each other's pain.'*

There was a sense of being drawn together when we heard of such experiences; Thabisa wrote, *'I felt welcomed, valued and emotional when learning to Mthokozisi's story.'* At various points in the programmes, participants would comment on the value they gained through as well as the emotional difficulty that came from speaking of or listening to accounts of violence. Throughout, there was a consistent sense of the mutuality gained through sharing such experiences. Eze (Ubuntudialogue.org, n.d.) refers to ubuntu, the sense of shared humanity, as arising from dialogue. In different terms, Keet, Zinn and Porteus (2009) argue for an education based on the recognition of mutual vulnerability.

An essential element of this process was attentive listening – what mattered was both speaking and knowing that you were being heard. A little acknowledged aspect is that it is rewarding and brings a sense of efficacy for people to know that they are providing support to those in need by providing such listening (Collins, 2013, p. 140).

9.4 THEME 2: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A SAFE SPACE

In this programme, the attention paid to ensuring safety within the group proved to be an essential element that enabled a sense of movement and unfolding growth of understanding. As Charity noted early in the pilot, *'I love that participants feel that the grouping is a safe space to communicate and share sensitive or controversial information.'* Similarly, in the evaluation of sessions at the conclusion of the intervention phase, a participant wrote, *'I'm even sad that they are ending 'cause I have now taken them as my safe space where I get to hold meaningful conversations and sort of open up.'*

These quotations convey the sense that participants were willing to take risks that they would otherwise not take, because they felt held and protected by the agreements that had been established from the outset. Walkerdine (2013, p. 763) writes of how movement develops under such conditions of safety: ‘...the process is indeterminate, plays upon complex unconscious and affective processes, and demands the centrality of safety to allow for imagination and experiments to be handled safely.’

Clearly, the practice of negotiating the ways of working in the group was an essential element in achieving the safe space – as was the respect that participants and staff paid to these ways of working. Yet this was such a simple, almost obvious task that had become routine in our work. On further reflection, though, I think its effectiveness is in part because this practice does what peace education may often fail to do – it draws attention to the possibility of creating peace in the present, immediately.

One of the consequences of creating a sense of safety is that it creates the possibility of giving attention to issues that seem not to be attended to in everyday life, leading to realisations that would otherwise not be made. For example, early in the pilot, in the discussion on childhood and gender, Mfundo said, ‘*I realised suddenly that one’s childhood was really, really, traumatic, traumatic.*’

It is also a space within which the issues of ethics becomes central, as building safety means that there need to be discussions about what is happening, now, in the ways in which people are protected. The learning this generates is an important element that student teachers take into their educational spaces. This shaping of the institutional space can be seen as developing a culture of peace, a term often applied at a macro-level to the whole society (Fry & Miklikowska, 2011), but here seen as the culture developed within a particular programme.

The notion of safe space here is closely related to the ‘dialogic space’ developed by Rule (2004, 2011). He regards it as enabling the emancipatory potential of projects such as this.

9.5 THEME 3: THE CENTRALITY OF EMOTIONS

It seemed a natural consequence of participants’ feeling that they were in a safe space for them to speak increasingly freely and directly of their emotions. It felt to me as the teacher as if some people had been waiting for this moment to speak of events and issues that carried major emotional weight and felt a sense of relief when they had spoken. I would argue that the significance of emotions in the sessions was twofold; the first point is that it brings into question

why so much education proceeds as if it is purely about cognition, and emotions are seen as a distraction or impediment.

While the freedom to engage with emotions was consistently welcomed, according to the comments of participants, some made use of this freedom less readily. Here there was some difference with regard to gender, with some men slightly more cautious in speaking of emotions – though it was also true that, in the discussion on gender early in the pilot, men spoke as readily of their feelings about their socialisation as did women.

Throughout the programme, there were many comments from participants about how difficult it was to negotiate the feelings that came up but also comments about how rewarding it was to speak freely of such issues, to be heard, and to be heard in a supportive way. While there was a willingness to reveal hurtful experience and the associated painful feelings, there was also a greater recognition of the presence of positive emotions, as in Thandeka's comment that 'The most feelings or emotions that came up was definitely empathy', after the one session in which Mthokozisi spoke of his being shot.

This suggests that the sense of safety in the environment contradicted a prevailing assumption of our educational systems, that this is not about ourselves, that the self and its emotions are not a valid focus of study. This distinction between cognition and emotion that has its roots in Cartesian thought (Albuquerque et al., 2003) and has pervaded Eurocentric education. Collins (2013, p. 143) writes of how, in a university course on violence, students responded to the opportunity to speak of their own reactions to material dealing with violence, thus: 'Not only was the idea of talking about personal feelings in the social and intellectual context of an academic lecture totally unexpected, but it became clear that many students had never had the opportunity to engage in this type of self-reflection.' In his case, students then adjusted their expectations and spoke freely about their emotional responses.

The second point I would make is that we were dealing with sensitive issues, given the focus of the programme, and that required addressing trauma – which entails addressing the emotions caught up in trauma. Emotion is a central element of the trauma that is generated through violence, as is made evident in all theorists on trauma (Herman, 1992/1997/2015; Eagle & Kaminer, 2013, 2015; Hernandez-Wolfe, 2018). Efforts to reduce violence will be limited unless they address the emotional reality of the resultant trauma. The implication is that avoiding engagement with emotion will fail, but also that the ways in which emotions are spoken of and responded to in class need thoughtful attention.

9.5.1 Challenging emotion norms and colonial affects

It was thus evident that part of the ‘work’ of such a programme of development is to challenge a prevailing norm to silence discussion of personal experiences of violence and its impact. This was made explicit in the intervention phase, in a striking comment by one participant about his unease over the open expression of emotions: ‘...*I think we need to separate, leave the emotions outside and let’s concentrate on the work and the content that was supposed to be discussed.*’

Zembylas (2007) writes extensively of the ways in which emotion practices in an education context are regulated through emotion norms that are reproduced, but which may change. He relates this to the development of the habitus of that context. In this case, the emotional norm had been changed, leading to the participant’s discomfort. Incidentally, he shifted his stance later, but his initial comment was useful in highlighting the implications of the changed emotion norm.

In later work, Kruger and Zembylas (2024) extend this approach to consider the ‘coloniality of affect’ and how ‘identifying the ways in which embodied experiences of peace education efforts could inform generating openings for challenging and interrupting the inscription and reproduction of the coloniality of affects’ (Kruger & Zembylas, 2024). This requires giving attention to ‘affective atmospheres’ that foreground ‘the active role that the embodied, relational, and non-representational dimensions of space play in shaping social interactions and subjective perceptions.’ They advance the practice of directing attention to these issues in ways that open up understanding of how such spaces can be decolonised. This approach provides a critical perspective on how emotion practices in a programme such as this may advance or limit decolonisation in its context (Heleta, 2016).

I would argue that there were some significant moves towards decolonisation in the programme that were evident in the ways in which participants seized opportunities for bringing their own concerns and experiences into focus. The moment at which Mthokozisi Lembethe, when I was about to interview him about his experiences, turned to me and said, no, he would rather tell his story his own way, was a moment where a break with colonial affect was evident. I also recognise in my own practice moments where the colonial affects reassert themselves, as in the training session I describe in 7.9.1, that took place after the end of this study. What would have been a valuable extension of our work would be the use of ‘atmospheric attunements’, such as providing greater reflective opportunities for exploring how emotions have been handled in our educational practice, considering the effects of this and thinking through the implications.

Engagement of emotions is thus a central element in achieving depth of transformation of learning, whether through the lens of Bourdieu's habitus (1977) or Mezirow's habits of mind (1997). Understanding violence fully means grappling with troubling emotions (Collins, 2013) and thus requires the creation of sufficient safety, as has been discussed above.

9.6 THEME 4: THE VALUE OF QUESTIONING

Working with questions proved to be a practice that supported other elements of the programme. This approach is generally strongly emphasised in critical pedagogy (Darder et al., 2003), drawing largely on the work of Freire (1972/2005), who saw as 'liberating education' the role of a teacher who poses problems rather than hands over information. In the final interviews, it was notable how the practice of questioning was identified as important, and four significant points became evident in the programme.

First, we encouraged students to generate questions as a means of advancing and challenging their thinking, not for anyone to have to provide the 'right' answer, but as a process of exploration. There was not the security of closure that comes with a settling of the question through an answer from other students or from a teacher. This openness to unexpected questions (Burbules & Berk, 1999) and the stimulation to deeper thought fostered a sense of intellectual rigour. Tofade et al. (2013) write of this process that it is 'questioning as thinking'. For those developing as qualitative researchers, this discipline of working with questions is a valuable resource.

Secondly, this process developed a sense of professional responsibility by challenging participants to think through possible answers. As Mathombi pointed out in her final interview, developing questions was a way of pushing herself to learn the content relevant to a dialogue.

Thirdly, it was very productive for participants to grapple with the challenging formulation of questions for dialogues. This task required giving attention to the structure of the questions, such as whether open-ended or closed, to the relevance of questions for the specific focus of the dialogue, to the logical sequence of questions and to the potential of questions to advance the discussion effectively. It required that participants applied their imagination to how people might respond. Such work prompted critical reflection on the questions and provided a useful discipline for learning. As Wandile wrote in reflecting on the one session, '*Creating questions required critical thinking and consideration of various perspectives, making the process intellectually stimulating.*' This process is a valuable form of engagement that fosters learning (Aflalo, 2021).

Finally, in an educational system focused on the ‘right’ answers rather than the best questions, I think the practice communicated a confidence in the intellectual ability of our participants.

9.7 THEME 5: EMBRACING DIVERSITY

What followed from the creation of a safe space was an openness to participants’ experiences and their reflections on these experiences, rather than on debates over opinions. This opened up awareness over complexity and diversity, in ways that diverged radically from the still-prevailing South African construction of racial groups and gender categories. In chapters 6 and 7, I explored some of the specific instances where assumptions about oneself and about the other were challenged.

Such exploration of diversity was far removed from the way in which diversity tends to be handled in South Africa, often still based on rigidly defined social groups, as under apartheid, a form of multiculturalism that perpetuates stereotypes (Morrow, 2006). At times the commonality of experience was evident; at times there was divergence where we might have expected commonality. This openness enabled also greater openness to different perspectives, as evidenced in the dialogue on age at the end of the pilot, where the participants spoke of contrasting experiences and their different ways of seeing life in relaxed and light-hearted ways.

This more complex handling of diversity required the attention to personal experience made possible through the safety of the educational space. It drew on the long tradition of experiential learning from Dewey (1938) to Kolb (1984) and the work of social justice educators (Adams et al., 2007). In my mind, I see a close connection between this openness to the experiences of others in education and the openness a qualitative researcher needs to maintain to the experiences of their participants, a point relevant to many on the programme who were postgraduate students or tutors.

9.8 THEME 6: “BEYOND FACILITATION”: EDUCATION AS DEVELOPMENT AND AS HEALING

The aim set out originally in 2023 was as follows: To develop people as leaders who have the capacity to facilitate dialogues and workshops in ways that advance peace, nonviolence, social justice and environmental sustainability. In retrospect, I placed more focus in my thinking and planning on ‘the capacity to facilitate’ than on the ‘develop’. What actually did it mean for us to develop people, and to develop them as leaders, given the context of violence and ongoing trauma? That question seems seldom posed in discussions on how we develop leaders in such

a context, although the costs of traumatised leadership have been identified (Gumede, 2021). The emphasis in much education falls presently largely on the short-term achievement of specific skills for career purposes, at the expense of slower, more concerted development (Leathwood & Read, 2022).

The implication of this is far-reaching. Despite the ample literature on violence in South African education, such as the studies by Burton and Leoschut (2013) and Mncube and Harber (2013), educationists have not faced up to the need for our systems to recognise the full extent of trauma and thus the need for personal development and healing. We do not pose the question: what does our education do to enable healing from trauma? Such issues seem to be raised mainly in regard to the situations faced by refugees from violent conflict (Global Monitoring Group, 2019).

There were various references in the data to the processes of healing that were, in part, under way in the programme. The emphasis on asking for reflective comments immediately after sessions, essential though it was, and lack of time at the end of each phase for a slower engagement in assessing learning, tended to obscure this broader issue of development. However, it emerged strongly in the fuller final interviews, in which participants spoke of far-reaching changes. This was made most explicit in Mathombi's phrase when she said that her learning went 'beyond facilitation'. She described changes in her life, with capacities that she could apply across different contexts, not only within education.

There were corresponding descriptions of personal change and development from participants at different points of the programme, though most explicitly in the final interviews, changes that were applied in different contexts. Von Holdt (2024) provides a description of the disorder within South African social sites, with different fields of practice penetrating each other. He argues also that this phenomenon applies across other societies and is insufficiently recognised. This calls, I would argue, for the development of a habitus that extends beyond one field of practice, a more generalised habitus that can be robustly held to across different fields of practice.

This brings to mind the work by Tani Adams on chronic violence (Adams, 2012, p. 7), in which she argues that 'Chronic violence must be addressed through intersectoral and interdisciplinary approaches' and '...obliges stakeholders to engage in an unprecedented process of interdisciplinary and intersectoral learning, exchange and experimentation in order to construct effective approaches.' We need to develop capacities and dispositions that can be applied

across different sectors in ways that do not reproduce the violence of societies, for example, processes of handling local conflicts informally that are not based on perpetuating violence. The capacities that the interviewees described as having developed during the programme are of value across different sectors, as Mathombi noted.

9.9 THEME 7: IT TAKES TIME TO DEVELOP DEPTH

Education continues to be a site of urgency and anxiety, mistrustful of people's capacity to learn with time – such is our Eurocentric heritage, perhaps. It may also be a legacy of a formal system that for years was committed to an outcomes approach (Jansen, 2006; Caspersen, Frølich, & Muller, 2017; Erikson & Erikson, 2019). The most consistent criticism from participants was that we were rushing through issues and not taking enough time. Perhaps as staff we were driven by a sense of urgency to achieve results – the production of skilled facilitators with deep understanding of the relevant social and educational issues, in a short period of time – and, sometimes, a sense of impatience from participants also. The comments about the need for more time tended to come later in the programme, indicating that there was growing realisation of the complexity of change.

I think the problem arises from our not sufficiently recognising the complexity and extent of what participants were dealing with. We were operating in a context both of direct violence and the long histories of structural violence that had impaired lives in ways that none of us would easily understand, with factors such as intergenerational trauma a constant presence (Prager, 2003). Sometimes as staff we wanted to push towards reflection at a time when participants needed, first, more engagement with the issue itself. Despite this, there was also a great readiness from participants to acknowledge the significance of their learning on the programme, and, despite the pressure of time, participants reported sustained and deep learning; the programme had a major impact on them.

One of the specific moments where the time given was too little was in a discussion on sexuality where one participant expressed what some saw as reactionary views. This response served to curtail a fuller discussion over how his feelings and views had originated, which would have led to deeper engagement with the processes of learning and unlearning.

As indicated in chapter 7, this theme connects with recent moves towards slowing down in education and resisting the urgency imposed on educational systems (Harrison-Greaves, 2016; Holt, 2002; Taylor, 2020).

9.10 IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

In this section, I will take examples from formal teacher education in a university environment as well as from nonformal teacher education in the preparation of tutors and in NGOs. I need first to address the question of transferability of findings from the context of the study to the context of teacher education.

At the outset I need to recognise the limitations imposed by institutional imperatives, such as national policy on teacher education, the requirements of higher education accreditation and the descriptors for specific qualifications in teacher education, which require the involvement, in South Africa, of the Council for Higher Education (CHE). These could, potentially, be framed in ways that are supportive of the critical orientation and process ontology adopted in this study, but, realistically, various constraints make that most unlikely.

There are also constraints that may arise from the availability of educators with the capacity and inclination to undertake what would be work substantially different from what teacher educators generally do.

In thinking through the possibilities, I decided first to set out what I see as ideal conditions and then to outline some steps towards their gradual realisation. There is a risk in assuming too readily that there are inevitable barriers; what are presently barriers to adoption of the recommendations may suddenly change.

9.10.1 Recognition of the reality and consequences of violence

Those responsible for teacher education need to take as a starting point that violence in the lives of both educators and students, broadly, is a reality. As entrants come into teacher education, their educators do not yet know the details of how this has affected them, and will never fully know, but the resultant trauma is something that all have to find ways of dealing with. While this is true for those entering all institutions of society, it has particular consequences for teacher education, given the evidence that trauma has deleterious effects on learning (Frieze, 2015). Furthermore, students will in future be teaching others who will also be grappling with such issues, so this should be a central concern for teacher education.

9.10.2 Teacher education as benign order

Here I argue that teacher education needs to be informed by a vision of peace and to develop a culture of peace (Galtung, 1990; Miller & Ramos, 1999; Harris & Morrison, 2003, p. 125; Fry & Miklikowska, 2011); in a context of violence, it needs to be a place of benign order. In this study, participants often articulated that they were doing what they needed to do to overcome

violence; the process seemed consistent with a vision for peace. Indeed, for all its violence, South Africa has been a place where people have held out a vision of a different life, even if that vision has still not come to pass. To bring change in education, those involved need to sustain such an attitude, a conviction that peace in and through education is possible. Such a vision is articulated in State policy, which promotes peace: ‘Non-violence training should be addressed through the curriculum’ (Department of Education, 2001, p. 52). However, to bring such a vision into teacher education requires processes that enable and sustain it.

One crucial point is that the process of establishing such a culture of peace must critically engage with the issues of epistemic violence in a context so marked by colonialism (Hlatshwayo, 2024). This work must take into account the critical perspective on how peace education has been used to impose a particular Eurocentric model (Gur Ze’ev, 2001; Kruger & Zembylas, 2024). There is no predetermined culture of peace to be applied here; it is rather a process that unfolds, and the manner in which it unfolds must take critically the ways in which exclusion can take place, such as language. There are locally indigenous traditions to connect with (Eze, 2000; Kiyala, 2022); however, as cultures and technologies change and knowledge in such areas as neuroscience develops, there is also no prescription from the past that can simply be adopted. The African concept of ubuntu has been a signal way of differentiating indigenous approaches; it links the literature on peace to a tradition that continues to resonate even in the midst of violence.

The idea of an oasis of peace follows from the strong emphasis in this study on a safe space. Another compatible idea is that of a ‘holding space’ (Powietrzynska et al., 2021; Kealy & Hebron, 2024), described by Epstein (2023) as ‘the act of being *fully present* with someone else, without judgment or distraction, so that the person can share their experiences and perspective.’ One implication is that there needs to be a clearly marked boundary between teacher education and the broader society. For all the pressures to be ‘relevant’, we cannot afford for teacher education to replicate the same practices as those of the broader society with its severe violence. Creating this boundary in a productive way is challenging but worthwhile.

I am extending this notion of a safe space to introduce the concept of benign order. Bourdieu (1990) identifies the significance of various fields of practice such as education and the habitus that develops in specific fields of practice. While his focus turns to how social change needs to disrupt this order, Van Holdt (2022) rather identifies the lack of agreed-upon order in South African society as a factor that enables coercion rather than liberation. Still working with

Bourdieu, he argues that societies such as this allow violence to penetrate different fields of practice that intrude on each other. He calls for the creation of order, a just order not based on the exercise of violence – an ‘alternative order from below’. A place of benign order may expose, contradict and provide understanding into the violence of society, including the violence of education itself. This is peace education that works using peaceful methods to establish a culture of peace.

It was after I had used the term ‘benign order’ that I was made aware of how it contrasted with the term ‘benign violence’, used to characterise education, both basic and tertiary (Allen, 2014). This characterisation of education, even of education that is ‘liberal’ and ‘multicultural’, is based on a perception of the coercive role that education plays in societies. It points to a legitimate concern that reformed education may simply be another, more slick way of ensuring compliance. To avoid this, I think it needs to be an order that is always in the process of renewal and renegotiation, rather than one that incoming students find imposed on them.

Within the South African context, there have been elements of disorder that have challenged the repressive aspects of both university life and of society, including elements of the Fees Must Fall protests (Luescher et al., 2022). However, much of the disruption from student protest has simply been demoralising and damaging to lives and property, creating greater divisions between staff and students. The chaotic nature of much protest points to a challenge to the notion of ‘benign violence’; the determined resistance that Allen (2014) calls for is not enough unless it addresses its own capacity for imposing violence.

The method for creating such an order is not through the assertion of force by universities where teachers are educated – an assertion evident during the Fees Must Fall movement – through what Galtung (1964) would refer to as negative peace. Rather, creating and recreating such a benign order needs to be a collaborative process that draws students into its ways of working. Its purpose is both to ensure the wellbeing of students and staff while within the space of teacher education and to develop the capacities of those involved in advancing peace. It also serves as a model of the practices of peace that may influence its students who proceed into teaching.

A thorough plan for how to create such a teacher education goes beyond the scope of this study. It would include, for example, how campuses or NGO premises ensure physical safety, an area not explored here – though there is relevant literature on some of the issues involved (Gordon & Collins, 2013). Ideally, all university staff need to be explicitly part of the process of building

a culture of peace. However, one should not underestimate the significance of creating, even within the most repressive of environments, spaces within which truly peaceful alternatives can be developed. This study provides specific insights into how to go about creating a safe space even at the micro-level of classroom interaction. Such a space could initially be created within one course being taught (Hemson, Ngidi, Xulu-Gama & Magudulela, 2018) or within a study group, or in student societies.

There is potentially a contradiction here; Harber (2022) argues that peace education will not work in schools because the ethos of peace education is so much at odds with the ethos of most schools. Despite this, creating even a small oasis may have lasting effects that could in time spread out, even when there is tension between that oasis and the broader institution.

9.10.3 Developing a habitus of peace

One key reason for developing teacher education as a benign order is that it holds the possibility of development of a habitus that informs education generally. Bourdieu defined habitus thus: ‘a subjective but not individual system of internalised structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class’ (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86). As noted in chapter 2, the significance of habitus is that it shapes individuals and society simultaneously. While Bourdieu is typically perceived to be pessimistic about the possibilities of change, there are those in the tradition he developed who point that, in reality, change does occur and that we can foster it. Thus Zembylas (2007, p. 448) argues that:

...a generative view of habitus may constitute a site of transformative emotion practices; that is, while an agent might be predisposed to act in certain ways, the potentiality for innovation and new affective connections with the world is not foreclosed (Emirbayer and Goldberg, 2005; McNay, 1999).

Similarly, Watkins (2018, p. 47), in criticising Bourdieu for seeing pedagogic action only as ‘...the imposition of a cultural arbitrary’, argues that it could ‘...instead have the potential to equip individuals with the means for social access and transformation.’ Experiencing teacher education as pervaded by a culture of peace enables student teachers to develop new dispositions – encompassing emotions, cognitions, perceptions and practices (see Nash, 2005, on the development of cognitive habitus). This is not a linear and straightforward process, as it entails revisiting and unlearning existing commitments that may have seemed natural and inevitable, as indicated by Mezirow’s concept of transformative learning (1997). What assists in this is that teacher education often requires a significant period, given the complexity of the

learning involved, of content, of design skills, and of practices, as well as ensuring an integration into a coherent professional self.

Education generally, and especially teacher education, is one of the few places in society where we can thoughtfully design a social environment that is peaceful and that sustains people justly, as a means of developing such a peaceful habitus. If we assume that teacher education has a degree of influence over what happens in schools and other places of teaching, then developing such a habitus may have a significant impact on schooling. Can a benign order in teacher education create a habitus that extends beyond this field of practice? The evidence from this study is that some participants identified valuable and far-reaching changes in their orientation to the world more generally.

9.10.4 Developing teacher educators as agents of peace as a logical first step

An insight from Freire (1972/2005) pervades this study and is borne out in my own learning as an educator. That is that the teacher learns from the student while the student learns from the teacher. In making this point, Freire directs attention to how the teacher learns. In 4.5.10, I reported on the lack of literature on the development of teacher educators (Snoek, Snennen & Van der Klink, 2010). A further problem is the lack of consistency; teacher education often uses one pedagogy but instructs students to use a different one in their practice (Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006). These issues weaken the capacity of teacher education, in particular its capacity to influence the culture of schools and other places of learning.

The advantage of starting with teacher educators is that this enables the scaling up of work, given the leadership role that they play in the whole system. It is remarkable that the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education (2006) fails to recognise this role and its significance. Yet intervening at this point makes a great deal of sense; for one thing, the scale is much more workable than attempting to start with the great number of student teachers. Secondly, teacher educators tend to stay in place, while students, whether intending schoolteachers, university tutors or community educators, move through. Teacher educators have the authority and responsibility for addressing the culture of the whole institution. Thirdly, the impact of their role in the whole system is major; they are seen as the one expert group able to provide critical judgement on the nature and quality of the educational system.

This would entail mobilising the considerable educational resources within teacher education to apply to our own learning as teacher educators. It requires an investment of time to make these resources more visible and to develop ways of addressing the development needed. For

example, all teacher educators have been through processes of development; teacher educators should collectively work to identify in their own histories what most enabled them to develop in ways that fostered peace, and apply those understandings to continue such development, especially for those entering this work.

9.10.5 A pedagogy for peace in teacher education and education generally

This study has argued that there were key elements of the pedagogy used that were effective at enabling greater capacity in building peace. These included the focus of attention on having a safe space, the use of storytelling as a resource for reflection on experience, the openness to emotion, the building of a sense of mutual vulnerability (Keet, Zinn & Porteous, 2009). How then are these applied practically within teacher education?

I would propose that this should proceed as a series of workshops involving staff and students, perhaps concentrated early in teacher education, but returned to at specific points, thereafter. A starting point could well be simply a discussion about the challenges students and staff face at the beginning of the year, and how those came to be the challenges they face. Such a session should end with specific reflection on what was learnt about ways of enabling communication amongst people of very different experience and age, focusing on listening and speaking skills and on what was being learnt from hearing diverse concerns and experiences.

What I propose takes time away from other elements of the teacher education curriculum. It gives greater attention to establishing a foundation of peace, leaving less time for learning the content areas. My argument is that this approach builds self-confidence and a sense of agency that makes subsequent learning more productive. It also builds the understanding of staff members as to what the priority learning needs of their students are. Furthermore, it develops learnings that are often left until much later, such as developing the communication skills that enable an understanding of where the learning of others is being impeded and the capacity to respond with greater effectiveness. This is also a fertile opportunity for developing both ethical practices and a reflective understanding of such practices.

These programme elements do not supplant the other tasks of teacher education – the learning of specific subject areas, the understanding of educational theory, the student practicum, and so on. In these areas, there may be sections of the curriculum structured in much more traditional ways, with pedagogies that we are already familiar with. The key requirement is not to insist on one pedagogy for all purposes, as long as the methods being used are consistent with a culture of peace. For example, there should be a general acceptance that all teaching

encourages students to speak of how they experience the learning, that students are encouraged to raise questions regarding where they are struggling, that there are open discussions about how people feel and an acceptance that all of us encounter personal and educational challenges. I do not assume that one pedagogy equally well serves all sections of the curriculum.

What we require from pedagogies for teacher education is thoughtfulness and compatibility with a core commitment to peaceful processes. Westbrook et al. (2013) identify as a problem of teacher education the inconsistency of the pedagogy used in teacher education and the pedagogy that students are meant to use when teaching in schools. If we as teacher educators value a specific pedagogy because of its ability to advance peace, then we should use it from the moment we first encounter incoming students, so that it becomes part of their resource base for the future.

9.10.6 Steps in getting there

As I indicate above, I have not held back in setting out the recommendations in ideal form. Implementation, though, will not be a smooth and rapid process. An initial step may be simply for concerned teacher educators to form a group that supports their growing understanding and the initiatives that they take that are consonant with the active pursuit of peace; in other words, a community of practice as a vehicle for institutional change (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). This approach would lead into innovation in teaching, research and ultimately policy proposals. It also allows for the time needed to develop a set of skills and understandings that cannot be assumed to be readily in place.

One of my own realisations, looking back, was of how some initial steps, because of their relevance and timing, had consequences that continued to expand, whether for good or for bad, a realisation that fits well with the process ontology adopted here. We are at a time of growing frustration with established forms of education; the advent of AI has drawn attention to the mismatch between the immensely growing practical capacities of our societies and issues of ethics and values. This is an opportune time.

9.11 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

In the introductory chapter and in chapter 4, I identified the relative lack of scholarship on the development of teachers to advance peace, and the even greater lack of research on how teacher education may advance peace in contexts such as South Africa. This study has thus addressed a major gap by focusing on the pedagogy that such a project needs to employ.

9.11.1 Focus on pedagogy in a context of violence

The main contribution of this study has been the emphasis on pedagogy in a context of violence. There is some literature on the handling of trauma in teaching in schools, much less on addressing trauma in teacher education in contexts such as the US and Australia (L'Estrange & Howard, 2022), but so little that I can find on addressing experiences of violence and trauma in teacher education in contexts of great violence.

A second aspect is the attention paid here to the connection between the pedagogy of education generally and that of teacher education, a relationship often overlooked (Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006; Westbrook et al., 2013).

9.11.2 Focus on teacher educators

In this study I draw attention to my own development as a teacher educator and the difficulties we face from our own experiences of violence and how we ourselves collude with violence. The focus I place on this moves the study away from complacency – yet this focus is often missing from what is often a prescriptive approach to the training of teachers (Snoek, Snennen & Van der Klink 2010).

9.11.3 Identifying the learning 'beyond facilitation'

In the literature that draws on Bourdieu (1979) the idea of a habitus has been developed that is more flexible and fluid than the rather deterministic view of habitus that Bourdieu had described. Thus, Zembylas (2007, p. 448) writes that, 'This generative view of habitus may constitute a site of transformative emotion practices.' At the end of this study, in reviewing the final interviews, I could identify what I saw as the outcome of such 'emotion practices', in the form of a transformed sense of the self. Here I draw on Von Holdt (2022) to consider how habitus could be shaped that would apply across different fields of practice, bringing order and consistency across a society caught in violence. The action research has given a concrete sense of how we can develop such a habitus, as well as what some of its elements could be.

9.11.4 The need for teacher education to be a 'benign order'

In this study, considerable emphasis has been placed on how and why we wanted the educational space to be a 'safe space'. My proposals for teacher education in our context take the principle of a culture of peace further, arguing for the need for teacher education to be a place of benign order. The term brings in a different inflection to the debates around peace education, which have, I consider, generally tended to assume a typical stability that cannot be taken for granted in violent contexts.

9.11.5 Decoloniality

The study has at various times directed attention to issues relevant to decoloniality. In addressing decoloniality, theory needs to translate into educational practices that sustain the development of students and teachers in ways that counter the ‘colonial affect’ (Kruger & Zembylas, 2024). I argue that the proposals for teacher education here provide specific examples of such practices and an explanation as to why they are relevant.

9.12 PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

My hope is that researchers build on this work through both further action research and the development of relevant theory on the pedagogy. For action research, developing a programme as proposed within a formal teacher education institution would be a truly significant study. So would extending this work into other sectors not currently addressed here, such as sports education and workplace training. Developing participants as co-researchers may be an additional element to strengthen our understanding.

A direct extension of this study would be to focus on former participants from both the pilot and intervention phases (and possibly also a 2024 iteration of the programme), to assess how all participants now understand and have applied their learning. It would be worthwhile to understand the longer-term impact of the work on developing facilitators and identify more fully further action needed to develop their capacities, such as the development of a community of practice. Another approach would be to rely on greater use of diverse media, such as Photovoice or art-based approaches, to explore in greater depth the nature of learning in such contexts.

From a more theoretically informed viewpoint, exploring the concept of habitus, with its non-dualistic nature, and of the possibility of a habitus that extends across different fields of practice would be worthwhile. The concept of chronic violence is something that should inform studies on how violence is constantly reproduced and extended in contexts such as that of South Africa, as well as the proposals made (Adams, 2012) for inter-sectoral initiatives to reduce violence.

The area of decoloniality is potentially fraught with simplistic prescriptions. However, bringing this lens to the work may be productive in overcoming some of the likely bias that arises from the language of peace education being developed primarily in western contexts. This entails going into greater depth as to how internalised patterns from the colonial legacy may skew our understanding of what is and what becomes possible. Further, while ubuntu is now frequently

celebrated in the literature, how such a philosophy can inform teacher education is an area calling out for scholarship.

9.13 CONCLUSION

I have tried to explore in this thesis what I intuitively felt about my work in education, though, this time, approaching it in a more systematic and structured way. This exploration has led me to a much greater understanding of what happens when we teach, for good or ill, and the significance of the responsibility we take when we assume that role.

Fundamentally, of prime importance to me is the value of those who have experienced violence and pain and have had the commitment to confront the violence, learn from it and commit not to allowing it to continue. Work such as this must keep to this commitment.

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APPENDIX 1 INITIAL FLYER FOR THE SHORT COURSE FOR FACILITATORS

This was sent to contacts and posted on the student portal of DUT

TRANSFORMING OUR HERITAGE: FACILITATING ENGAGEMENT 2021

Aim	To develop a cohort of facilitators who can competently and ethically lead dialogues and other participatory learning events in a range of community and educational settings, with a specific focus on dealing with the issues of violence, trauma and conflict that pervade our region. The course will be responsive to the different contexts in which the diverse group of participants operate.
Title	The title takes its name as much of the course takes place in Heritage Month, and it will engage with both positive and negative aspects of our history and heritage.
Rationale for the course	<p>The looting, arson and violence that shook KwaZulu-Natal and other parts of South Africa in July 2021 exposed how traumatised society is and how that trauma is connected to deep divisions in society that originated in the long histories of apartheid and colonialism.</p> <p>It also demonstrated the communities were ready to organise themselves in response to provocations. However, some of that response was informed by trauma and exacerbated the violence. The area, however, also revealed some initiatives to resolve divisions and conflict through dialogue.</p> <p>ICON's analysis, and that of the Urban Futures Centre, is that we need multiple sites where dialogue takes place within and across communities, where histories can be reviewed and understood. To do this, we need to ensure that we have a diverse range of skilled facilitators with the spirit of nonviolence and skills in helping to achieve it.</p> <p>These facilitators will be based in workplaces, at universities and in communities generally. For example, Nonkululeko Zungu, an alumnus of the Innovative Leadership Programme, has already initiated dialogues in the Ntuzuma and Bhambhayi areas. A particular group that we aim to target in future will be teachers, because of their pivotal role in socialisation.</p> <p>To ensure the greatest synergy in using scarce resources, ICON is seeking to work in collaboration with staff from other departments at DUT, including General Education and the School of Education, staff from Education at UKZN and ICON will liaise where possible with colleagues at the University of Zululand and the Mangosuthu University of Technology.</p>
Learning outcomes	<p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7) Develop safe dialogue and learning spaces. 8) Develop an understanding of how patterns of violence and trauma operate at personal, institutional and societal levels and across time, and how these engender conflict and the inability to resolve problems 9) Explore ways of addressing experiences of violence at these levels 10) Enhance their skills in leading discussion in small and larger groups, including listening attentively and intervening appropriately in ways that assist groups to address common problems

	<p>11) Identify and apply principles that strengthen the role of dialogue in transforming conflict and building peace.</p> <p>12) Identify sources of psycho-social support and referral processes for participants they engage with.</p>
Participants	<p>20-30 people.</p> <p>Requirements include meeting the responsibilities (set out below) and being able to communicate effectively in English (speech, reading and writing), evidence that the participant has demonstrated a commitment to build peace (broadly defined).</p> <p>The ability to communicate effectively in IsiZulu (in particular in speech) is an advantage but not a requirement. We will try to source participants from different areas of the EThekweni Metro.</p>
Mode of delivery	<p>Online, except for last sessions, which will be face-to-face, with social distancing, and longer. This will require taking participants who have an acceptable device, reliable access to connection to the Internet and a supply of data. ICON will ensure the provision of data for those participants who do not have an adequate supply.</p>
Attention to ethics	<p>At its introductory session, staff and participants will together develop a common set of values and practices that will inform how we work together. This can be reviewed and updated where necessary. This area is of critical importance as we cannot address issues of violence without a clear ethical foundation for our work.</p>
Key principles that inform the course	<p>The major distinction between staff and participants is that staff take formal responsibility for the course.</p> <p>Both staff and participants need to demonstrate commitment to its effectiveness, which includes a willingness to resolve obstacles to such effectiveness.</p> <p>Both staff and participants bring a rich range of resources to the course. These include diverse experiences of the issue of violence in their lives and in the broader society, and experiences of ways in which people have attempted to resolve conflict and violence.</p> <p>Reflecting on the experience of violence, on our responses to violence and on our knowledge of communities is an essential element of this work. To do this, we have a collective responsibility to make this a safe space for all who are present.</p> <p>Working on issues of violence together requires particular attention to confidentiality and to the need for ensuring mutual support. What is discussed in the group needs to remain within the group.</p> <p>Although it is not the intention of the group to do any harm, should anyone feel traumatized or need extra support they will be referred to the support services offered by DUT (such as the Student Counselling Centre).</p>
Methods of learning	<p>There will be a strong emphasis on participatory methods that draw on existing experiences, bring to the surface existing understandings and open up the potential for learning from others. This will include such methods as group discussions, visual methods, role plays, group presentations, and so on.</p> <p>Participants and other resource people not on the course may be involved in panels that enable all to learn from specific experiences.</p> <p>There will be short theory input that will connect with the discussion.</p> <p>Focused readings will be used to extend understanding of the issues of violence, trauma and conflict, and of ways of addressing these challenges.</p>
Responsibilities of participants	<p>Participants are required to attend all sessions punctually and in full.</p>

	<p>They will be expected to take part fully in all activities and undertake all relevant reading.</p> <p>Participants will be asked to write a weekly journal on their reflections on the course.</p> <p>They will produce one written assignment (this can be in IsiZulu if preferred).</p>	
Certification	<p>Those participants who undertake all tasks effectively, in the judgement of staff, will receive a Certificate of Achievement from Durban University of Technology. This will not be a formal qualification. There is no formal assessment.</p>	
Evaluation	<p>There will be ongoing processes to ensure that the effectiveness of the course is being reported on, and a final evaluation at the conclusion.</p>	
Dates and times	<p>Saturday 4th September 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 8th September 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 15th September 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 22nd September 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 29th September 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 6th October 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 13th October 2021</p> <p>Saturday 16th October 2021</p>	<p>09:00 to 12:00</p> <p>15:00 to 18:00</p> <p>15:00 to 18:00</p> <p>15:00 to 18:00</p> <p>15:00 to 18:00</p> <p>15:00 to 18:00</p> <p>15:00 to 18:00</p> <p>09:00 to 12:00</p>
Staff members	<p>Mr Crispin Hemson, Director of the International Centre of Nonviolence, is the person directly responsible. He can be contacted on 082 926 5333 or on icon@dut.ac.za</p> <p>xxx, Lecturer in ICON.</p> <p>xxx, Lecturer in ICON, will assist in part of the course.</p> <p>Other resource people will participate where relevant and possible.</p>	
Cost	<p>Thanks to the support provided by DUT, there will be no cost.</p>	
This is where to apply	<p>Click here</p>	

APPENDIX 2: APPLICATION FORM, SHORT COURSE FOR FACILITATORS

Application form: Short course for facilitators

For those who wish to join the ICON course aimed at developing facilitators who can address and work within contexts of violence and trauma.

Selection will take into account the need to balance diversity of background, context and experience.

1. What is your first name?

2. What is your surname/family name?

3. What is your cellphone number?

4. What is your email address?

5. What year were you born?

8/30/2021

APPENDIX 3 LETTERS OF INFORMATION AND LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT, PILOT



Letter of information to short course participants about the related research project

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking an interest in my research. I am Crispin Hemson, Director of the International Centre of Nonviolence at Durban University of Technology. I wish to provide information on my doctoral research so that you have a clear understanding of what it is about.

Introduction and purpose of the study

The title of my study is “Educating teachers for peace and justice in a context of violence and injustice”. This is an action research project. The aim of the project is to develop the skills and understandings of teachers so they address peace and justice more effectively in and through their work.

What I am asking you to do

As part of the group of participants on the short course, if you choose to be part of the research study, you will be asked to allow the use of information from your involvement to be used as data for the study. In all cases, that information will be treated as anonymous and confidential. What this means is that your name and identity will in no way be revealed and that it will not be possible for someone who was not present in the discussion or interview setting to know whose words are being used.

I am thus asking whether you agree to the use of what you express or communicate in these contexts:

- Discussion in class, excluding discussion in breakout rooms
- What you write in evaluations, any written assignment and reflection tasks
- An individual interview and focus group interview, if you are asked to take part in these
- Possible arts-based work that is designed to bring to the surface key relevant issues about the focus of the course.

There will be a process of checking with research participants on the accuracy of data (for example, in the transcript of interviews) and whether findings reasonably reflect the data from the course.

We will start the project in September 2021 and end by November 2021.

What you do not have to do

1. You do not have to participate and you will be free to withdraw your consent at any time.
2. You do not have to agree to the use of your name or identity in any way through any published material related to the project.

Risks and benefits

We do not foresee any specific risks. The benefits to you are limited to the benefits that flow from participating in the short course. The researcher will benefit through greater understanding of these issues and through the likely publication of research findings.

If, during the study, you feel affected emotionally by the issues under discussion, be assured that Student Counselling are aware of the study and have agreed to provide support if that is needed.

Withdrawal from the study

If you withdraw your consent, you do not have to provide any reason for withdrawing.

Other aspects

There will be no payment to you for your participation in the study. You will not be expected to contribute any costs towards the study.

You will be fully informed of what we find out from this study and will be provided with a copy of the final research paper that will be written.

Confidentiality

As indicated above, your name will not appear at any stages of the study. It will not be possible for others to identify you from any research publication.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

Please contact the researcher (082 926 5333 or 031 373 5499, icon@dut.ac.za) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagement, Prof S Moyo on 031 373 2577 or dvcric@dut.ac.za.

Sincerely
Crispin Hemson

Letter of information to short course staff members about the related research project

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking an interest in my research. I am Crispin Hemson, Director of the International Centre of Nonviolence at Durban University of Technology. I wish to provide information on my doctoral research so that you have a clear understanding of what it is about.

Introduction and purpose of the study

The title of my study is “Educating teachers for peace and justice in a context of violence and injustice”. This is an action research project. The aim of the project is to develop the skills and understandings of teachers so they address peace and justice more effectively in and through their work.

What I am asking you to do

As part of the staff group on the short course, if you choose to be part of the research study, you will be asked to allow the use of information from your involvement to be used as data for the study. In all cases, that information will be treated as anonymous and confidential. What this means is that your name and identity will in no way be revealed and that it will not be possible for someone who was not present in the discussion or interview setting to know whose words are being used.

I am thus asking whether you agree to the use of what you express or communicate in these contexts:

- Discussion in class, excluding discussion in breakout rooms and in meetings
- What you write in evaluations, emails, and meetings
- An individual interview and focus group interview, if you are asked to take part in these.

There will be a process of checking with research participants on the accuracy of data (for example, in the transcript of interviews) and whether findings reasonably reflect the data from the course.

We will start the project in September 2021 and end by November 2021.

What you do not have to do

3. You do not have to participate and you will be free to withdraw your consent at any time.
4. You do not have to agree to the use of your name or identity in any way through any published material related to the project.

Risks and benefits

We do not foresee any specific risks. The benefits to you are limited to the benefits that flow from participating in the short course. The researcher will benefit through greater understanding of these issues and through the likely publication of research findings.

If, during the study, you feel affected emotionally by the issues under discussion, be assured that Student Counselling are aware of the study and have agreed to provide support if that is needed.

Withdrawal from the study

If you withdraw your consent, you do not have to provide any reason for withdrawing.

Other aspects

There will be no payment to you for your participation in the study. You will not be expected to contribute any costs towards the study.

You will be fully informed of what we find out from this study and will be provided with a copy of the final research paper that will be written.

Confidentiality

As indicated above, your name will not appear at any stages of the study. It will not be possible for others to identify you from any research publication.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

Please contact the researcher (082 926 5333 or 031 373 5499, icon@dut.ac.za) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagement, Prof S Moyo on 031 373 2577 or dvcric@dut.ac.za.

Sincerely

Crispin Hemson

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Crispin Hemson, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study. I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Letter of Information) regarding the study.

I am aware that the information, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials will be anonymously used for the study report.

I understand that I am participating on my own free will, and that I may refuse to answer any particular questions and/or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and of my own free will declare myself prepared to participate in the study.


Full Name of Participant	Date	Time	Signature
---------------------------------	-------------	-------------	------------------

I, Crispin Hemson, herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study. I agree to the conditions stipulated in this Letter of Informed Consent and undertake to respect and adhere to them.

Full Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
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APPENDIX 4: POSTER FOR INTERVENTION PHASE

This was sent to prospective applicants and posted on the student portal of DUT



DURBAN INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME 2023

The 2023 Programme will focus directly on the development of skilled facilitators with the ability to advance peace, social justice and environmental sustainability.

This Programme is hosted by the International Centre of Nonviolence (ICON) at DUT, in collaboration with WESSA, the environmental organisation.

The Programme will consist of:

- A series of classes linked to readings, from April to October
- Engagement in practical facilitation work
- A written assignment




THOSE STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE ALL COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAMME WILL BE AWARDED A CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

- Applicants must be able to work online.

TO APPLY, CLICK [HERE](#)

ANY ENQUIRIES: SEND AN EMAIL TO ICON@DUT.AC.ZA
OR VISIT THE ICON OFFICES, GROUND FLOOR, BLOCK C,
ML SULTAN CAMPUS, DUT.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:
4th April 2022



APPENDIX 5: LETTER OF INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT, INTERVENTION PHASE



LETTER OF INFORMATION TO FACILITATOR PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE RELATED RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking an interest in my research. I am Crispin Hemson, Director of the International Centre of Nonviolence at Durban University of Technology. I wish to provide information on my doctoral research so that you have a clear understanding of what it is about.

Introduction and purpose of the study

The title of my study is “Educating teachers for peace in a context of violence”. This is an action research project. The aim of the project is to develop the skills and understandings of teachers so they address peace more effectively in and through their work.

What I am asking you to do

As part of the group of participants on the facilitator programme, if you choose to be part of the research study, you will be asked to allow the use of information from your involvement to be used as data for the study. In all cases, that information will be treated as anonymous and confidential. What this means is that your name and identity will in no way be revealed and that it will not be possible for someone who was not present in the discussion or interview setting to know whose words are being used.

I am thus asking whether you agree to the use of what you express or communicate in these contexts:

- Discussion in class, excluding discussion in breakout rooms
- What you write in evaluations, any written assignment and reflection tasks
- An individual interview and focus group interview, if you are asked to take part in these
- Possible arts-based work that is designed to bring to the surface key relevant issues about the focus of the course.

There will be a process of checking with research participants on the accuracy of data (for example, in the transcript of interviews) and whether findings reasonably reflect the data from the course.

This consent concerns the period April to November 2023.

What you do not have to do

1. You do not have to participate and you will be free to withdraw your consent at any time.
2. You do not have to agree to the use of your name or identity in any way through any published material related to the project.

Risks and benefits

We do not foresee any specific risks. The benefits to you are limited to the benefits that flow from participating in the facilitator programme. The researcher will benefit through greater understanding of these issues and through the likely publication of research findings.

If, during the study, you feel affected emotionally by the issues under discussion, be assured that Student Counselling are aware of the study and have agreed to provide support if that is needed.

Withdrawal from the study

If you withdraw your consent, you do not have to provide any reason for withdrawing.

Other aspects

There will be no payment to you for your participation in the study. You will not be expected to contribute any costs towards the study.

You will be fully informed of what we find out from this study and will be provided with a copy of the final research paper that will be written.

Confidentiality

As indicated above, your name will not appear at any stages of the study. It will not be possible for others to identify you from any research publication.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

Please contact the researcher (082 926 5333 or 031 373 5499, crispinh@dut.ac.za) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagement, Prof K Motaung on 031 373 2577 or dverie@dut.ac.za.

Sincerely

Crispin Hemson

APPENDIX 6: INITIAL INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS, INTERVENTION PHASE

Durban Innovative Leadership Programme

2023 programme

Aim

To develop people as leaders who have the capacity to facilitate dialogues and workshops in ways that advance peace, nonviolence, social justice and environmental sustainability.

Selection criteria

- Teachers, university students, staff or community-based activists.
- The ability to demonstrate existing involvement in a project that advances peace, nonviolence and/or environmental sustainability and where their learning can be applied.
- Evidence of a commitment to this work that is in line with our aims
- Has signed a commitment to full participation.
- Educational level: minimum of 1st year university complete.
- Must have access to effective Internet connection.
- Positive reference from someone working in these fields.

Educational rationale

- Effective facilitation for peace and nonviolence involves learning a *range* of understandings, skills and attitudes.
- A major learning is to understand what one's *role* is as a facilitator.
- Good facilitation requires understanding relevant *theory* and working with that theory in the practical steps of facilitation.
- The context is one with a history of oppression and environmental degradation.
- The context is one with high levels of violence that reinforce each other, such as discrimination, gender-based violence, vigilantism, substance abuse, and this carries the consequences of entrenched patterns of trauma
- Learning to be an effective facilitator requires undertaking the necessary unlearning of rigidities and distortions that arise from our socialisation within a violent, oppressive and environmentally impaired context.
- Such unlearning and transformation require creating and sustaining spaces within which there is sufficient sense of safety for confronting uncomfortable issues.
- Learning to be an effective facilitator requires engagement with values and emotions as well as our cognitive understanding.

Requirements for certificate of achievement

Ability to complete successfully a written account of one's learning on the programme that demonstrates the effective use of relevant theory.

Ability to facilitate learning in a specific context, either on the programme or in existing projects, in ways that are judged to be consistent with and to advance the aims of the programme (this may require assessment by a mentor on site).

Attendance and full participation at all sessions. There will be eight face-to-face and three online sessions.

Programme

Session				Theory and reading
1	Face to face	Friday 24 March 13:00 – 16:00	Creating a safe space Seeing ourselves and others as resources Developing and posing questions	Grint/Freire
2	Online	Wednesday 5 April 16:30 – 18:00	Role of the facilitator Safety and socialisation	Harro
3	Face to face	Saturday 22 April 10:00 – 14:00	The environment and nonviolence: visit to nature reserve	Burt, Lotz-Sisitka & Pereira
4	Online	3 May 16:30 – 18:00	Violence	Gandhi, Galtung, Collins
5	Face to face	21 May 13:00 – 16:00	History, collective violence and collective trauma	Mogapi, Collins
6	Face to face	23 June 13:00 – 16:00	Developing dialogue	Dialogue as habitus
7	Face to face	28 July 13:00 – 16:00	Methods of facilitation: handling emotions	Zembylas
8	Online	10 August 16:30 – 18:00	Gender dialogue	
9	Face to face	25 August 13:00 – 16:00	<i>To be determined</i>	
10	Face to face	22 September 13:00 – 16:00	<i>To be determined</i>	
11	Face to face	27 October 13:00 – 16:00	Assessing learning	

Structure of sessions

Online sessions: Wednesday afternoons, from 16:30 to 18:00

Proposed dates are the 4th Friday of each month

Recruitment and selection

Direct approach will be made to groupings with which ICON has existing relationships, such as GenEd (tutors in particular), Environmental Education Network, WESSA, Men's Carve and the Durban Coalition.

Application will be online.

Written assignment

Identify one or two concepts or theories that you have found most useful in helping you to learn on this programme. Explain fully why you have chosen them and what they mean for your work as a facilitator.

In responding to this topic, please:

- Provide a brief description of the context in which you work
- Explain the concept/s or theory/ies you have chosen sufficiently and clearly enough for the reader to understand the significance to you.
- Clarify fully the ways in which you have found using these theories is valuable in your work as a facilitator. This includes providing specific examples of where you have/would draw on them.
- Have a clear line of argument that you develop in the assignment.
- Provide a clear introduction that guides the reader to your main argument, and a conclusion that sums up what you have done in the assignment.
- Use headings in the main text to guide the reader.
- Give in-text references and a final list of references that follow the guide given (DUT Referencing Guide)
- Ensure that your use of any scholarly work is clearly referenced and that any quotation is clearly identified.
- Write about 1 500 words.

APPENDIX 7: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



19 September 2022

Mr C M C Hemson
15 Morris Place
Glenwood
Durban
4001

Dear Mr Hemson

Educating teachers for peace and justice in a context of violence
Ethical Clearance number IREC 152/22

The DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letter.

Please note that **FULL APPROVAL** is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the DUT-IREC according to the DUT-IREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's).

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the DUT-IREC as outlined in the DUT-IREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely

Prof J K Adam
Chairperson: DUT-IREC

APPENDIX 8: GATEKEEPER'S LETTER



Directorate for Research and Postgraduate Support
Durban University of Technology
Open House
P.O. Box 1334, Durban 4000
Tel.: 031-3732576/7
Fax: 031-3732946

5th September 2022

Mr Crispin Hemson
c/o International Centre of Nonviolence
Faculty of Management Sciences
Durban University of Technology

Dear Mr Hemson

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE DUT

Your email correspondence in respect of the above refers. I am pleased to inform you that the Institutional Research and Innovation Committee (IRIC) has granted **Gatekeeper Permission** for you to conduct your research "Educating teachers for peace in a context of violence" at the Durban University of Technology. **Kindly note that this letter must be issued to the IREC for approval before you commence data collection.**

The DUT may impose any other condition it deems appropriate in the circumstances having regard to nature and extent of access to and use of information requested.

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings would be submitted to the IRIC on completion of your studies.

Kind regards.
Yours sincerely

MS V GOVENDER
ACTING-DIRECTOR: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT DIRECTORATE

APPENDIX 9: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: INTERVENTION PHASE

When you look back at the course for facilitators, how do you feel about it?

Can you identify two or three critical incidents that made an impact on you – and explain why they were significant?

Can you give me a few examples of high points during the course?

Can you give me a few examples of low points during the course?

Overall, what impact did the course have on you?

How did the course impact how you understand the role as a facilitator?

How did the course impact the way you now facilitate?

What did you learn about yourself through this process?

APPENDIX 10: WAYS OF WORKING AGREED UPON, PILOT

These were the specific ways of working negotiated with participants generated through the process of consensus:

- Discussion of case studies
- Consistency of attendance
- Creating a safe space for people to express themselves
- Challenging ideas not people- disagree respectfully- try to take time to reflect on your opinions before disagreeing.
- Debates around issues- explore issues fully
- Considering/ hearing more about different cultural/religious backgrounds- thinking about context and history
- Mix of small and large group discussions
- All voices welcome- we want to hear from everyone- participation is essential
- Inclusivity
- Exposure to different groups of people and sharing information/ideas across groups
- Clear report backs from others
- Allowing ourselves and others to speak about how we feel
- Using “I” messages when we present different/disagreeing ideas- avoid accusatory language
- Encourage collaboration- welcome equal contribution
- Be considerate- remember to be open to others’ ideas and thoughts
- Being mindful of difference (e.g. from different age groups etc.)
- Punctuality
- Confidentiality- make sure we ask around sensitive experiences/sharing- consent and anonymity.
- Use knowledge about others’ experiences respectfully.
- Thoughtfulness around problems of connection.
- Comfort breaks!
- Patience as different people express themselves- it is not always easy for everyone.
- Using language in equitable ways – home language plus translation where necessary

APPENDIX 11: WAYS OF WORKING AGREED UPON, INTERVENTION PHASE

- Listening deeply to each other, being present to each other, engagement
- Willingness to learn and unlearn
- Being open-minded
- Respect each other – by listening, by how we ask questions
- Being welcoming, understanding we are a diverse group, different perspectives
- Non-judgemental
- Creating a safe space for us to share experiences
- Embracing diversity
- Being empathic and compassionate to each other
- Ownership: accepting that we are different
- Confidentiality: appropriate handling of what we hear, thinking about how we use that information
- Honesty to share what they want to share, honest to say what they don't want to share
- Sharing of resources (readings etc)
- Talk loudly

APPENDIX 12: EDITOR'S LETTER

Elizabeth Norton-Amor

MA, CELTA

4 Irex Ridge, 9 Underwood Road, Umgeni Park, 4051

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28 March 2025

LANGUAGE EDITING REPORT

This is to certify that I provided language editing services to Crispin Hemson for his PhD thesis entitled 'Educating educators for peace in a context of violence'.

All language and grammar changes were included in track changes and implementation was left up to the author.

Elizabeth Norton-Amor

APPENDIX 13: TURNITIN REPORT

27/3/2025

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Educating Educators for Peace in a Context of Violence

By Crispin Hemson

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

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