

Art. # 1319, 13 pages, doi: 10.15700/saje.v36n4a1319

Leading curriculum change: Reflections on how *Abakhwezeli* stoked the fire

 Deidre Geduld and  Heloise Sathorar

School for Initial Teacher Education, Faculty of Education, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Campus, Port Elizabeth, South Africa
deidre.geduld2@nmmu.ac.za

Curriculum leadership is a complex and demanding practice, which goes beyond the research and disciplinary expertise of the curriculum leader. Engaging and leading educators in a process of curriculum change is not easy: it can be a difficult, and sometimes chaotic journey which is often characterised by philosophical debate, the calling into question of current practices, fear, and even openly acknowledged resistance. In order for change to succeed, leaders of curriculum change must facilitate a shared ownership of the change process. This will require the bringing together of individuals with different personal priorities and rallying them around a common goal, e.g. designing quality Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) programmes. Our curriculum renewal journey involved the use of problem-posing pedagogies and required us to employ transformative types of leadership strategies. In this paper, we reflect critically, on our roles, as members of the '*Abakhwezeli*', in stoking the fires of curriculum change in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) Faculty of Education. Furthermore, this paper will highlight particular defining moments during the curriculum renewal journey, where stakeholder consultation and the use of transformative methodologies assisted in prompting deep, critical reflection on the (re)designing of our B.Ed programmes.

Keywords: critical approach; critical pedagogy; curriculum renewal; dialogical spaces; problem-posing strategies; transformational leadership; transformative methodologies

Introduction

These are extraordinary times in Higher Education in South Africa: there is unprecedented turmoil throughout South Africa at Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) and calls for deep social transformation echo throughout the country. Change is happening at an increasingly rapid pace; however, according to university students and the organisers of student protest campaigns such as Rhodes Must Fall, Open Stellenbosch and Fees Must Fall, it is not fast enough. Hence, these campaigns highlight in particular the slow pace of curriculum transformation.

What needs to be considered is Cross, Shalem, Backhouse and Adam's (2009) contention that the profile of the South African student has changed, and that a fundamental disjuncture exists between the skills that poor and working class students leave high school with and the requirements of the university, whose model is predominantly a performance-driven one. Maistry (2011) therefore alludes to a need to interrogate how universities have responded in their curriculum to the changed profile of their student bodies. Policy reforms required all HEI's in South Africa to review their curriculums and renew them to respond to the needs of the 21st century emerging economy. This requires of HEI's to know their students and their students' needs and to prepare them both to interrogate the status quo, and to contribute to changing it and building an equitable, socially just, and more humane society.

In a curriculum-change learning community, an important factor for sustained change is an effective, consistent curriculum leader (Fullan, 2001; Reeves, 2006; Zmuda, Kuklis & Kline, 2004). Lachiver and Tardif (2002) describe the leadership required for curriculum change as being characterised by its capacity to attract individuals to a rallying objective, which has been defined by a mission statement, an educational vision, and guiding principles, all backed by the establishment and maintenance of a climate of confidence that drives a determination to succeed. Furthermore, Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky (2009:2) emphasise that:

What is needed from a leadership perspective are new forms of improvisational expertise, a kind of process expertise that knows prudently how to experiment with never-been-tried-before relationships, means of communication, and ways of interacting that help people develop solutions that build upon and surpass the wisdom of today's experts.

The NMMU Faculty of Education, who also had to review their curriculum, saw this process as an opportunity to facilitate deep, critical introspection and reflection on personal practice, while simultaneously consulting with various stakeholders. Tapping into student and alumni voices assisted a great deal with getting to know who our students really are. This was critical in assisting us to address the needs of our students via curriculum renewal. In addition to consulting students, consulting with school principals, mentor teachers and officials from the Department of Education assisted us in our quest to establish what our schools and society really require from newly qualified teachers.

Problem Statement

National policy reforms and calls for the restructuring of higher education in South Africa required HEI's to review and redesign their curriculums. In teacher education in particular, HEI's were provided with prescribed requirements in the Revised Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (Department of Higher Education and Training, Republic of South Africa, 2015) which stipulated the composition of teacher

education qualifications, as well as the knowledge and skills with which newly qualified teachers had to be equipped. Thus, HEI's who offered teacher education qualifications were required to review and redesign their programmes in order to adhere to the prescribed policy requirements. Maistry (2011) and Oleyede (2009) point out that some institutions dealt with curriculum transformation requirements by opting for technical compliance, as manifested in carefully scripted policy documents. This kind of technical compliance falls short of the kind of profound transformation required to meet the needs of the students who would become teachers in a radically transformed country like South Africa.

Maistry (2011) refers to "technisist" academics who proposed an approach to curriculum development and transformation that endeavours not to "contaminate" either the curriculum by drawing on students' experiences or the knowledge they bring to class, or the "purity" of disciplinary knowledge by making use of local as opposed to Western examples used in the prescribed text books. However, other academics actively embraced curriculum renewal as an opportunity to facilitate processes that open up spaces for deliberation on issues of curriculum transformation - specifically decolonizing the content of the curriculum and taking cognisance of indigenous knowledge. Rosenmund (2006) warns that curriculum change cannot simply be seen as a planned, "technocratic" reform to improve the productivity of the education system, but should also be understood as a political measure that re-shapes relationships between individuals of the institution through the selection and organisation of knowledge.

This is a tall order but is absolutely necessary if we, as faculties of education, look to the future and to the fulfillment of our mission, namely the provision of resilient, high quality beginner teachers, who would also have a critical understanding of the current economic and political conditions in our country and the world in order to provide quality education. A critical understanding does not necessarily mean a shared understanding, rather, an understanding that would enable a beginner teacher to interrogate the current conditions and apply the required expertise. We recognise the need for critical pedagogy that will help students look at issues in broad social contexts; that will hone their abilities for deep and critical inquiry; where they constructively consider multiple viewpoints and perspectives in dialogue with others; and that will engage them in socially just actions that will prepare them for a new citizenry in our increasingly pluralistic democracy (Nagda, Gurin & Lopez, 2003). Our students are sent to a range of

different schools in the Nelson Mandela Bay area for teaching practice and in particular, to develop their understanding of the impact of the whole ecosystem on the child's development within society. One student who was schooled in a well-resourced school, and who was exposed to teaching in an under-resourced school where the unemployment and poverty negatively impact the quality of teaching and learning, highlighted the following:

I appreciate the opportunity to have been exposed to schools operating in a different context than what I am used to as it allowed me to develop an understanding about the political, socio and economic nature of education, in and out of class. This made me think about the skills I need as a beginner teacher to interrupt the hegemony of the system and create learning opportunities based on learners' lived reality.

South Africa (SA), more than twenty years after the first democratic elections, is still reeling from the legacies of apartheid rule, and the challenges faced by a new democratic government. As such, SA, like most developing countries, is an emerging economy and struggling with the provision of quality education to ensure adequate economic growth that will enhance the standard of living in the country. Teacher education institutions have a vital role to play in the contribution of resources to the economy through the provision of resilient, flexible, high quality teachers. It is important that the curriculum offered by teacher education institutions take cognisance of the current reality in the country and prepare student teachers to work in schools with limited resources; thus, preparing teachers to embrace challenges such as schools without electricity or textbooks, and not to shy away from these challenges.

This paper provides a brief exposition of how leaders in teacher education can employ transformational leadership strategies and stakeholder consultation to facilitate critical reflection on practice so as to develop a teacher education curriculum that will prepare beginner teachers to think critically and creatively. Students should be able to implement theory in practice and remain relevant to the context of the children they teach. Thus, HEI's must encourage beginner teachers not to depend on resources such as textbooks, data projectors or even electricity; but rather to draw on local knowledge and the experiences their learners bring to class. By bringing forth the knowledge and strengths their students bring with them, teachers and students contribute to the development of a socially just and democratic society. Below, we discuss some of our successes in bringing about these changes. We also highlight the challenges experienced and lessons learnt during the curriculum renewal process.

Literature Review

Critical approach to curriculum renewal

The traditional transmission-of-knowledge mode sees students as passive, empty vessels waiting to be filled with knowledge provided by the professor, accepting whatever he/she says as what they should know. This is no longer seen to be sufficient. We need students to be able to explain, understand, and interpret knowledge. What is the alternative? Critical pedagogy and the implementation of a critical approach to educational practice provide a possible alternative.

Foley, Morris, Gounari and Agostinone-Wilson (2015) provide one definition of critical pedagogy that emphasises the task of teachers to develop very specific classroom processes designed to promote values and beliefs which encourage a democratic, critical mode of teacher-student participation and interaction stripped of egoistic individualism. Other scholars emphasise that a critical approach to education involves a way of thinking about, negotiating, and transforming the relationships in classroom teaching, the production of knowledge, the institutional structures of the school, and the social and material relations of the wider community, society and nation state (Keesing-Styles, 2003; McLaren, 2000; Nouri & Sajjadi, 2014). Additionally, according to Riasati and Mollaei (2012), a critical approach is one that attempts to help stakeholders question and challenge domination, and the beliefs and practices that give rise to it. As such, this approach includes developing in students a respect for moral commitment and social responsibility. Teachers who apply a critical approach are not seen as objective transmitters of knowledge, but rather as consciously acting human beings. Foley et al. (2015) maintain that teachers of critical pedagogy exist in a dialogical relationship with their students, where knowledge and meaning are constantly negotiated and debated. Thus, the learning process is seen as bi-directional, and teachers would have to develop forms of knowledge and classroom social practices that validate the experiences that students bring to school. Giroux (1988) refers to these types of teachers as transformative intellectuals.

The call for teachers to be transformative intellectuals is a response to the dominant perception of teachers as “high-level technicians” who carry out the dictates and objectives that have been decided by experts who are far removed from the everyday classroom life (Bercaw & Stooksberry, 2004; Giroux, 1988). The challenge for teachers is to overcome their tendency to be transmitters of knowledge who rely on technicians approaches (Giroux, 1988; Giroux & McLaren, 1996; Leistyna & Woodrum, 1996). Bercaw and Stooksberry (2004) suggest that in contrast, transformative intellectuals critically examine the world and its processes, including the political and educational

institutions that maintain social inequalities. The task of transformative intellectuals is, subsequently, to transform those institutions. Are lecturers at South African universities ready to grant students their own authority in the lecture halls? Are they ready to be transformative intellectuals? In order to encourage lecturers to become transformative intellectuals it is critical to introduce them to transformative methodologies. Kincheloe (2005:28) emphasises: “*good critical pedagogy dictates that I share where (students) are and teach them in ways that are culturally relevant to them.*” In the Faculty of Education at NMMU, the curriculum leaders employed transformational leadership to expose lecturers in the Faculty to transformative methodologies.

Facilitating curriculum renewal through transformational leadership

The theory of transformational and transactional leadership was conceptualised by James Mac Gregor Burns (1978), and further developed by Bernard Bass (1985). Subsequently, Bass and Riggio (2006) distinguished four elements of transformational leadership: *Idealized influence* implies that the leader is providing a sense of mission, winning the respect of team members, and instilling pride in their team. *Inspirational motivation* is demonstrated when the leader articulates a compelling vision, sets attractive goals and is confident team members will achieve them. *Intellectual stimulation* reflects a leader who stimulates team members to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions and approaching the status quo critically. Furthermore, transformational leaders approach each team member as an individual and not only as a member of a group. Thus, transformational leaders employ *Individualised consideration* to pay special attention to the needs of each member with regard to empowerment and development by acting as a coach or mentor. The elements of transformational leadership were used as guiding tools by the *Abakhwezeli* team in the Faculty of Education at NMMU, to negotiate a way through the complexities of curriculum design. It helped us focus our efforts and transformative practices in a structured manner, so as not to fall back on ticking the boxes.

More traditional transactional leadership involves leader-follower exchanges that are seen as necessary for achieving agreed-upon performance goals. These exchanges involve four dimensions:

- contingent reward (this factor describes a process whereby leaders provide followers with rewards for specific tasks performed);
- management by exception (active) (involves leaders providing corrective criticism);
- management by exception (passive) (involves leaders providing negative feedback and negative reinforcement); and

- laissez-faire (involves leaders who avoid taking positions of consequence or making decisions and are unwilling to take initiative or responsibility for their or their followers' actions) (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

This approach is technocratic: it focuses on individual work, drawing on expert opinions, and it employs a superficial box-ticking approach, with a strong focus on reform. In contrast, transformational leadership requires leaders to shift the values, beliefs and needs of their collegial teams in three important ways:

- increasing team members' awareness of the importance of their tasks and of performing them well;
- making team members aware of their needs for personal growth, development, and accomplishment; and
- inspiring team members to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the organization [sic] (Bass, 2010).

Transformational leadership also offers team members the affordances to extend their cognitive abilities, problem-solving skills and knowledge (Thoonen, Slegers, Oort, Peetsma & Geijsel, 2011). These characteristics of transformational leadership best suited the *Abakhwezeli* in their leading of the curriculum change process in the NMMU Faculty of Education.

Using transformative leadership practices

As noted above, we used transformative practices in line with the elements of transformational leadership. Transformative practices are participatory and visual, and they include different creative forms of communication and expression (<http://www.transformativestory.org/>). Whatever form is used, first and foremost, it encourages the telling of powerful stories and these stories are produced through collaborative processes, where participants and facilitators work together. Some stories are personal and others are collective.

The transformative practices we used included *World Café Conversations* (The World Café Community Foundation, 2015) and *Courageous Conversation* strategies (Singleton & Linton, 2006). We asked critical questions such as, 'who are our students?' and 'what do they need to know to actively participate as teachers in a developing country with low economic growth and in schools with limited educational resources?' Freire (1970:75) postulates that when critical questions constitute the primary driving force of a renewal process, the invitation to inquiry prepares participants to assume active roles in shaping and reshaping the core values underpinning the curriculum. We also used Metaphoric Analogies to encourage participation in and commitment to the process. Furthermore, holding these critical reflective sessions in *Provocative Spaces* like on our Missionvale Campus, situated in the heart of a

township, further enhanced our discussions regarding the realities that we have to prepare our students for. In this paper, we share what we have learnt, as well as the challenges we have experienced while applying these transformational leadership strategies and transformational practices during our curriculum renewal process.

Research Methodology

Method of Research

The current study resides within the qualitative research paradigm and, in particular, an instrumental case study analysis was followed. Yin (2003) explains that an instrumental case study involves gaining insight into a particular phenomenon; where there is also an explicit expectation that learning can be used to generalise or to develop theory. A case study is "a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context" (Yin, 2003:13). Thus, Yin (2003) views a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates the case or cases conforming to the abovementioned definition by addressing the 'how' or 'why' questions concerning the phenomenon of interest. He finds it particularly relevant for curriculum renewal inquiries. It is a strategy of qualitative research that allows for engagement in the context (the curriculum transformation context in this particular case) and allows for the views of the researcher and participants to be investigated and interrogated. This research method best suited us as it allowed us to tap into our own experience as well as into the experiences of participant stakeholders.

Context

When the Faculty of Education at NMMU was required to review their B.Ed curriculum they decided to involve all stakeholders in the review and the subsequent renewal of the curriculum. Stakeholders included university lecturers, students, alumni, school principals, mentor teachers, as well as officials from the local Department of Basic Education. The process needed to be facilitated and led by a multifaceted group of people. The then-Dean of the Faculty headed up a group consisting of the Directors of Schools as well as the Heads of the particular Programmes that needed to be reviewed and renewed. This group later called themselves *Abakhwezeli*, an isiXhosa word meaning 'fire stoker', the person who lights the fire and ensures that it continues to burn for the good of all. Thus, the main role of the *Abakhwezeli* team was to keep things 'burning' by moving forward during the curriculum renewal process. The process involved the following steps: Firstly, analysing the old curriculum to identify gaps in content that were taught, as well as gaps in the practical experience

we provided to our students. Secondly, we looked at what it was that our graduates needed to know and do to be able to teach in the range of contexts in the South African schooling system (this is where the input from alumni, school principals and mentor teachers who were working in these different contexts was extremely valuable). We then moved on to conceptualising theoretical constructs of what the B.Ed programme should equip a student teacher with. Subsequently these theoretical constructs (humanising pedagogy, decolonisation, critical thinking, and social justice) became the cornerstones of our curriculum framework and informed the module conceptualisation of specific programmes.

Participants and Positionality of Researchers

The Faculty of Education were required to review and renew their B.Ed Curriculum. As mentioned above a leadership team to facilitate the process was established. The *Abakhwezeli* team followed a critical approach to review the old curriculum and to facilitate the conceptualisation of the new curriculum. An important aspect of the critical approach that was followed was tapping into stakeholder voices to gain their opinion about the current curriculum and the requirements for a new curriculum. The stakeholders included: lecturers working on the B.Ed programmes (who were the constant participants in the process as they had to participate in all curriculum renewal workshops and colloquiums). Other stakeholders who were invited to some of the workshops included current students from the different B.Ed programmes, alumni from the different programmes, school principals, and mentor teachers from the range of different contexts in the SA school system (well-resourced and under-resourced schools), as well as officials from the local Department of Basic Education. School principals and mentor teachers would be invited from our teaching practice network of schools. The current students that were invited to participate in some of the workshops were predominantly fourth year students from the three B.Ed programmes and the Alumni were students who graduated in the previous five years, who had been teaching in our local schools.

The *Abakhwezeli* arranged workshops and colloquiums during which transformative practices such as World Café conversations and Courageous Conversations were employed to engage the stakeholders in identifying the gaps and problem areas in the old curriculum as well as to identify the guiding concepts that would inform the new B.Ed curricula.

The authors of this paper were members of *Abakhwezeli* as they were respectively the Heads of the Foundation Phase (FP) and Further Education and Training (FET) Phase programmes. As such,

they formed an integral part of the curriculum renewal process and had a vested interest in understanding what it was that the various stakeholders wanted from the new B.Ed programme, and ultimately newly qualified beginner teachers. *Abakhwezeli* met on a weekly basis, to reflect on the progress of the renewal process and to discuss ways in which to take it forward in a coherent manner. It is important to mention that the team was not established to review and redesign curricula on their own, but rather to elicit the contributions of all stakeholder participants.

Data Collection Process

It is incumbent upon case study researchers to draw their data from multiple sources to capture the complexity and entirety of the case. Both of us kept a reflective journal, in which we used free narrative writing to describe our experience of the curriculum renewal process, and in particular, how we used transformational leadership strategies to engage all stakeholders in the process. We captured our experience of the different workshops, but also pertinent stories and comments shared by stakeholder participants at the various workshops in our journals. As these journals had reflective notes on all the workshops that took place during the curriculum renewal process, they became the main source of data collected for this paper. These journals not only captured our experiences but also, to some extent, stakeholder voices. The trustworthiness of the data in our reflective journals was fortified by comparing the data to the notes taken by an independent third party on behalf of the Faculty at the different workshops and engagement events. These notes were also made available to all members of Faculty, who were invited to offer corrections and revisions. In addition, the notes were backed up by video recordings of the workshop proceedings that captured stakeholder voice and their participation in the proceedings. Both the workshop notes and video recordings were used to confirm our experience of the proceedings.

Data Analysis

The data was analysed qualitatively. We used a process of triangulation, whereby the data in the authors' journals were compared to the workshop notes, as well as to the video recordings, to identify common themes. This was achieved by using open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) that involved four steps:

- Reading through the corpus of narrative data (notes from the authors' reflective journals and the notes taken by an independent third party at all the Faculty Curriculum Renewal workshops and colloquiums) as well as watching the video recordings of these events to search discretely within the different sets of data for emerging themes and patterns.

- Sorting the data and categorising it into themes.
- Choosing two main themes to focus on in this paper. This was done by the authors comparing the themes that they identified from the data with the literature on transformational leadership theory. The two themes that were identified were: ‘*the use of transformative practices*’ and the ‘*implementation of the four elements of transformational leadership*’.
- Finally, a mapping process was used to identify connections, tensions, continuities, discontinuities, and gaps among the themes and the literature to determine what these connections might allude to regarding the curriculum change process.

Findings

Between 2012 and 2014, the stakeholders identified above participated in a sequence of workshops and meetings aimed at facilitating the redesign of the B.Ed curriculum. During these sessions *Abakhwezeli* facilitated collaborative sessions focused on how to contextualise and deliver the new curriculum in a way that would address the needs of all stakeholders in SA. For this purpose *Abakhwezeli* applied the *intellectual stimulation* element of transformational leadership by drawing on Jansen’s (2009) *Knowledge in the Blood* to facilitate these discussions. Two other thought provoking texts (Del Carmen Salazar, 2013; Keet, Zinn & Porteus, 2009) were also employed. In addition to this *Abakhwezeli* employed transformative practices including the World Café methodology, Courageous Conversation strategies, provocative spaces and metaphoric analogies. A brief discussion about how we used these transformative practices follows.

World Café Conversations

This methodology was used to allow all participants to reflect on suggested readings that served as stimulation for them to contribute to the pertinent issues under discussion. It also allowed participants to share their thoughts and opinions in smaller groups before reporting to the bigger group, and it allowed for cross pollination of ideas and the building up of main ideas that would subsequently inform our curriculum design. Participants had to read selected chapters of Jansen’s (2009) *Knowledge in the Blood*. The World Café conversation asked participants to rotate around the room, visiting different stations, and at each of the stations to explore the answers to set questions including the following:

- who are our students and where do they come from?
- what do our students already know?
- what do they need to know to contribute to a socially just and democratic society as beginner teachers?
- what does a socially just and democratic society need these beginner teachers to know?
- how best do our students learn; and

- how best can we assess whether they have learnt what they need to know to make a meaningful contribution to our developing democratic society?

Participants were urged to contribute their thoughts on each question without their contributions being critiqued. These contributions were cross-pollinated with others (as groups changed) to connect diverse perspectives. This allowed for the harvesting and sharing of collective discoveries through the identification of patterns, common insights and deeper questions that would subsequently inform the B.Ed programme frameworks and specific module designs. One of the examples that emerged referred to in both our reflective journals was the importance of exposing our students to the range of different schools in South Africa. Another matter that was highlighted was the importance of engaging the other Academic Service Faculties at our institution, that provide our students with specific subject content to ensure that they know what content our students require to teach in the South African schools.

Despite the obvious benefits of using this practice, we also experienced some challenges in using it, as some people felt that not being able to critique contributions would allow for a deficit view to infiltrate our thinking, especially regarding the perceived “limited” knowledge that students bring to the university and the different backgrounds from which they originate. These challenges were, to some extent, overcome by allowing general discussions at the end of the Café conversations, when participants are allowed to express how they experienced the discussions, as well as make comments on the notes that were taken at the different stations and subsequently shared with the whole group. At the end of one such a workshop, where exposing students to the different contexts in the SA schooling system was discussed, a 4th year student made the following comment, openly sharing her fear as well as expressing her total surprise at what she experienced:

Being asked to visit a school in the township I really expected the worse. I must be honest. I cannot believe how good the school looks and how well it is run. The kids are disciplined. I expected chaos, filth... While I was driving there and looking at my surroundings my heart just sank and I became very anxious... but then when I walked through the school gates, I was pleasantly surprised... as it is pretty awesome. I could not believe that this well run school was there in the middle of all the poverty and deprivation. And I started to think that it’s possible for me to teach in this school.

These interactions highlighted the importance of getting to know our students and where they come from, as well as the importance of appreciating diversity by not giving preference to the values of

one type of educational system over another – for example romanticising and privileging suburban city school education over rural education, or for that matter romanticising indigenous knowledge. These were heated and very emotional conversations and we came to the realisation that there are no clear-cut answers or ten step recipes for designing programmes and modules. The conversation with all the different stakeholders would be an on-going evolution, and the content that needed to be included in the modules would have to be constantly negotiated so as to take into account the realities of our students.

Courageous Conversation

Another transformative practice employed during the curriculum renewal process was Courageous Conversations. Kincheloe (2005:7) points out that curriculum frameworks are shaped by those who devise them and by the values they hold. Consequently, curriculum design cannot be dissociated from histories and identities as conditioned and situated in socio-cultural and socio-political human beings. Thus, during our analysis of the current curriculum, to identify the gaps, overlaps and problem areas, we were obliged to acknowledge the dominance of Western ideologies and how this alienated the majority of the new generation of students in South African universities. This caused a lot of tension and made some of the participants uncomfortable, as the current curriculum with its Western ideologies was all we knew. Some participants even questioned why we had to change a curriculum that is “working”. For example one of the Faculty academics asked whether changing the curriculum was the right thing to do, as our students were “happy” with the current curriculum. *“Our students just want to obtain a degree and live an average life; they don’t want to change the world,”* she said. On another occasion another academic participant said: *“it feels as if we are asked to dumb down the curriculum and it is rather frustrating as the current curriculum is working”*. We then had to ask for whom the curriculum was working, and why it was working for some and not for others. These were difficult and painful conversations but also intellectually stimulating; the utilisation of the Courageous Conversations strategy made these conversations possible. We would be asked to reflect on specific chapters from Jansen’s (2009) *Knowledge in the Blood* and then in pairs discuss how the text made us feel. In particular we (Faculty academics) had to share aspects of race relations in our Faculty, and how we experience the different races within the Faculty working together. After the pair sharing participants would be invited to share in the group what they experienced during the pair sharing.

We were constantly reminded that healing and progress come from talking about the joys and pains of our current reality. We both mention in our journals staff conversations regarding how difficult it was to talk about SA’s “apartheid past” in some of our classes, as some white students and even white staff members, felt that they were tired of being blamed and having to apologise for things that they did not personally do. On the other hand, black students and staff felt that it was important to talk about these matters so that we never have a repeat of “apartheid”. Staff shared how in some classes, white students would not attend or participate when these matters were discussed. Staff shared how students were frustrated with each other about using their mother tongue (isiXhosa or Afrikaans) rather than English in class, and how important it was to effectively mediate the situation. In these sessions, *Abakhwazeli* constantly emphasised that it was only through talking that we would be able to craft a shared understanding of what was required in the new curriculum, and what we needed to do to work towards those goals. The following principles of courageous conversations (Singleton & Linton, 2006) were employed, and we were continually reminded to apply them in our critical reflections and deliberations:

- Staying engaged – morally, emotionally and intellectually engaged in the conversation. The heart, mind and body need to stay committed to the conversation. One needs to guard against the inclination to move away from the conversation and as such, there is a need to manage one’s own silence and defiance.
- Experience discomfort – discomfort will arise when examining your own core perceptions, beliefs, values and behaviours. We were reminded that an increased tolerance for discomfort leads to increased tackling of challenges.
- Speak your truth – this involved a willingness to take risks, and being absolutely honest about your thoughts. The respective facilitators and *Abakhwazeli* encouraged staff to not fear sounding angry, ignorant or offending, but rather to own their own experience and speak about these experiences. In other words, don’t just say what you think others want to hear.
- Expect and accept non-closure – From the off-set of the curriculum renewal process *Abakhwezeli* informed staff that we will make this path as we go along and encouraged staff to let go of searching for solutions as there are no quick fixes. It was thus important to accept that a solution lay in conversation itself (Singleton & Linton, 2006).

It was very difficult to implement these principles, but we were constantly made aware of them by the Dean (who was the Head of *Abakhwezeli*) as well as an outside consultant (who assisted the Dean in facilitating the process). If we followed these principles we would move the process forward. This helped to keep us committed. *Abakhwezeli*, by

applying the transformational leadership element of *idealized influence* (convincing staff to commit to the process through setting an example worthy of following) sought through their own example of staying committed to applying the principles of Courageous Conversations, to keep their teams focused on the ultimate goal of designing new curricula that would take into account the lived experiences of all stakeholders. Furthermore, by showing their own vulnerability, *Abakhwezeli* sought to ensure that team members knew that we were all in this process together. For example, the B.Ed Foundation Phase (FP) Head of Programme who formed part of *Abakhwezeli*, shared the following during one of our discussions:

I was intimidated to be in a classroom with 80 Grade One learners at one of the township schools. The question that came to my mind was whether I prepared my student teachers in the FP programme for this context. Is there alignment between my module content and the pedagogies needed for this classroom?

After this, many of the other academics admitted that this context was something that they did not know and that they were very fearful of facing. However, because we were in the process together, we could open ourselves together to learn from teachers who deal with these realities on a daily basis, and not be fearful of the reality. In so doing we could also share what we have learnt with our students.

As the Courageous Conversation principles indicated, we would not end up with a clear and set programme framework, or specific modules. However, the process did highlight aspects that needed to be taken into account in the design of the programme frameworks, as well as the specific modules. The process and the implementation of the Courageous Conversation principles made us aware how important it was to respect and listen to each other's views and lived experiences. It also made us aware of the value of expressing one's own feelings and opinions. Finally, it made us realise how important it is to acknowledge the different knowledge and lived experiences that our students bring into our classrooms.

At one of our colloquiums, current students were asked to share how they experienced the curriculum. Students of all races shared openly how in some classes they felt ignored, and how they did not participate in discussions as they felt that what they had to contribute would not be valued or that it would be ridiculed. One student (a black, fourth year B.Ed FET student specialising in the teaching of Business Management and Economics) mentioned how he could not relate to the examples being used in some classes. The student referred specifically to Western, Eurocentric examples that were used in the prescribed textbooks of some modules. In particular, he mentioned how they would be expected to do case

studies on American Aviation Companies, when some of them have never been at an airport or in an aeroplane. A lecturer who was present during this colloquium said afterwards that the students' presentations served as an opportunity for him to reflect on the relevance of his module content and the need for a carefully thought-through module revision that takes contextual realities of schools and children into account.

At the same colloquium, several B.Ed FET students also mentioned how they struggle during teaching practice to manage their classes, especially in schools situated in areas that were plagued by drug abuse and crime. One female student shared the following story:

I don't feel equipped to deal with my Grade 10 Life Sciences class. I stand in front of the class and teach, but nobody listens... I ask questions and nobody answers... my learners stare at me with blank looks in their eyes... needless to say they perform badly on tests... and I don't know what to do anymore... I am so despondent because nothing I do seem to work...

This highlighted the importance of preparing our students for these complex social phenomena that they will experience in schools, and how important it is to support students while they are doing practice teaching.

Metaphorical Analogies

Metaphorical analogies were also used as a transformative practice. The concept of metaphors originates from the Greek word "metaphora" meaning "transference", and serves as a bridge, or threshold (limina) to another reality, as it involves a shift in beliefs, values or relationships (Hartmann, 2011). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) are of the opinion that metaphors not only make our thoughts more vivid and interesting, but they actually structure our perceptions and understanding. Metaphors enhance or limit participants' freedom to respond and participate by going beyond linear propositional Aristotelian logic (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). This aligned with *Abakhwezeli's* use of transformational leadership and in particular with the elements of idealised influence and *inspirational motivation*. *Abakhwezeli* used metaphors to inspire and motivate participants to engage in the curriculum renewal activities and to enhance their understanding of what was required of them during the process.

Each B.Ed Programme team had to prepare a presentation on their respective curricula, bearing in mind that in post-apartheid South Africa, desired changes for improving education for the majority of learners in the system have not materialised. The three programmes used different metaphors to describe their understanding and interpretation of their curriculum design. For example, the B.Ed FP used the metaphor, of scaling summits. This portrayed how, within the current curriculum

structure, the FP curriculum makers needed to be conscious of the context within which teaching and learning takes place. Thus, the curriculum maker had to take cognisance of our developing country context, where the majority of schools are lacking resources, and where learners in these schools need to be instructed in their mother tongue. The metaphor of a summit suggests how we, within the FP programme, have a mountain to climb when it comes to the many challenges of teaching and learning within our context of teacher education. But by collaborating with other stakeholders on the summit (school principals, mentor teachers, and community members), we would go a long way in overcoming the challenges we face.

The B.Ed Further Education and Training (FET) programme utilised the metaphor of “Survivor: Building resilience; and addressing the challenges facing young, novice teachers within the 21st century classroom”. For this particular activity, workshop attendees (faculty lecturers) were divided into groups by the *Abakhwezeli* facilitator, and given a pack of word cards with the names of the current B.Ed FET modules on the cards, for example, PGED 101 – Education 1; PGED 301 – Education 3; POSD 2 – General Didactics. Participants were asked to construct a four-level structure with the cards that would illustrate the curriculum. The FET staff members in the different groups were required to assist by indicating which modules were offered in the respective years of the degree, so as to ensure that the word cards were used in the correct level of the structure. Subsequently, groups had to physically move the structure from their table to the front table, with this symbolising the requirement of the curriculum to move us into the 21st century. However, these structures collapsed, indicating that the current B.Ed FET curriculum was unstable – like a house of cards – and that several gaps, overlaps and problem areas could be identified.

Being part of *Abakhwezeli* and working in parallel with different stakeholders as a collaborative team, highlighted the importance and potential of collaboration that subsequently further stimulated creative and collaborative activities in our respective programme teams. Employing transformative practices heightened our own creativity, and made us aware of the importance of tapping into stakeholder voices as they provided valuable insights into what should be included in the curriculum to adequately prepare students to teach in all contexts in SA. It is through acknowledging stakeholder voice that one gains support for the mutual goal. Applying a transformational leadership strategy, and in particular, focusing on the four elements of transformational leadership (idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration), allowed us to support our teams on their trans-

formational journey, but also assisted us in our transformation as leaders – and made us realise that you can only be a leader through the support of your team. Finally, reflecting in our journals allowed us to make sense of the process as it was unfolding, and allowed us to share our experience with each other.

Provocative Spaces

Provocative spaces were also used as a transformative practice. The different hi(stories) of the different stakeholders and the nature of the political and intellectual questions at stake for curriculum renewal required an entirely different context – one that could speak both to reason and to affect. Thus, it was decided to use provocative spaces to enhance the stories and experiences stakeholders bring to the curriculum renewal table.

Our Missionvale Campus was used as a provocative space, not for its artistic or historical significance but for its ability to spark conversation. The Missionvale Campus was the Port Elizabeth base for the previous multi-campus Vista University which offered tertiary qualifications to black students, who under the apartheid regime, were not allowed to attend the traditionally white universities. This campus was situated in the heart of three neighbouring townships. Thus, it was a space of restriction and controlled access (a space previously meant only for black students with some white lecturers), as well as a space of possibility (a space where previous experiences could be shared and new knowledge developed). As such, it required us to think of different ways of teaching and learning (*individualised consideration*) as opposed to thinking of out-dated colonial modes of learning such as imitation and repetition. The purpose of this space was to engage the story and the storyteller respectfully, focusing our attention on participants’ active engagement and agency. At one of the workshops held on the Missionvale Campus, some white lecturers shared that it was their first time on that campus. Lecturers who attended the workshop were asked to describe how the Missionvale campus made them feel using free narrative writing. Those who were willing to share their narratives were given an opportunity to do so. One lecturer wrote the following:

As I enter the townships, I am immediately more conscious of myself being a white woman [sic]. I don't frequent townships as much as people of color enter places that are predominantly white or are owned and managed by people like me (this, I know, is an assumption). I think to myself, have these places really changed? Are they still closed off? While my thoughts are uncomfortable, the space felt comfortable but I recognize [sic] it is a necessary discomfort.

We observed that participants felt courageous enough to risk, explore, experiment, assert, learn, and change, knowing that they would be supported

in those necessarily destabilising and unpredictable processes. The Missionvale campus also allowed us to tap into stakeholder (school principal and mentor teacher) voice, regarding classroom experiences in the surrounding area, and what the Faculty of Education can do to prepare teachers to work in these schools.

School principals highlighted that the Faculty currently trains their students to teach with interactive whiteboards and data projectors, and as such, prepares them to only work in twenty percent of South African schools. They made a request that in the new curriculum, student teachers be prepared to teach in the range of different schools in South Africa, some of which operate without textbooks, internet, computers, smart boards, enough desks etc. They reported that eighty percent of schools in South Africa require resilient teachers that can tackle challenges such as a lack of electricity, or having to make their own learning materials. Principals reiterated that they wanted a teacher with a positive ‘yes, I will go’ attitude. One school principal said that he wants teachers to still be positive, despite having 80 learners in one class; to be prepared to make their own reading materials and collect lids of milk cartons that her learners could use as counters; and teachers who would be willing to light a candle when it is too dark for learners to read.

The dialogue in *this space* required great willingness on the part of participants to disclose their personal views of the situation, their own opinions and experiences (Bergold & Thomas, 2012). These experiences included principals from the surrounding township schools sharing how, despite all their challenges, learning still takes place in their schools. It further involved students realising that they should not fear working in a township school and that there is actually a lot that you can learn from such schools. It also included lecturers’ realising that they need to prepare their students to work in the range of different schools in South Africa.

Freire (2002) links learning spaces like Missionvale to dialogical processes. The *Abakhwezeli* played a vital role, as transformational leaders, by creating these dialogical opportunities and using these provocative spaces to inspire and motivate (inspirational motivation) their teams. By doing so, stakeholders’ stories and voices were woven into suggestions for a new curriculum. The fact that *Abakhwezeli* brought different educational stakeholders together to learn from each other’s experiences served as an inspiration to make a difference. Furthermore, exposing stakeholders, especially lecturers and students, to different educational contexts; serving as motivation to take these contexts into account when preparing students teachers, it also motivated to students to want to teach in these previously feared areas. The

sharing of stories and experiences also did not go unchallenged, as some staff felt that if we were going to prepare students to work in under-resourced schools, we are going to stifle the students’ development, while yet other staff members felt that we were expecting too much from our students, as the goal of most students, they asserted, was to make a living for themselves and not to change the world. However, the more we engaged with the different educational contexts, and especially with under-resourced schools, lecturers gained a better understanding of them and realised that both they and their students could learn from these under-resourced schools. One lecturer had the following to say about this:

For me: As a practicing lecturer I would now say after participating in this process: I have one word: “exposure”. We all need to be exposed to all different kinds of situations. We need to know the range of contexts. That’s the first thing. Secondly, teaching is adaptation, and maybe adaptation should be somewhere... Whether it’s a module or whatever, it must be somewhere. And thirdly is thinking on your feet.

Discussion

As *Abakhwezeli* members, the focus of our curriculum journey was twofold: firstly, the development of a new B.Ed curriculum that would take into consideration the needs of all stakeholders in our developing democracy; and secondly, to ensure that all stakeholders participate in the development of this new curriculum.

The exposure to transformational practices that formed part of the critical approach used during the curriculum renewal journey, was new to our traditional Western frame of reference, and took us on a laborious journey of transition. The sessions where these transformational practices were employed confirmed the importance of collaborative consultation among educational stakeholders as a whole, and we underwent processes of reshaping our professional identities, while being exposed to critical theory and new approaches. For example, one of the challenges in this process was involving all stakeholders as equal voices in the curriculum renewal process. This required us to view ourselves as equal parts of an interdependent whole. Thus, for example, teacher educators, student teachers and their learners all needed to accept that they were equals in the educational system, and as such, needed to be open to switching roles at times – with teachers learning from their learners and learners teaching their teachers. This forced us to reconsider our identities as “knowers” and “authorities”.

This research highlights that all educational stakeholders are important, as well as the importance of applying different forms of dialogue to tap into the voice of these stakeholders, so as to gain valuable information regarding what is

required by a teacher education curriculum to prepare student teachers to work in all contexts of the SA schooling system. Thus, we all need to constantly respond to the critical questions: why are we doing this, and in whose interest? (Anyon, 2005; Apple, 1999; Fine & Weis, 2003). *Abakhwezeli* took up the challenge to ensure that all stakeholders were consulted during the curriculum renewal process, by creating the dialogical conditions through using transformative practices such as the World Café Conversations, Courageous Conversation and utilising metaphoric analogies in our own safe, but also provocative spaces, so as to support a language of critique and collaborative empowerment.

However, a major challenge we experienced was resistance to the process. Some of the processes and activities brought about explicit resistance, and some stakeholders derided the approaches we followed, feeling that they were a waste of their time. Instead, they wanted us to reinforce their ideas of a technocratic approach to curriculum design. Carr and Kemmis (1986) and Schön (1983) provide some hope by suggesting that when teams are exposed to the varied contradictions found in our society a new consciousness and creative actions related to it, may emerge. Exposure to perspectives and contexts different from what one hold to be legitimate, could contribute to new ways of thinking. Instead of saying to lecturers that the content of the current curriculum needed to be decolonised, we had to allow them to discover it for themselves. It helped that they heard from their own students how they experienced the content of their modules, and why change was needed.

As mentioned earlier, this was a revelation to some lecturers, who mentioned that students' views on their modules now compel them to review the content of their modules, as well as how they present it. An important lesson for *Abakhwezeli* was not to delay the process because of challenges, but to deal with challenges while moving the process forward.

We realised the importance of sharing stories (lived experiences), as it gave voice to the struggle to revise the curriculum from the ground up rather than top-down. Stories helped us support each other in our own acts of hesitance and uncertainty, and linked individuals and groups in grass-root movements for the purposes of transformation. Teachers working in under-resourced schools find strength in sharing their stories with other teachers and by learning from teachers in similar situations. Stories can also create learning environments that participants reconfigure based on their own needs, backgrounds and experiences. The story of how a grade one teacher copes with eighty learners in her class with no electricity or learning materials, serves as an inspiration to our student teachers,

because despite these challenges, learning still takes place. Furthermore, stories can enable personal and social transformation, because they serve as examples to follow and as motivation to inspire and convince. We realised the importance of understanding stakeholders' personal stories in their struggle to gain agency over their own learning. We also realised the value of personal stories, particularly those dealing with our past experiences as teacher educators. These stories allowed us to reflect on the present reality by looking backwards and saying, "I wish...", and then looking forward and saying, "I hope..."

The stories and life experiences of all stakeholders played a vital role in informing the design of our new curriculum for improved teacher education in South Africa. The stories of senior students and alumni about how they struggled to manage their classes in their first year of teaching and during teaching practice, were particularly useful, as these accounts highlighted the lack of attention to classroom management in the current curriculum. Students told stories of how they were not able to deal with the 21st century problems of drug abuse and dysfunctional family structures in their classes. This highlighted a need for a new curriculum, equipped to more adequately prepare students to deal with such problems. Students also commented on how they struggled to teach in schools with no electricity, no textbooks or technology available. This highlighted the need for the curriculum to not only prepare students to teach in well-resourced schools, but to prepare them to embrace the challenges of under-resourced schools. It also highlighted the importance of exposing students to the range of different schools in SA during Teaching Practice.

School principals confirmed that limited resources had an effect on teaching and learning, but did not want their schools to be classified as disadvantaged. This showed that principals believed that there was a lot that students could learn from their school and the community in which it was situated. They portrayed a fighting spirit, by highlighting the need for passionate, newly qualified teachers in their schools, who would embrace challenges and use their own initiative to enhance the quality of education in the country.

These stories distilled, would become the big ideas on which our curriculum might become based: humanising pedagogy, decolonisation, critical thinking, and social justice. They became the cornerstones of our humanising curriculum (always taking the 'who' into account) that subsequently informed the design of programme frameworks. Although we experienced challenges like resistance to the process and the time consuming and complicated nature of the process, the benefits of enhanced human relations, the establishment of collaborative networks, and the

development of a humanising curriculum framework far outweighed these challenges and made the journey worthwhile.

Conclusion

The challenges which our curriculum design process highlighted include the tensions curriculum leaders encounter when attempting to meet external education standards that demand immediate outcomes: these are often in conflict with the goal of designing a radically transformed curriculum that takes into account the needs of all stakeholders. However, it is the uncertainty of this process that also represents its potential. It is the curriculum leader's responsibility to ensure that collegial collaboration is at the heart of the process. What is crucial is the fundamental capacity to establish, cultivate and support humanising relationships that authenticate the collective work of the community, the Department of Education, students, practicing teachers, school leadership teams and teacher educators. This research process has in fact strengthened our commitment to an epistemological stance that affirms that our role as teacher educators is not to produce knowledge that leads to the prediction and control of human experience, but instead to guide, nurture and harvest knowledge that deepens and enhances the understanding of the human experience.

Note

- i. Published under a Creative Commons Attribution Licence.

References

- Anyon J 2005. *Radical possibilities: public policy, urban education, and a new social movement*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Apple MW 1999. Freire, neo-liberalism and education. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 20(1):5–20. doi: 10.1080/0159630990200101
- Bass BM 1985. *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Bass BM 2010. *Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications* (5th ed). New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Bass BM & Riggio RE 2006. *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Bercaw LA & Stooksberry LM 2004. Teacher education, critical pedagogy, and standards: An exploration of theory and practice. *Essays in Education*, 12:1–13.
- Bergold J & Thomas S 2012. Participatory research methods: A methodological approach in motion. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 13(1): Art. 30.
- Burns JM 1978. *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Carr W & Kemmis S 1986. *Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research*. London, UK: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Corbin J & Strauss A 2008. *Basics of qualitative research* (3rd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Cross M, Shalem Y, Backhouse J & Adam F 2009. How undergraduate students 'negotiate' academic performance within a diverse university environment. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 23(1):21–42. Available at http://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/36401237/Cross_How_undergraduate_students_negotiate_SAJHE.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJ56TQJRTWSMTNPEA&Expires=1479949612&Signature=WQ%2FLRbhZs0Pp7KknZY7z2V9R%2FXs%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DHow_undergraduate_students_negotiate_aca.pdf. Accessed 24 November 2016.
- Del Carmen Salazar M 2013. A humanizing pedagogy: Reinventing the principles and practice of education as a journey toward liberation. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1):121–148. doi: 10.3102/0091732X12464032
- Department of Higher Education and Training, Republic of South Africa 2015. National Qualifications Framework Act (67/2008): Revised policy on the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications. *Government Gazette*, Vol. 596(No. 38487). 19 February. Pretoria: Government Printing Works. Available at http://www.dhet.gov.za/Teacher%20Education/National%20Qualifications%20Framework%20Act%2067_2008%20Revised%20Policy%20for%20Teacher%20Education%20Qualifications.pdf. Accessed 24 November 2016.
- Fine M & Weis L 2003. *Silenced voices and extraordinary conversations...: ...re-imagining schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Foley JA, Morris D, Gounari P & Agostinone-Wilson F 2015. Critical education, critical pedagogies, Marxist education in the United States. *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, 13(3):110–144. Available at <http://www.jceps.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/13-3-7.pdf>. Accessed 24 November 2016.
- Freire P 1970. *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum Press.
- Freire P 2002. *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum International Publishing.
- Fullan M 2001. *The new meaning of educational change* (3rd ed). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Giroux H & McLaren P 1996. Teacher education and the politics of engagement: the case for democratic schooling. In P Leistyna, A Woodrum & S Sherblom (eds). *Breaking free: The transformative power of critical pedagogy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Review.
- Giroux HA 1988. *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. New York, NY: Bergin & Garvey.
- Hartmann E 2011. *The nature and functions of dreaming*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Heifetz R, Grashow A & Linsky M 2009. *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Boston,

- MA: Harvard Business Press.
- Jansen JD 2009. *Knowledge in the blood: Confronting race and the apartheid past*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Keesing-Styles L 2003. The relationship between critical pedagogy and assessment in teacher education. *Radical Pedagogy*, 5(1). Available at <http://unitec.researchbank.ac.nz/handle/10652/1931>. Accessed 24 November 2016.
- Keet A, Zinn D & Porteus K 2009. Mutual vulnerability: a key principle in a humanising pedagogy in post-conflict societies. *Perspectives in Education*, 27(2):109–119. Available at http://www.repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/11564/Keet_Mutual%282009%29.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y. Accessed 24 November 2016.
- Kincheloe JL 2005. *Critical pedagogy*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Lachiver G & Tardif J 2002. *Fostering and managing curriculum change and innovation*. Paper presented at the 32nd ASEE/IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference, Boston, 6–9 November. Available at <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.20.6116&rep=rep1&type=pdf>. Accessed 24 November 2016.
- Lakoff G & Johnson M 1980. *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Leistyna P & Woodrum A 1996. Context and culture. What is critical pedagogy? In P Leistyna, A Woodrum & S Sherblom (eds). *Breaking free: The transformative power of critical pedagogy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Review.
- Maistry SM 2011. Transformation through the curriculum: Engaging a process of unlearning in economics education pedagogy. *Alternation*, 18(2):115–134. Available at [http://utlo.ukzn.ac.za/Files/Alternation%2018.2%20\(2011\).pdf#page=119](http://utlo.ukzn.ac.za/Files/Alternation%2018.2%20(2011).pdf#page=119). Accessed 24 November 2016.
- McLaren P 2000. Paulo Freire's pedagogy of possibility. In SF Steiner, HM Krank, P McLaren & RE Bahruth (eds). *Freirean pedagogy, praxis and possibilities: Projects for the new millennium*. New York, NY: Falmer Press.
- McNiff J & Whitehead J 2002. *Action research: Principles and practice* (2nd ed). London, UK: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Nagda BA, Gurin P & Lopez GE 2003. Transformative pedagogy for democracy and social justice. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 6(2):165–191. doi: 10.1080/13613320308199
- Nouri A & Sajjadi SM 2014. Emancipatory pedagogy in practice: Aims, principles and curriculum orientation. *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 5(2):76–87. Available at <http://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/view/228/671>. Accessed 23 November 2016.
- Oleyede O 2009. Critical reflection on the report of the ministerial committee on transformation, social cohesion and the elimination of discrimination in public higher education. *Perspectives in Education*, 27(4):426–434.
- Reeves DB 2006. *The learning leader: How to focus school improvement for better results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
- Riasati MJ & Mollaei F 2012. Critical pedagogy and language learning. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(21):223–229. Available at http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_21_November_2012/26.pdf. Accessed 23 November 2016.
- Rosenmund M 2006. The current discourse on curriculum change: A comparative analysis of national reports on education. In A Benavot & C Braslavsky (eds). *School Knowledge in Comparative and Historical Perspective: Changing curricula in primary and secondary education*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.
- Schön DA 1983. *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Singleton GE & Linton C 2006. *Courageous conversations about race: A field guide for achieving equity in schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- The World Café Community Foundation 2015. *Café to go: A quick reference guide for hosting world café*. Available at <http://www.theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf>. Accessed 3 March 2016.
- Thoonen EEJ, Slegers PJC, Oort FJ, Peetsma TTD & Geijsel FP 2011. How to improve teaching practices: The role of teacher motivation, organizational factors, and leadership practices. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(3):496–536. doi: 10.1177/0013161X11400185
- Yin RK 2003. *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Zmuda A, Kuklis R & Kline E 2004. *Transforming schools: Creating a culture of continuous improvement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).