

**THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR IN IMPLEMENTING AN
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ABET)
PROGRAMME IN A RURAL AREA IN THE SOUTHERN CAPE**

by

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Declaration

I, the undersigned do hereby declare that the content of this thesis is my own original work and that it has never before been partially, or as a whole, used by me for completing a degree at any other university.

Signed:

Date:

SUMMARY

It is estimated that some 12,5 to 15 million adults in South Africa have had little or no education. Since the first democratic elections in April 1994 the political, economical and social context in South Africa is in the process of transformation. In order to cope with this transformation phase, South Africa is creating structures where the culture of every citizen, irrespective of class, race or gender is acknowledged and respected. One of these structures is the provision of basic education to all South African adults who have historically been deprived of education and training.

The changing political situation in South Africa has inevitably influenced the concept of what literacy is for and how it should be taught. This inevitably affects the role performance of facilitators (educators of adults) at grass roots level. Recent policy developments place heavy demands on facilitators without adequately considering the necessary inputs needed to cope with these demands. The purpose of this study is therefore to make a meaningful contribution to the understanding of the challenging and important role of the facilitator in ABET.

A qualitative approach which provided a clear description of the roles facilitators are currently performing in a rural area in the Southern Cape was chosen. This revealed the factors having an impact on the role performances of a facilitator.

This study revealed the following:

- In keeping with international trends the *teacher's* role in adult basic education in South Africa has been redefined as that of a *facilitator* of learning.
- The attitudes adopted by the literacy organization can directly influence the teaching approach adopted by facilitators during classroom practice.
- Facilitators need to exhibit flexibility when using different teaching styles during classroom practice.
- Training objectives should encompass the different learning and teaching styles of facilitators.

In order to enable facilitators to perform their multiple roles in ABET the preparation and continuing support of facilitators at grass roots level is crucial, especially if ABET is to make a meaningful contribution towards solving the adult literacy problems as experienced in South Africa and to prevent littering the South African landscape with the debris of failed projects.

OPSOMMING

Na raming het ongeveer 12,5 tot 15 miljoen volwassenes in Suid-Afrika min of geen onderwys onderrig gehad nie. Sedert die eerste demokratiese verkiesing in April 1994, is die politieke, ekonomiese en sosiale konteks in Suid-Afrika in 'n proses van transformasie. Ten einde hierdie transformasiefase te bowe te kom, is Suid-Afrika besig om strukture te skep waarin die kultuur van elke burger ongeag klas, ras of geslag, erken en gerespekteer word. Een van hierdie strukture is die voorsiening van basiese onderwys aan alle Suid-Afrikaanse volwassenes wat histories onderwys en opleiding ontbeer het.

Die veranderende Suid-Afrikaanse politieke situasie het 'n uitwerking gehad op die begrip van die doel van geletterdheid en hoe dit onderrig moet word. Hierdie werklikheid het onvermydelik weer 'n uitwerking op die rolvervulling van fasiliteerders (onderwysers vir volwassenes) op grondvlak. Onlangse beleidsontwikkeling stel hoë eise aan fasiliteerders, sonder voldoende oorweging van die noodsaaklike insette wat fasiliteerders moet lewer ten einde aan hierdie eise te voldoen. Die doel van hierdie studie is dus om 'n sinvolle bydrae te lewer om die uitdagende en belangrike rol van die fasiliteerder in volwasse basiese onderwys (VBO) te verstaan.

'n Kwalitatiewe benadering is verkies wat 'n duidelike beskrywing gee van die rolle wat fasiliteerders tans in 'n landelike gebied van die Suid-Kaap vervul en wat die faktore weerspieël wat 'n uitwerking op die rolvervulling van 'n fasiliteerder het.

Die studie het die volgende tendense aan die lig gebring:

- In ooreenstemming met internasionale neigings, is die rol van die *onderwyser* in volwasse basiese onderwys in Suid-Afrika herdefinieer as 'n *fasiliteerder* van die leerproses.
- Die gesindhede wat deur die geletterdheidsorganisasie aanvaar word, kan die onderrigbenadering van die fasiliteerder in die klaskamer direk beïnvloed.
- Fasiliteerders moet buigsaamheid aan die dag lê by die gebruik van verskillende onderrigstyle in die klaskamer.
- Opleidingsdoelwitte moet die verskillende leer- en onderrigstyle van fasiliteerders omsluit.

Ten einde fasiliteerders in staat te stel om hulle veelvuldige rolle in volwasse basiese onderwys te vervul, is die voorbereiding en deurlopende ondersteuning van

fasiliteerders op grondvlak deurslaggewend, veral indien volwasse basiese onderwys en opleiding 'n sinvolle bydrae wil maak tot die oplossing van volwassenes se geletterdheidsprobleme soos dit tans in Suid-Afrika ondervind word en as dit wil verhoed dat die Suid-Afrikaanse landskap met die opdrifsels van mislukte projekte besaai word.

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

In South Africa, adults who have attended school up to grade 6 or lower are considered functionally illiterate (Van Niekerk, 1996:27). According to this perspective it is estimated that some 12,5 to 15 million adults in South Africa could be functionally illiterate (Hartley, 1997:25; Sebakwane, 1995:207). How much can be deducted from these figures is open to debate, but they serve the broad task of indicating the wide extent of functional illiteracy among adults in South Africa (Harley, Aitchison, Lyster & Land, 1996:27). This lack of access to basic education and resultant functional illiteracy have consigned millions of South Africans to silence and marginalisation from meaningful participation in social and economic development (Sebakwane, 1995:207).

This situation has attracted a great deal of attention and numerous programmes have been initiated to address the need for building the capacity of functionally illiterate citizens, so that they are empowered to become participators in their communities, within society and in the economy and able to share in the fruits of change (Southern Cape Literacy Project, 1992).

It has become increasingly clear in recent years that the facilitator (educator of adults) has a central role to play in the success of these literacy programmes (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:15). Clur (in Motala, 1992:23) points out that the success of a literacy programme lies not in the programme used, but in the skill and dedication of individual educators presenting these programmes. Wedepohl (1984:8) substantiates this observation by noting, "that the quality of the teacher far outweighs the quality of the materials" as a factor in the success of programmes. Steinberg (1993:30) confirms this statement by accentuating the fact that materials are only as good as the facilitator who presents the programme. Steinberg recalls that an unmotivated facilitator will ruin the best material, while a skilled facilitator will make an excellent lesson out of mediocre or no materials. According to Wedepohl (1984:8) teaching literacy at a basic level to adults, is one of the most difficult tasks a facilitator of adults can face. Because of the direct contact of facilitators with the learners at grass roots level, they can thus "make or mar" the programme (Motala, 1992:8).

Nevertheless the practices of facilitators (adult educators) in South Africa are still lacking in a number of ways. Although committed and eager, they are often not very skilled. Their knowledge of appropriate teaching techniques is incomplete. Most facilitators of adult learning, even when they aspire to progressive ideals, are strongly influenced by the models of transmission and rote-learning they had experienced as school children (Steinberg, 1997:23). Motala (1992:15) notes that in many instances one is faced with facilitators who lack commitment, and motivation, are passive and abuse progressive rhetoric. Many of these poor pedagogical practices are attributed to the training and learning facilitators have been exposed to. There is a tendency to think it is easy to teach adults and much more attention than is presently the case should be given to the training of facilitators of adults (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:15). Furthermore, the current tendency to talk about facilitating learning rather than teaching (Lyster, 1992b:174) has significant implications for the training of facilitators and subsequently the way facilitators perform their roles in the teaching-learning process.

1.2 A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

To obtain an understanding of what the role of the facilitator in ABET truly entails, it is necessary to describe the learner and the facilitator as individuals as well as within the broader context in which they exist. Jordaan and Jordaan (1989:40) state that:

... human experience and action can not be properly understood if they are divorced from the context in which they occur in everyday life.

If people's experiences and actions are divorced from the context in which they occur only a blurred picture of human nature and the roles they perform will be provided. Regard for context is a prerequisite for the understanding of human experience and behaviour, "context is something without which meaning and understanding are impossible" (Bateson in Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:47). Thus to make sense of anything, and to obtain a clearer and more conceivable understanding of what the role of the facilitator in ABET truly entails, it is necessary to describe the learner and the facilitator as individuals within the broader context in which they exist. To be able to accomplish this objective the researcher adopts a meta-approach in order to develop and obtain a wider holistic understanding of the role of the facilitator in ABET from

within the broad framework of the present South African situation (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:60).

Because a meta-approach will be used throughout this study it is necessary to orientate the reader towards an understanding of the basic principles and purposes of a meta-approach. A meta-approach is a comprehensive, global approach which assimilates and integrates different, separate approaches which by themselves are severely limited. The sole function thereof is that of a paradigmatic scheme; it is a way of thinking about people and their existence and about the information available about people. The meta-approach used in this research is not a blueprint for a specific theory of human functioning, nor is it a blueprint for a specific research approach for testing the validity of a theory. It provides, independent of any specific trend or theoretical orientation, a wider holistic perspective on human functioning. It is intended rather to be an activity which precedes theory-building and the application of knowledge, as Jordaan and Jordaan (1989:61) describe it, "somewhat like doing your homework before going out to play."

For the purposes of this study an integration of an ecological as well as a systems approach is used. A systems perspective refers to a view of individual behaviour which takes into account the context in which it occurs. **The systems theory** sees different levels and groupings of the social context as systems where the functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between all parts (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1997:36). Seen in this way, the whole system forms the larger context, and each of the part systems is then a lesser context (part) within the whole. Similarly, the subsystems form still lesser contexts (still smaller parts) within the context of the whole system. It is these systems that are an open hierarchic organisation functioning interdependently (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:51-61). Accordingly, the behaviour or changes in one component of the system is seen as affecting, and being affected by, the behaviour or changes of other parts of the system and the system as a whole (Bentovin, Barnes & Cooklin, 1982:3). **The basic premise of the meta-approach used in this study thus states that human functioning can be studied by means of the contextual analysis and synthesis of part-systems and subsystems which together form a whole system, with systems understood as an open hierarchic organisation functioning interdependently (Jordaan & Jordaan 1989:51-61).**

Another fundamental principle of systemic thinking is that cause and effect relationships are not seen as taking place in one direction only. They are rather seen as occurring in circles, or more accurately, cycles (Donald *et al.*, 1997:36).

The term **ecology** was originally applied to a subsection of biology dealing with the interdependent relationship between living organisms (animals and plants) and their living and non-living environment. It has now become acceptable to speak of human ecology, which is the study of the interdependent relationship between people and their living environment (which includes, animals and plants, the presence of other people and the things that other people do) and their non-living environment (this is their natural, geographical and climatic environment as well as the man-built or man-modified environment) (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:42). An **eco-systemic perspective** therefore has as its main concern the indication of how individual people and groups at different levels of the social context are linked in dynamic, interdependent and interacting relationships. This ecological orientation is based on the assumption that each learner must be viewed as a complete entity surrounded by a unique mini-social system or eco-system. Because living systems are acutely dependent upon their external environment, they are envisaged as open systems (Donald *et al.*, 1997:34).

The whole system with its part-systems and subsystems thus form a functional classification. It is a classification in that things that belong together are placed together. The classification is functional in that there is interaction within and between all the part-systems and subsystems, with interaction understood as mutual influencing in terms of the relationship between a person and his world. There are permeable boundaries within and between the different part-systems and subsystems. In the hierarchic organisation there consequently is active mutual influencing (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:51-61).

The whole system can be represented as a network of simultaneous horizontal interdependencies (interaction *within* a part-system) and vertical interdependencies (interaction *between* part-systems) (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:46).

The four part-systems are:

- The **ecological and metaphysical part-systems** which make up the “world-out-there” - the context in which the individual lives (his physical and symbolic world)
- The **biological and intrapsychic part-systems** which make up the living person - the individual and his inner world (see Figure 1.1).

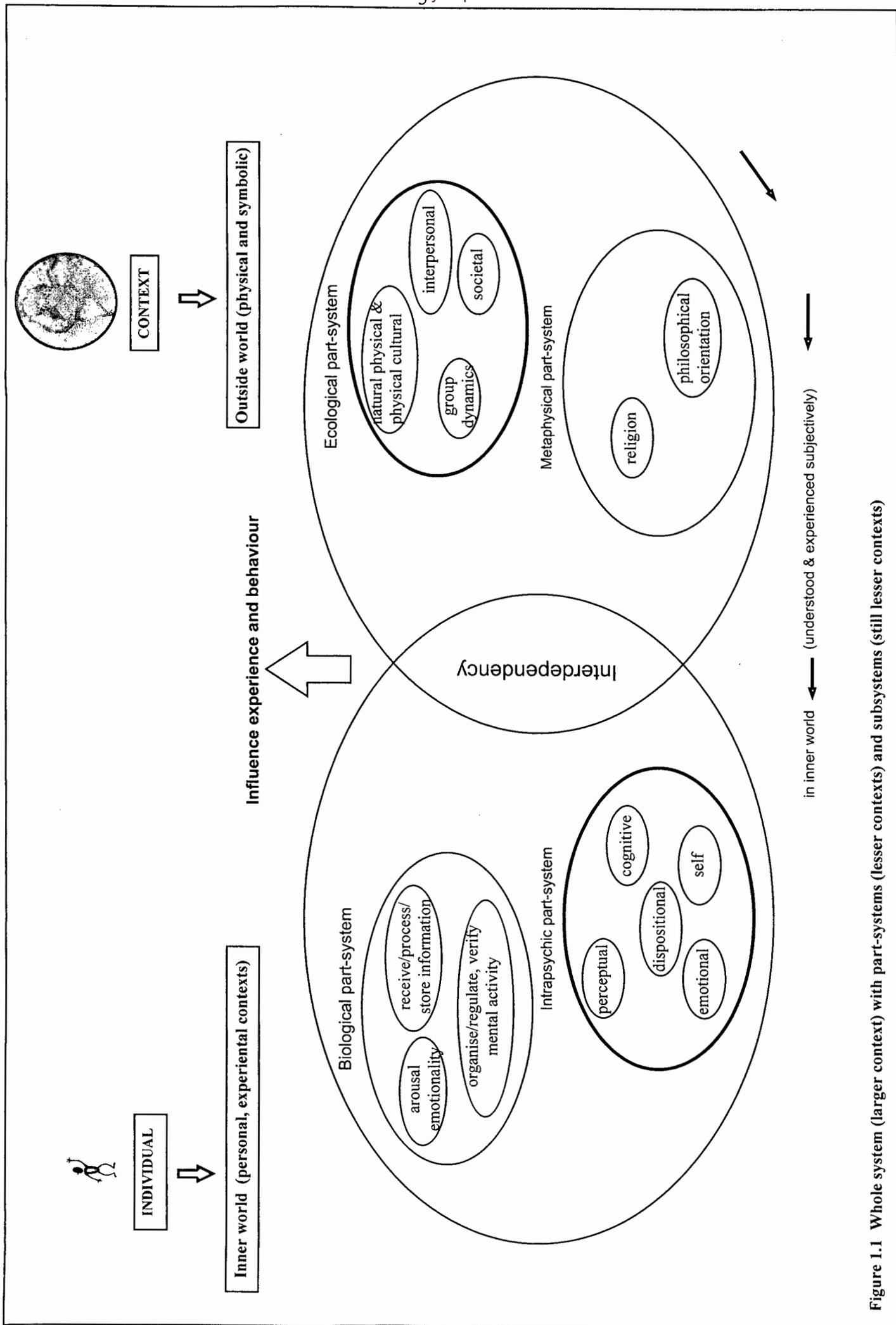


Figure 1.1 Whole system (larger context) with part-systems (lesser contexts) and subsystems (still lesser contexts)

Due to the fact that there exists an inter-relationship between the individual and society, focusing on one aspect without the other is to present a false picture of reality. It should, however, be noted that these two aspects are not discrete entities, and that dividing these two is done only for use of analysis (Jarvis, 1996:15).

It is thus clear that there exists a relationship between the developing individual (the integratedness of the biological and the intrapsychic as a psychobiological unity), and the "world-out-there" (the ecological and metaphysical). Furthermore, the individual has to deal with at least two kinds of worlds. Firstly, there is the *physical outside world* which consists of the real physical objects, conditions, people and events. On the other hand there is the *symbolic outside world* which includes all knowledge and conceptions of a philosophical, theological, scientific, historical, literary, artistic, technological and theoretical nature. It also includes all viewpoints, arguments, theories, opinions, in connection with the nature of the physical and symbolic outside world. Secondly, there is the *inner world* of the individual person. The inner world may be described as the person's personal, experiential context, i.e. the person interacting (through his psychobiological equipment) with a limited spectrum of objects, people, events, knowledge and concepts in the physical and symbolic outside worlds. Information about the outside world is thus absorbed and incorporated into the individual's inner world in accordance to how it is subjectively experienced and understood. It is therefore clear that a person does not live in an objective, impersonal world, but in a world of objects, conditions, people, events, knowledge and concepts which each person sees in a particular way. The inner world is therefore a reconstruction of the outside world as a person sees and experiences it (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:46).

1.3 DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD OF ABET IN SOUTH AFRICA

1.3.1 Introduction

The researcher needs to obtain an appropriate description of the larger South African context, since human experience and action can not be properly understood if they are divorced from the context in which they occur (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:40). In order to accomplish this goal, the researcher primarily obtained information from the intrapsychic part-system (describing the learners' corresponding inner worlds - perceptions, thoughts, motivations, self-image) and the ecological part-system (describing poverty in South Africa, the disregard for human rights in the past, estrangements, discrimination, oppression, the urban-rural divide, the

underdeveloped infrastructure in rural areas) as well as taking the metaphysical and biological part-systems into account. From these different but equally valid part descriptions, a whole description of the problem will be developed in terms of recurring patterns of interdependencies between the different part-systems and subsystems (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:54). The role of the facilitator may therefore be understood more fully by taking into account the larger context in which these roles have to be performed.

In order to describe development in the field of ABET in South Africa, it is first of all necessary to focus on the South African society as it exists today and to consider the legacies it carried with it from the past, therefore taking the apartheid era into account.

1.3.2 South African Society today

1.3.2.1 The apartheid era

The multi-cultural, versatile South African context is complex in its nature due to the course of history and the composition of its population. Characteristic of the South African society today is its polarisation, complex group-relations, different levels of development, the diverse expectations of its people and its multi-lingual qualities (Roodt, 1993:159). During the apartheid era the South African society could be distinguished by its lack of realistic political awareness and national solidarity. The fact that all the political power was in the hands of the white electorate, further created the suggestion of oppressor and oppressed (Roodt, 1993:37).

For years education in South Africa was controlled by political and social processes. Educational policy in South Africa since 1948 until 1994 was based on the political philosophy of apartheid and segregation. This political ideology coupled with group-isolation contributed significantly to the unique problematic nature of the educational system in South Africa. Apartheid thus led to the exclusion of majority groups. Furthermore, apartheid policies, and in particular Bantu education had been used to maintain the dominance of the whites (Lyster, 1992a:40). Education in South Africa was established to serve the needs of the governing class in the society. This gave rise to what Freire (1985:72) calls the typical characteristics of “the culture of silence” in South Africa:

changes is more dramatic for this country because apartheid isolated us from the early phases of these changes. At the end of the twentieth century we are living in a world dominated by a global economy based on capitalism and markets. With this globalisation comes a predominantly Western political tradition of liberalism which emphasises the rights and responsibilities of individuals and which sees the role of the state as being concerned primarily with protection and regulation. Change is a complex phenomenon; change always entails unforeseen consequences; it produces unpredictable difficulties no matter how carefully planned ahead (Graaff & Parker, 1997:5). Consequently, this transformation phase can be experienced as a crisis where people are shaken loose from their traditional roles and are now in the process of learning new roles to be able to survive in the new dispensation.

What complicates matters even further is that many of the culturally, economically, rural poor people in South Africa that were also educationally restricted in the past are still carrying the scars of the apartheid legacy (Dirkx & Spurgin, 1992:20). According to O' Loughlin (1990:6) they consequently lack self-confidence, self-awareness and depend on the facilitator in a literacy programme to tell them how they are doing. They further lack political awareness both of oppression and within themselves, as a result of racial, sexual or social class bias. They have negative attitudes towards education and feel ashamed at the low level of their achievement. They lack a sense of voice; they are sometimes unaware that their lives and their learning are influenced by autobiographical and historical experiences. They have learned not to trust their own experience, nor do they see experience as the starting point in learning. They lack empowerment - they are convinced that the world is the way it is, that they are unable to go beyond this to contemplate the possibility of change. They show little empathy for oppressed persons, nor outrage at their own or others oppression. In summary: they lack a sense of agency, never experiencing the sense of mastery that comes from knowing that they can know and act for themselves to control their own destiny.

To overcome this transformation phase South Africa is now in the process of creating structures where the culture of every citizen despite class, race or gender is acknowledged and respected. One of these structures is the provision of basic education for all South African adults who have historically missed out on education and training in the past (Harley *et al.*, 1996:3).

1.3.3 Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) in South Africa

1.3.3.1 Introduction

It is evident that when reflecting on the South African past, education can not be separated from politics and power relationships - especially when one considers the education system in the apartheid era. The enormous dissatisfaction with apartheid education, its vanguard role in the struggle for democracy and the necessity for reconstruction, development and redress made new education policy development a social and political priority (Harley *et al.*, 1996:3; Van Niekerk, 1996:27).

A new era for South Africa began in February 1990 with the unbanning of political organisations and the release of Nelson Mandela, unleashing a new energy and vision for the future. The changing political situation in South Africa has furthermore inevitably impacted on the understanding of what literacy is for, and how it should be taught - the purpose of adult literacy could thus be reconsidered (Harley *et al.*, 1996:3).

Prior to 1990, ABE policy was practically non-existent. The sudden energy around formulating policy, has largely been the result of the political changes which have taken place in the country. The main assumption underlying much of the ABE policy work at this stage was that the new government would take ABE far more seriously and would be far more involved in ABE provision (Harley *et al.*, 1996:145).

In keeping with our fledgling democracy, great emphasis was placed on the process of arriving at a policy which will address our unique national and individual needs and be acceptable to a very large majority of stakeholders (Van Niekerk, 1996:27).

Since the first elections in April 1994 much work has been done. Government commissions have scurried back and forth producing lengthy reports, consulting stakeholders and experts, writing White papers and Green papers and finally legislation (Graaff & Parker, 1997:1). ABE also underwent a major transition: from "literacy" to "ABE" and "ABET"; a term which emphasized the role of literacy as far broader than just reading, writing and numeracy (Harley *et al.*, 1996:3); from a smaller to a larger scale; from ad hoc to a more formalised system with levels and exams (Steinberg, 1997:7).

By 1997 the clear outlines of government policy had emerged and the basic

foundations for a new education and training system had been laid by a number of legislation acts, for instance, The South African Qualifications Act (SAQA) and The National Education Policy Act (Graaff & Parker, 1997:1).

But in order to make sense of all the different aspects of the policies, it is helpful to look at the overall vision for ABET in South Africa. According to Graaff and Parker (1997:3) “too often when we look at the pieces, we don’t see how they fit together and we loose(sic) our sense of perspective.”

The global vision for ABET in South Africa, according to the National Multi-year implementation plan for Adult Education and Training (1997:9) is “the eradication of illiteracy through the development and recognition of a skilled and knowledgeable adult learner population.” However, according to Freire (1985:7) such a concept of illiteracy is naive. Freire compares this concept of illiteracy on the one hand to “a poison herb” (as is implied in the current expression of “eradication of illiteracy”) and, on the other, to “a disease” that is contagious and transmitted to others. “Sometimes we see it as a depressing ‘ulcer’ that should be cured.” When educators limit their understanding of this complex issue, Freire believes that their solutions are always of a mechanical nature. Literacy as such is then reduced to the mechanical act of “depositing” words, syllables, and letters into illiterates (Freire, 1985:8). Illiteracy is neither an “ulcer” nor a “poison herb” to be eradicated, nor a “disease”. According to Freire it is “one of the concrete expressions of an unjust social reality” (Freire, 1985:10).

The Ministry of Education further views ABET as a force for social participation and economic development, providing an essential component of all Reconstruction and Development Programmes (RDP) (Government Gazette, 15 March 1995:31). According to Engelbrecht (1998:6) and Lyster (1992a:26) one of the challenges in South Africa today is therefore to use adult basic education as a tool to provide basic education, develop critical thinking and empower individuals to participate in all aspects of their communities, to understand the causes of their oppression and to act to change their situation. The central issues for ABET in South Africa is thus human dignity, literacy, justice, democracy, equality and national development (Engelbrecht, 1998:2).

Bhola (in Coetzee, 1991:89) declares that “while literacy would not change the world, it will make it more susceptible to change.” And this may well be enough reason to continue on the rocky road to realize this vision no matter how idealistic or

unattainable it may seem to be.

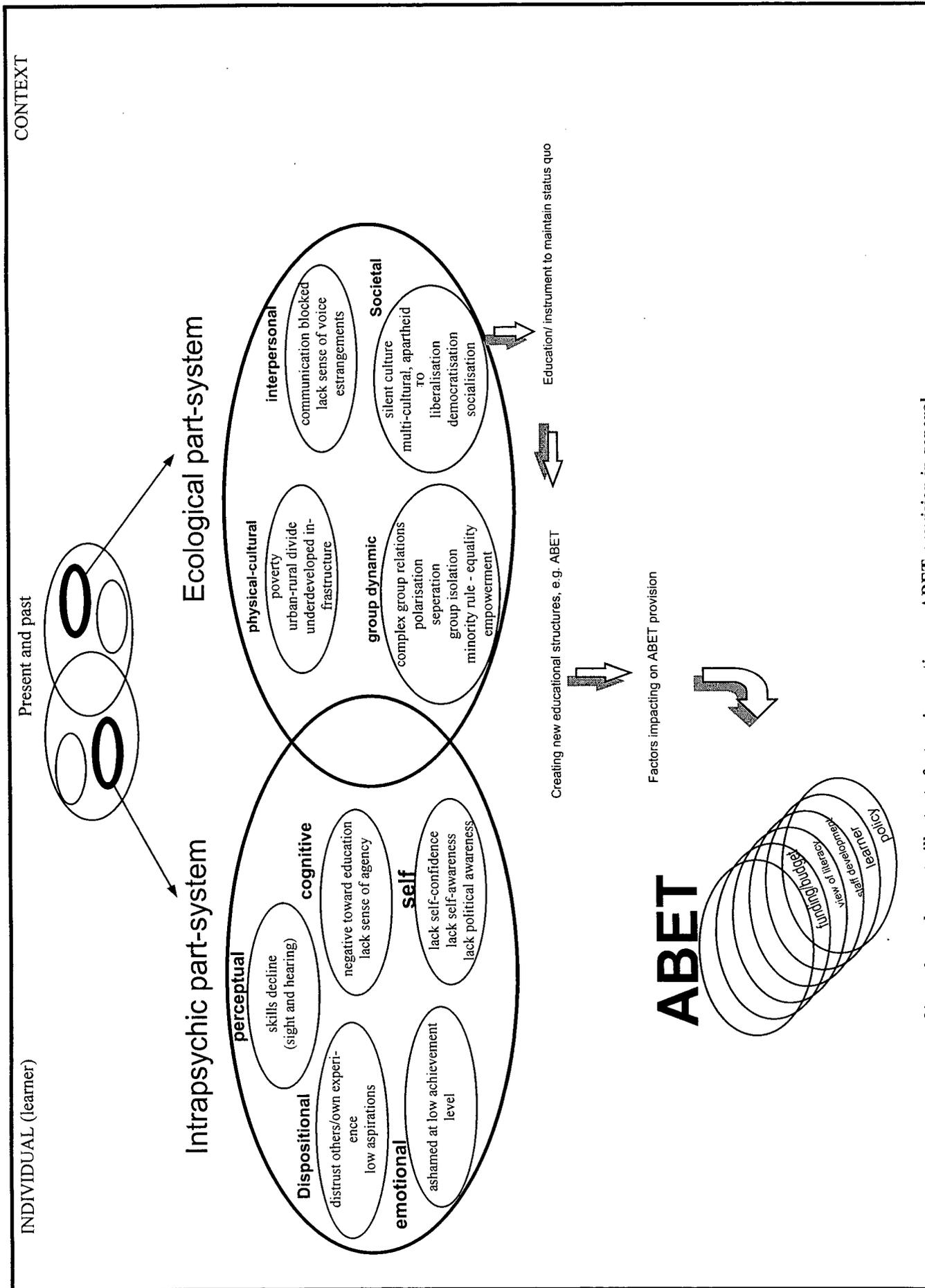
A rocky road indeed, for an important problem impacting negatively on the “eradication of illiteracy” in South Africa, is due to the weaknesses inherited by the state. The South African state has very limited financial resources and a bureaucracy that became infamous for its corruption and incompetence. South Africa spends more on education in terms of a percentage of the state budget than most countries and yet this investment has produced schools and other learning centres which are dysfunctional (Graaff & Parker, 1997:4). This situation is made more serious because of the high level of poverty amongst our disadvantaged communities - especially the rural communities in South Africa (Coetzee, 1991:87). Not surprisingly, the urban-rural divide is reflected in the quantity and quality of all aspects of ABE provision. There are fewer organisations, fewer well-qualified facilitators, fewer libraries, less support and less money in rural areas (Harley *et al.*, 1996:536) and the situation of ABE provision in South Africa (especially in the rural communities) can therefore still be described as chaotic (Engelbrecht, 1998:6). As Harley *et al.* (1996:3) put it “the existing situation in South Africa is but a mirror of our past.”

These factors greatly impact the provision of ABET to these adults at grass roots-level who are disadvantaged. And it is here where the facilitator in ABET can make a meaningful contribution (see Figure 1.2).

1.3.3.2 ABET Policy development and implementation since 1994

- **Prior to 1994**

When educational policy planning became a priority in preparation for the New South Africa, Adult Education was included. Learners’ attitudes also changed. The demand for systematic, structured learning was clear. Educational policy took up this challenge. First the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) (1992) and then the Cosatu Participatory Research Project (PRP) (1993) set out to research the requirements of a national system that could deliver education to adults on a mass scale. Their research and discussion transformed adult literacy first into ABE and then into ABET. This expanded understanding of what ABE entails was then endorsed by mass democratic organizations to inaugurate the South African Committee for Adult Basic Education (SACABE) (1993) and accepted by industry through the National Training Board (NTB) (1994) (Steinberg, 1997:14).



- **1994**

Since the inception of the new government, the field of ABE has received hitherto unheard of attention. In time for the new government in May, 1994, the Centre for Education Policy Development created an Implementation Plan for Education and Training which included a report from the national task team for ABET, set up by the National Minister of Education. It outlined the work needed to put into place new governance structures, financing, legislation and mass provision of ABET (Steinberg, 1997:14).

The new government's Reconstruction and Development White Paper was published. ABET was identified as a presidential project with the intention to launch a National ABET Programme with donor funding. Likewise the African National Congress education department released its draft Policy Framework for Education and Training in January 1994. The framework put forward a vision of a new system of education and training based on democratic participation, redress of imbalances and empowerment of all citizens. It defined the goals to be pursued by a new Government concerned with the final laying to rest of apartheid legacy. Although other goals, such as education for human growth, community awareness, citizenship and democracy were present, the document tended to focus on education for economic growth. The funding proposals for special needs, rural education and education for the unemployed were weakly developed and the marginalisation of these areas appeared to continue their past neglect (Greenstein, Tikly, Motala, Mkwanazi & Chisholm: 1994:82).

Furthermore, South Africa adopted an outcomes-based approach to education. This has its origins in policies emerging from Cosatu. Since the early 1990's Cosatu has been developing an approach to adult basic education and training which emphasised the importance of a person's skills and understanding. Employment opportunities, a major concern of the unions, are seen to be linked to a worker's level of understanding and skills. In 1994, the NTB, in which Cosatu played an important role, developed the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in which education and training were linked through an outcomes-based system (Parker, 1997:25). The NQF was thus a priority programme of the Ministry of Education acting in consultation with the Ministry of Labour. The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) which had the responsibility for developing the NQF was brought into existence by October 1995 through legislation as a parastatal body, after the NQF Act had been passed (Government Gazette, 15 March 1995:21).

The NQF is considered to be one of the most important forces of legislation (AETASA practitioner conference, 1998) and according to Miller (1997:94) one of the most significant developments in South Africa's human resource development history. It provides a single system for training and education and provides individuals with a whole range of opportunities.

As part of the NQF it sets out 4 levels of ABET with equivalence to schooling. ABET thus consists of levels along a continuum of learning. These levels articulate with the formal schooling sector and because outcomes are the same, enable an adult and a school-going child to enter an institution of further learning with both having acquired the same basic knowledge, albeit through separate routes (see Figure 1.3) (Miller, 1997:94).

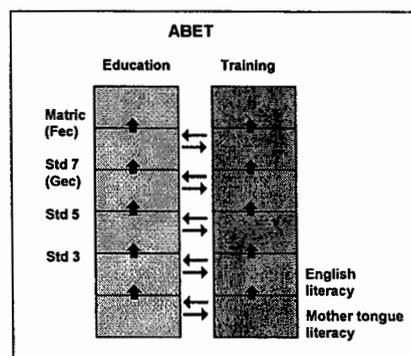


Figure 1.3 Diagram illustrating the four ABET levels of the NQF, articulation between education and training and the ABET-level equivalencies to the old formal schooling standards (Van Niekerk, 1996:28)

According to Harley *et al.* (1996:4) the integration of education and training and the articulation between formal and non-formal education and training, have profound implications for ABE facilitators and hence teacher training. It provides the basis for a new look at assessment and certification for learners and generates a new language for talking about curriculum (i.e. outcomes-based, core-skills, transfer).

Important changes in the structural context of ABE flowed from the policy work. A major structural change started being implemented by the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). Through a process of natural consultation, the IEB gradually developed outcomes for ABET levels 1, 2, and 3 in two subject areas and started providing accredited examinations. This standard setting process affected teaching and curriculum development in the whole field, providing people with clarity, direction and new criteria for decision-making (Steinberg, 1997:16). According to Miller (1997:97) the fact that the IEB had set adult exams, further enhanced the

transformation from teaching adults as if they were children in a day school, to a process of facilitating a learning programme which recognised prior learning. Competency levels and standards were consequently being set by the IEB, the NTB and Industry Training Boards.

- **1995/6**

The draft White Paper on Education and Training was published in March 1995. This was the first policy document on education and training by South Africa's first democratically elected government (Government Gazette, 15 March 1995:5).

Four distinct educational rights were established here. The right:

- to basic education
- to equal access to educational institutions
- to choice of the language of instruction
- to establish educational institutions of a certain character (Government Gazette, 15 March 1995:40).

The policy document drew heavily on the NTB and Cosatu proposals. The White Paper argued that ABE was a basic human right guaranteed to all persons by the Constitution and clearly identified the state as having primary responsibility for ABET, while also acknowledging the important role of other ABET stakeholders (Harley *et al.*, 1996:173).

Subsequently, a Directorate for Adult and Continuing Education was formed within the Ministry of Education with a sub-directorate on ABET. The issue of practitioners (adult educators, tutors, teachers, facilitators) were being addressed by the Directorate through their participation in the Department of Education Committee on Teacher Education Policy (COTEP) and the National Training Board's Education, Training and Development Practices Pilot Project (ETDP). This information had been fed into the ABET National Stakeholder Forum (NSF) in which adult learning practitioner associations such as the Adult Education and Training Association of South Africa (AETASA) participated and have been involved in the development of policies and programmes for practitioners (Department of Education, 1997:23).

The NSF agreed that AETASA should develop a draft document outlining national standards for the training of adult educators and trainers. The document which AETASA produced outlined the process necessary to develop such standards but did

not itself set these standards (Harley *et al.*, 1996:466,477).

Subsequently it was recognised that qualifications and standards for facilitators were most urgent priority and the Draft Standards for ABET facilitators, produced for the NSF by the ABET Standards-Generating Task Team (SGTT) was published in April 1997. It included a set of draft, core, generic unit standards especially formulated for ABET facilitators. Some of the purposes of this document were to provide information about the implications for ABET of current qualifications policy proposals; to provide a concrete basis for further consultation, education and development around the issue of professional standards for ABET practitioners. This document suggested ways in which these standards could fit within SAQA guidelines and those for teacher qualifications.

The SGTT decided that qualifications and standards for facilitators were most urgent priority for the following reasons:

- Facilitators have the most significant role in ABET because they work directly with learners.
- Recent policy developments relating to ABET, including national standards and extended curricula for ABET learners, place great demands on ABET facilitators who often require upgrading of their skills in order to cope with these policy demands.
- Facilitators are most vulnerable in terms of job security because many do not have any nationally recognised qualifications, while high level practitioners often have university or teaching qualifications.
- ABET is often seen as a convenient place to employ unemployed school teachers, who then compete with ABET facilitators for employment.
- School teachers who find full or part time employment in ABET often require urgent training in teaching adults (Draft Standards for ABET facilitators, April 1997:7-8).

Furthermore, the Minister of Education, announced the Interim Guidelines for the provision of Adult Basic Education and Training as official policy of the National Government on the 8th of September 1995. It was only after the historic introduction of the Interim Guidelines that the state as delivering agency truly entered the mainstream. According to Dr Ihron Rensburg the state was no longer a mere spectator or an obstacle to the development of a strong adult education and training movement in this country (Department of Education, 1997:iv).

This policy led to a growing interest in ABET. The number of people working in the field increased. Companies started implementing a literacy component as part of their training. Universities raised funds and employed people in ABE departments. Even publishers became interested in the field, investigating the possibilities of publishing ABET learning materials. With regard to curriculum the policy work created a whole new framework. The framework aimed at providing guidelines for mass delivery, which was a new concept to people working in the field, bringing with it completely new challenges (Steinberg, 1997:15).

As a result of the additional launching of the Interim Guidelines by the National Ministry of Education and the setting in motion of the NQF, the field has been revolutionised. Literacy has become Adult Basic Education and Training or development (ABET/ABED). This has meant a shift in focus, a professionalisation of the field and for the first time, the setting of standards and nationally applicable outcomes. It has also meant that industry, organized labour, government and civil society have worked together in a significant manner to agree on entry and exit points for learners (Miller, 1997:94).

- **1997**

A National Policy framework for ABET was affirmed by the Heads of Education Committee for ABET on 22 October 1997. The National Multi-Year Implementation Plan for Provision and Accreditation, which operationalises the Policy, received a simultaneous endorsement. For the first time in this country we saw the emergence of a truly national plan which gives expression to the collective efforts and contributions of all sectors - state, economic and non-governmental - in formulating an effective, efficient, high quality and relevant ABET system for all people (Department of Education, 1997:v).

- **1998**

According to Leumer (1998) an ABET bill setting framework conditions for adult learning centres will be tabled soon by national government. This will be defining the conditions of good practice and quality assurance in learning sites, which seek public support and subsidiary funding from tax-payers sources. An ABET bill will concentrate on issues relating to governance by the learning communities, the ability of adult learning sites to be as responsive and as close as possible to the learning needs of people.

1.3.3.3 A critical view of ABET policy

Kell (1997), criticizes ABET policy for two things: for having an incomplete conception of literacy, and that the move towards outcomes-based approaches seems to be happening without an adequate consideration of the inputs necessary for those outcomes to be achieved. She specifically refers here to the content knowledge on the part of ABET facilitators. Similarly, Leumer (1998) notes that all of the South African policy documents and curriculum reform deliberations state objectives aimed at: filling the systematic gaps in schooling and development of society in order to redress the legacies of the past. In that scenario although the development orientation is frequently mentioned, adult education is primarily set for remedial, second chance education.

Likewise, Mpoyiya and Prinsloo (1996:72) state that present policy and planning as manifest in the White Paper on Education and in the plans of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, take certain common assumptions as given: that people without certain arbitrarily determined levels of attained schooling are functionally disempowered in that they are unable to take part in the characteristic behaviours and transactions of modernity, which are assumed to require a literate orientation and the accompanying capacities: and that some months in part-time night schools will somehow reproduce the effects, in middle-aged individuals, that sustained full-time schooling is said to produce in middle-class children. These assumptions around the problem of adult illiteracy, however, are unable to explain the occurrences of very low attendance at those adult night schools that are available, the high drop-out rates that are characteristic of adult literacy work and the low levels of achievement in curriculum terms.

It is thus clear that although the new policies offer an appealing vision and mark a sharp break from apartheid education these policies are still lacking in many ways. A reliable defense for these deficiencies can be that we are only in the primary stages of undergoing radical changes in our educational system and effective change is difficult, it is long-term, systemic, conflictual and slow (Graaff & Parker, 1997:5-11).

But the fact remains that many of the policies have an incomplete conception of literacy, and moreover even though they attempt to broaden our perceptions on the legacies of apartheid education and its vanguard role in the struggle for democracy, they do not tell us *how* to make the break from apartheid education. As Graaff and Parker (1997:4) put it, "policies do not give us a recipe or a checklist to guide our

planning, nor do they provide instructions about how to achieve the desired outcomes.” The details of implementation are lacking. We have thus been given a map, but there are still only a few roads on it. This means that the results of the conceptual work done on education by planners will depend heavily on the creativity of facilitators. And it is not at all clear when the first fruits of this enormous work will be visible (Graaff & Parker, 1997:2).

1.3.3.4 Conclusion

While goals and visions have been set up to strive towards, there are considerable obstacles on the way forward and one of the most forbidding of these is the inheritance from the past. A prime feature of the old apartheid system was that it had a built-in resistance to change. It was a deeply conservative and authoritarian system in which change was seen as something bad. According to Graaff and Parker (1997:14) it is only when there is a mutual recognition of the dependency between facilitators, management, the organization (learning centre), the department and the community, that planned change is really on the agenda. It is thus clear that the organizational development must operate from a holistic perspective. The organization must be viewed as a complex and interdependent web in which a multitude of factors are influential. To make a difference means addressing as many of these factors simultaneously, rather than any single isolated factor on its own.

It is clear from the literature survey that the following factors impact negatively on ABET provision:

Less than 1% of the education budget is spent on ABE. Current provision subsequently can still be described as small-scale, fragmented in multiple sites without any central co-ordination which leads to a duplication of resources and a general lack of cost-effectiveness (NEPI, 1992:25). However, Alexandra (1998) is concerned that so many reports are on funding or lack thereof. He suggests that links with the union movement should be restored and cautions that non-governmental organisations (NGO's) especially should not become or remain totally dependent on outside/foreign funding. In the apartheid era parties like the ANC could still use foreign funding, but according to Alexandra “those taps are closed.” Funds are now being centralised.

ABE at ground level furthermore tends to be recognised within the narrow framework of literacy skills: reading, writing and arithmetic (Sebakwane,

1995:207; Wydeman, 1993:3) while some programmes additionally tend to have a unrealistic approach towards literacy attainment. The result of such thinking, potentially is that there could be a shift in the focus of ABE provision towards short-term, attenuated programmes which aim at getting as many learners as possible through the programme for specific sums of money. An example is where the possibilities mention that learners could be made literate within three months, when there is no substantiation that quick fix measures have ever been successful in the long term (Wydeman, 1993:11).

Furthermore, **the present nature of adult literacy work is still extremely limited in scope, with low take-up rates and high drop-out figures.** Less than 100 000 people are enrolled for ABE, of these 45% are in state programme-night schools, using primary school syllabi, 45% are in industry-related programmes and a further 10% are catered for by NGO's (Prinsloo, 1993). According to Elsdon (1988:154) many adult learners see no point whatsoever in being able to read or write because they were coping perfectly well with all the requirements of their lives without bothering further.

Not surprisingly, **the urban-rural divide is reflected in the quantity and quality of all aspects of ABE provision.** There are fewer organisations, fewer well-qualified facilitators, fewer libraries, less support and less money in rural areas (Harley *et al.*, 1996:536).

As far as staffing and staff development are concerned, the picture is what would have been anticipated. There are encouraging signs of an insipid system of professional development of staff for ABE, but the foundation of any ABE system - **the classroom facilitators - still need more comprehensive training and support in order to do their jobs effectively** (Harley *et al.*, 1996:536). Staff development and training as does currently exist is poorly planned, informal, haphazard, fragmented, limited to a specific programme, often reactive, and lack follow up and evaluation (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:127). Perhaps the one undisputed fact in the provision of ABE is that there are not enough well-trained people to do the jobs that are required (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:130).

Ironically, although the facilitator has been identified as the most important aspect in terms of achieving success with a programme, the average duration of the training of facilitators in South Africa is only 10 days (Wydeman, 1993:3; NEPI, 1992:25). Wedepohl (in Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:10) mentions that teachers receive years of

training, while literacy facilitators generally get their training in the form of so-called “crash courses” lasting a week or two. The reasons for this include limited time and resources as well as the erroneous view that anyone who can teach children can automatically also teach adults and that any literate person can, with minimum effort, develop the necessary skills to present a literacy programme. Consequently, these short courses training ABE facilitators produce facilitators with very minimal competencies, usually just the ability to teach the basics according to a very particular course and using specific materials. As soon as learners progress beyond the very basics, these facilitators are at a loss as to what to do next as they have seldom been trained in broad educational theory and methodology (Harley *et al.*, 1996:139).

What complicates the matter even further is that at present very little theoretical background can be provided for training ABE facilitators (Booyesen, 1995:ii). One of the main effects of poor training is that teachers resort to teaching methods they previously practiced or experienced as learners (Motala, 1992:23).

In addition the development of staff at higher levels is also of pressing concern partly because there are few qualified people to work at that level and because the chances are that the quality of the staff at grass roots level will be directly related to the quality of higher-level ABE staff. According to Wydeman and Kamper (1990:130), Booyesen (1995:ii) and Motala (1992:2) ABE trainers of facilitators are often inadequately trained in adult education themselves.

Other barriers towards effective development of ABE workers in South Africa is the fact that **there is no clear overall plan or allocation of government funds for comprehensive and rapid human resource development** to cater for the increased demands of ABET (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:13). South Africa, as most other countries consequently lack the resources to attract, train or adequately pay full-time professional staff. A commonly held view is also that there is too much investment in materials and too little in facilitators (Motala, 1992:23). The result is relatively poorly paid staff with inadequate training and no sense of career path which they can follow in ABE. Many facilitators are part-time and do not have the time or the inclination to attend courses or workshops. Low pay and no career paths are contributing factors for non-participation in courses and workshops (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:130).

ABET is furthermore becoming a convenient dumping ground for unemployed teachers (AETASA practitioner conference, 1998). Problems that have been experienced up to now with the use of teachers as literacy programme presenters are

that they do not possess the skills to teach adults and they frequently regard literacy teaching merely as an opportunity to supplement their salaries and are consequently insufficiently motivated to make a success of a demanding task like literacy teaching. This leads to the fact that many people involved in ABE do not identify themselves as adult educators. Many are trained to teach children and do not consider it necessary to improve or change their practice. Combined with the popular notion that anyone can teach adult literacy, this leads to serious weaknesses in theory, research and practice in ABE (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:127).

What complicates matters even further is that in adult basic education, **the past was dominated by a separationist atomistic approach**. So, although national policy adopts an integrated holistic approach, many educators and trainers are likely to feel more comfortable with a separationist approach. The NQF adopts an integrationist approach, where knowledge, skills and values are joined together. A separationist approach is where knowledge and skills are separated into distinct parts or atoms. The rote learning approach of apartheid education was similar to a separationist approach. The learner was expected to learn bits of academic content or knowledge in isolation from skills. The holistic integrated approach assumes that the learners are willing to learn. Again, poverty and lack of resources make this very difficult. Also, the learners need to know that investing their energy and efforts in education will be worthwhile (Graaff & Parker, 1997: 25-34).

Furthermore, according to Burroughs (1994:38), **poor overall knowledge of important policy indicators** suggests that considerable work will need to be done to ensure that providers in the field are aware of policy proposals and development (Harley *et al.*, 1996:184). Basic to building capacity is information and understanding. The fact that so many organisations still have no idea what the IEB is, which any of the ABE umbrella organisations are, and what the latest policy developments are, is indicative of a basic lack of information and a need to develop understanding of key issues (Harley *et al.*, 1996:53). Burroughs (1994:38) claims that the necessity of popularising, indeed, of selling the NQF to the larger South African public is vital if ABE is to play a properly reconstructive role within the Reconstruction and Development Programme.

When viewing current ABET practices it thus seems that the good intentions of the government and its education policy-makers are not always reaching ground level. The people at ground level are not always reaping the benefits proposed by policies.

Many challenges still await ABET in the future.

- One of the challenges facing the ABET sector in South Africa is to ensure that it retains its significance and importance as part of reconstruction and development and as a basic human right.
- In addition to this challenge is the need to negate the tendency which views ABET provisioning simply as a second-chance schooling system and, especially, that view which sees it as a second opportunity to finish school (Department of Education, 1997:22).
- Furthermore, the centralisation of ABE activity within the state must be balanced with the current decentralised activities of literacy and ABE in rural areas, community initiatives and in civil society in general (Van Niekerk, 1996:85-86).
- Ultimately as facilitators have many essential roles to perform in the teaching-learning process, they need to enjoy acceptance within the broad spectrum of ABET and be credible among a wide range of constituencies to be able to perform their roles with skill and dedication. It is clear throughout this study that teaching literacy at a basic level to adults is one of the most difficult tasks a facilitator can face (Jenkins in Wedepohl, 1984:8). Even though this may be the case there is a tendency to think it is easy to teach adults (Brown in Motala: 1992:15) and much more attention than is presently the case should be given to the training of facilitators (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:15).

There is a great deal happening in ABE and still many difficulties to face. Even though change produces unpredictable difficulties despite carefully planning ahead, we still need to consider our strategies urgently before littering the South African landscape with the debris of failed literacy projects (Lyster in Hutton, 1992:42). If we in South Africa are serious about ABE and the success of literacy programmes we need to become serious about facilitation (Costas, 1989:18) and the teaching-learning process it entails. The preparation and continuing support of facilitators with particular reference to ABET is therefore crucial if ABET is to make a meaningful contribution to the adult literacy problems as experienced in South Africa.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

Considering the many roles facilitators have to perform in the teaching-learning process that go far beyond the transfer of information to learners; the lack of research on this phenomenon in ABET in South Africa as well as the support and ongoing development facilitators deserve and need, the following research question and

sub-questions are formulated:

What is the role of the facilitator in implementing an Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme in a rural area in the Southern Cape (the Riversdale area)?

This question is divided into the following sub-questions:

Sub-questions:

- What is meant by adult learning, adult teaching and facilitating adult learning?
- What roles do facilitators need to perform in order to facilitate learning in ABET?
- What roles are facilitators currently performing in a rural area in the Southern Cape in order to facilitate learning in ABET?
- What are the implications for the training of facilitators in ABET in South Africa?

1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

At the grass roots level, the facilitator has many responsibilities in the teaching-learning process and in the involvement of the local community (Motala: 1992:8). The focus of this research is on the facilitator at grass roots level, that is the facilitator who interfaces with the learner directly, in order to identify from within an eco-systemic perspective what the different roles are that facilitators need to perform in order to facilitate learning in ABET.

The aim of this study is to describe the challenging and important role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process in ABET by describing the roles facilitators have to perform and the problems they encounter in performing these roles, in order to make recommendations toward enhancing facilitator training.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of this study will now be discussed briefly.

1.6.1 Research design

A qualitative approach was chosen since a holistic and integrated perspective is required to understand the role of the facilitator within the South African context. According to Morse (1994:3) the aim of qualitative research is the development of theory, description, clarification and comprehension rather than the exact testing of hypotheses. The qualitative design is suitable for this specific research since it allows rich descriptions of the process and the problems that will be recorded as they unfold over a period of eleven months. As a qualitative researcher the researcher may be considered to be an important research instrument who as participant will use questioning, listening and observing tools to assist in the research (Ely, 1991:78). The research methodology is therefore qualitative, explorative, descriptive and explanatory in nature.

1.6.2 Data collection methods

An extensive literature review will be conducted in order to define the research problem more clearly, and to develop a framework of reference with which to interpret the findings (Bothma, 1997:7) and will be followed by a single case study. A purposeful method of sampling (Bothma, 1997:7; Shipman, 1988:53) is used which entails that the subject (a specific facilitator) will be chosen from a specific target group whose opinions and ideas are particularly germane to the research.

Methods of data collection include observations in the classroom and semi-structured interviews conducted with the facilitator, a UNISYS spokesperson and an adult learner.

1.6.3 Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of selection, sharpening, sorting, focusing, discarding and organizing in order to make sense out of the data, integrate the data, draw conclusions and verify the data (Merriam, 1988:127).

All the data gathered is organised chronologically to build the data base and the data from various sources is analysed according to the content analysis procedure of open coding as described in Berg (1995:185).

To develop themes, the researcher will apply a combination of the processes

proposed by Ely (1991:87) and Cocklin (1996:88-115) as guidelines since all qualitative data analysis is in a sense idiosyncratic. The researcher is in charge of making meaning, of making sense of data. No one else can do that job since the researcher is so intimately involved with shaping the study and in understanding what has been studied (Van Maaren in Ely, 1991:141).

The roles the facilitator is performing in the teaching-learning process and the problems she encounters in performing these roles will be described in rich detail. After the data is analysed and interpreted, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations made toward enhancing facilitator training and contributing to a clearer understanding of what the role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process in ABET truly entails.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF TERMS

The terms Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET), the adult learner, and the facilitator have varying meanings in different contexts. The use of these terms in this research is clarified below. It must also be noted that the use of the male pronoun (he) for the facilitators and the learners is for the sake of convenience only and no gender discrimination is intended.

1.7.1 Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)

According to the Multi-year implementation plan for Adult Education and Training (1997:13) Adult Basic Education (ABE) refers to “the educational base which individuals require to improve their life changes.” Adult Basic Training (ABET) refers to “the foundational income-generating or occupational skills which individuals acquire for improving their living conditions.” The New South African education and training policy combines education with training in an attempt to jettison the traditional notion that these activities are opposing dichotomies and create an integrated approach (Van Niekerk, 1996:27-28). Thus, together, Adult Basic Education and Training, imply the foundational knowledge, skills, understanding and abilities that are required for improved social and economical life (Motala, 1992:1).

ABET as per the draft policy document on ABET of the Department of Education, March, 1997 is defined as:

... the general conceptual foundation towards lifelong learning and

development, comprising of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range of contexts. ABET is flexible, developmental and targeted at the specific needs of particular audiences and, ideally, provides access to nationally recognised certificates (Hartley, 1997:25).

For the purposes of this research ABET can be defined as adult education and training equivalent to the 10 year free and compulsory schooling legislated for our children, illustrated as ABET levels 1-5 of the National Qualifications framework (NQF) (Van Niekerk, 1996: 27-28).

The focus of this study will be particularly on ABET levels 1 with specific reference to the Southern Cape UNISYS computer-assisted literacy programme, targeting functional literacy and life skills education (Harley *et al.*, 1996:418; Southern Cape literacy Project, 1992:3).

1.7.2 The adult learner

The adult learner also referred to as participant, co-learner, student (Chadwick, 1995:2) is a person with a history, a language and a culture (Usher in Boud & Walker, 1994:13; Heron, 1992:31). The National Adult Basic Education Conference (November 1993) states that ABE is aimed at adults who have had no or very little formal schooling, those who did not have the equivalent of a school-leaving certificate and those who only require specific sections of ABE which meet their particular needs (Harley *et al.*, 1996:20).

According to Dirx and Spurgin (1992:20) a typical characterization of the ABE learner is that he is “culturally, economically and educationally disadvantaged.” Although typically disadvantaged and oppressed the adult illiterate is not cognitively inferior to other adults and must be regarded as a dignified, competent human being (Lyster, 1992a:29).

Many adult learners in South Africa lack significant life skills (i.e. they can not read the Bible, have problems in traffic, can not fill in bank forms, cannot carry out written instruction in the workplace) (Wydeman and Kamper, 1990:9). This may cause social embarrassment which further weakens their poor self-image (Harley *et al.*, 1996:52-73).

But despite these deficiencies adults have a variety of roles which they are required to fulfil. Some of the roles are age-based (like being a husband or wife, grandfather or grandmother), others are legally constructed (such as the role of voter), others are economically defined (holding a job) (Morphet, 1992:92). The focus of this study will be particularly on adult learners at ABET level 1 of the NQF.

1.7.3 The facilitator

The focus of this study is on the facilitator at grass roots level: that is the teacher/educator who interfaces with the learner directly. According to the Draft Standards for ABET Facilitators (1997:7) the term *facilitator* refers to a tutor, teacher, educator - someone who teaches a learning group of ABET learners. Motala (1992:1) notes that the term used to describe the *educator* usually derives from the philosophical flavour of the programme and its underlying ideology. There is a tendency in adult education to talk about facilitating learning rather than teaching. Therefore the teacher is now a facilitator, a resource, a catalyst and a negotiator rather than an expert, an instructor and a transmitter of knowledge. Other programmes use terms deriving from classical pedagogy such as instructor, teacher, educator, supervisor (Saddington in Costas, 1989:188).

For the purposes of this study the term *facilitator* is defined according to the roles facilitators occupy, or functions they perform in the teaching-learning process (Motala, 1992:1). With the reference to the term *roles* the researcher implies the facilitator's style of teaching which further encompasses his responsibilities and obligations or tasks in the teaching-learning process (Krech, Crutchfield, & Ballachey, 1962:486) and the set of expectations attached to them (Morphet, 1992:94).

The term *facilitator* thus refers to a person who is skilled in helping a learner or group of ABET learners to specify their own learning objectives, committed to a learner-centred form of relationship or operating from within the other persons frame of reference (Boud & Walker, 1994:21).

1.8 CHAPTER DIVISIONS

The chapters are divided as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a theoretical orientation to the research, the research problem and research design, stating the importance of the research within the specific South African context, describing the developments and changes that have occurred in South Africa as a whole and ABET in particular since 1994 and how these impact on our understanding of the role of the facilitator.

Chapter 2 focuses on the facilitation of adult learning and provides a theoretical understanding of what adult learning, adult teaching and facilitating adult learning comprise of.

Chapter 3 describes the ideal roles facilitators need to perform in order to facilitate learning, from within an international perspective and provides the theoretical basis for a proposed teaching-learning model, which will subsequently determine the research design and format of the qualitative case study.

Chapter 4 describes the research methodology used to execute the research in order to obtain a clearer understanding of the roles facilitators are currently performing in ABET. The methods used for data-collection and data-analysis will be described in rich detail.

In **chapter 5** the research findings are presented and discussed according to the categories determined at the final data-analysis stage in order to get a clearer understanding of the roles facilitators are currently performing in a rural area in South Africa and to determine problems experienced by facilitators in performing these roles in ABET.

Chapter 6 provides the implications of the research findings and recommendations will be made for the improvement of literacy programmes, facilitator training and the classroom practices of ABET facilitators.

1.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a clear description of the South African society as a whole and ABET in particular in order to provide a holistic perspective regarding the role of the

facilitator in the teaching-learning process in ABET. Throughout this chapter it is evident that learners and facilitators can not exist independent of their environment and that their actions and experiences can not be properly understood without taking their context into consideration. It therefore becomes clear that many factors have to be taken into consideration when endeavoring to understand the complexity of the role of the facilitator. Unless an appropriate description of the larger South African context is obtained the researcher may draw conclusions at an early stage taking only a narrow view of facilitators' roles into account. This chapter subsequently illustrates some of the factors impacting on facilitators' roles in ABET.

It is clear that the necessity for reconstruction, development and redress in South Africa made new education policy development a priority and that the new government would take ABE far more seriously. Nevertheless, these policies are still lacking in many ways.

The following factors impacting negatively on ABET provision were also discussed:

- lack of government funds was one of the main barriers towards effective development of ABE workers in South Africa
- low take-up rates and high drop-out figures characterize many projects
- the urban-rural divide is reflected in the quantity and quality of all aspects of ABE provision
- the facilitator at grass roots level still needs more comprehensive training and support
- lack of theoretical background which can be provided for the training of ABE facilitators

The preparation, training and continuing support of facilitators in ABET is crucial if ABET is to make a meaningful contribution to the adult literacy problems as experienced in South Africa. In order to understand the training needs of facilitators and the roles they have to perform in the teaching-learning process it will be necessary to understand what comprises adult learning and teaching.

Chapter 2 will therefore provide a theoretical understanding of what adult learning, adult teaching and the facilitation of adult learning comprise of.

CHAPTER 2: THE FACILITATION OF ADULT LEARNING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Although this study is not about learning theory, but essentially about teaching or facilitating learning, Brookfield (in Garrison, 1989:55) stresses the importance of clear and unambiguous definitions of learning and teaching. In order to provide such clear and explicit definitions the researcher will study different theoretical perspectives regarding learning and teaching adults. From the point of the facilitator of adults, an examination of theory is important, as how we view learning affects how we teach (McCombs, 1997:5). This chapter will therefore first of all focus on adult learning and adult teaching, before discussing the facilitation of adult learning in more detail.

2.2 ADULT LEARNING AND ADULT TEACHING

2.2.1 Adult learning

Recent work on learning indicates that:

- Learning is active, not the passive receipt of knowledge and skills; it is therefore not something which the facilitator does to the learner (Rogers, 1996:94; Hobbs (1992:1).
- Learning is personal, individual; it is not a collective activity. In learning, the individual is the agent, even though the agent may be subject to the social pressures of the group (Jarvis, 1996:85; Brookfield in Rogers, 1996:80). Even though learning is affected and may even to some extent be controlled by society or other collectives, the learning activity itself is personal (Rogers, 1996:80-81).
- Learning is voluntary, people do it themselves; it is not compulsory (Brookfield in Cross 1996:351; Rogers, 1996:77). Most learning is unintended, however, there are occasions when people engage in some purposeful learning activity, some structured process of mastering a situation.
- Learning comes from experience and is therefore continuous. It occurs throughout life (Rogers, 1996:80-81).

Learning takes place in a number of different spheres. Adults may learn new *knowledge* as they collect information and need to relate their new material in ways that lead to new *understanding*. Adults may further learn new *skills* or develop

existing skills (i.e. physical, thinking, learning, coping and problem solving skills). Since adults can learn new knowledge, new understandings and new skills without necessarily changing their attitudes, the learning of *attitudes* is a distinct sphere of learning. It is possible for learning changes to be brought about in all four of the above mentioned areas without accompanying alterations in our way of life or pattern of behaviour, therefore it is necessary to learn to apply newly learned material to what we do and how we live, to carry out our new learning into changed ways of *behaving* (Rogers, 1996:79).

From the facilitator's point of view it is useful to keep the distinctions between these different areas of learning in mind during the preparation of the learning programme. If the teaching is primarily in the area of skills, or knowledge or understandings or attitudes or behaviour it will influence the practices facilitators will adopt in the programme of learning (Rogers, 1996:79).

Among the many ways in which adults learn the following range of strategies may be identified:

- *Analogical thinking* and *trial and error* are used frequently in the adult learning activities.
- Adults often tend to rely on the creation of *meaningful wholes* to master new material.
- Adults rely *less on memory and rote learning* to retain what has been learned.
- Adults share with younger people the ability and need to learn by *imitation*. They will often quickly grasp something demonstrated to them, but in general they will not retain it without constant use (Rogers, 1996:95).

The learning cycle

Both the learners and their socio-cultural context have to be taken into consideration when endeavoring to construct a theory of adult learning. In order to understand the learning process more thoroughly, it is important to understand the meaning of the learning cycle (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2). A dialectical relationship exists between the developing individual and the culture (the-world-out-there) (Jarvis, 1996:54; Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989:44). Jarvis (1996, 55-57) explains that the socio-cultural context can be divided into two distinct elements: the objectified culture of a society and the means by which it is transmitted to individuals. In the process of learning there appears to be a cyclic relationship between individuals and their objectified culture as

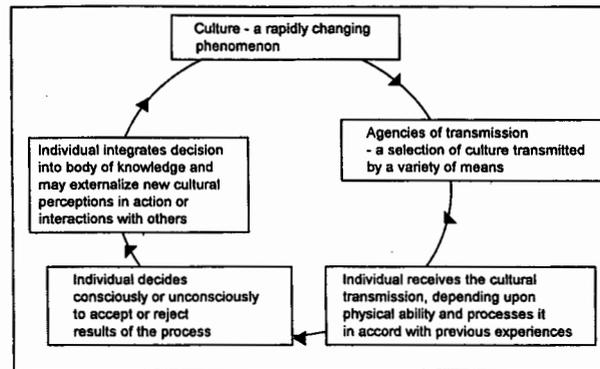


Figure 2.1 A learning cycle (Jarvis, 1996:59)

they both process and internalize the objectified culture and thereafter, externalize it through social interaction (Jarvis, 1996:58). This learning cycle (see Figure 2.1) represents a process and it is clear that there are two major facets to the process which represent the teaching and learning processes: there is a selection of culture transmitted to the learner that may be regarded as an approach to teaching and there is also the learner's selection of culture which may be perceived as learner-centred learning.

Furthermore there is growing consensus that experience forms the basis of all learning. Freire (1983:20) and others (Knowles, 1985:6; Saddington, 1992:43; Jarvis, 1996:99) have suggested that learning is accomplished by critically analysing experience. They have spoken of a learning cycle (see Figure 2.2) starting with experience, proceeding through reflection on experience and leading to action which in its turn becomes the concrete experience for further reflection and thus the next stage of the cycle (Rogers, 1996:107).

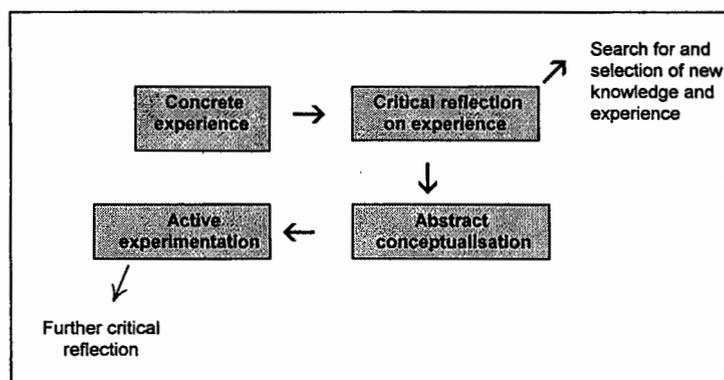


Figure 2.2 A learning cycle (Rogers, 1996:109)

Rogers (1996:107) notes that the process of reflection is complex. It involves making a judgement of experience, assessing it in the light of some other standard which is

drawn from other experiences. It means trying to explain the experience, to assess in what ways the experience could have been different. In learning through critical reflection on experience there is the active search for new material against which experience can be judged. Critical reflection will lead in some cases to the drawing of conclusions, to developing generalisations (Kolb in Rogers, 1996:108; Jarvis, 1996:68).

Critical reflection may therefore be seen as asking questions about experience in the light of other experience. Abstract conceptualisation may be seen as identifying possible answers. Hypotheses are formed from the process of critical reflection on experience which may be tested in new situations. Rogers (1996:109) states that learning includes goals, purposes, intentions, choices and decision-making which tend to be omitted from discussions from the learning cycle. There is a widespread acceptance that critical reflection on experience leading to action forms a large part of the process of learning. But it is probably unacceptable to suggest that this is *the way* in which we learn when considering the many different strategies of learning which are all used at some time or other. Critical reflection on experience would seem to be the key strategy in the process of creating meaning out of experience; but there is more to learning than the search for meanings.

2.2.2 Adult teaching

According to Jarvis (1996:143) teaching may be defined as the intention to bring about learning (not to produce a learning outcome) and is the provision of any situation in which learning occurs. Teaching is thus primarily concerned with the promotion of learning.

According to this definition it is clear that learning can and does occur without the facilitator, so while the learner is an essential element in the educational process, the facilitator is not. Because the above definition is too wide a definition within the context of the occupation or role of the facilitator, this study will more specifically focus upon the relationships between conditions of learning and approaches to teaching, **where teaching may be viewed as one way in which learning is facilitated**. Teaching is thus not essential to learning, but may facilitate it (Jarvis, 1996:101-103). In other words this study will focus more on what is meant by facilitating learning.

According to Jarvis (1996:122) facilitating learning is not in opposition to teaching, it

is a way of understanding the teaching role. Facilitation on this account, does not imply that teachers never teach, nor for that matter that they never tell or explain things to learners. Facilitation merely implies modifying, not supplanting teaching. Facilitation is therefore more appropriately seen as a perspective on teaching, or if you will, a particular philosophy of teaching. It is thus an approach or philosophy that conceives of teaching as expediting the learners' learning rather than disseminating knowledge to learners. In learner-centred teaching the facilitator is a facilitator of the learning rather than a source of knowledge, *so whilst responsible for creating the learning situation, facilitators do not control the learning outcomes but surrender some of the power to the learner* as opposed to teacher-centred approaches which ensure that the facilitator has control of the learning process (Jarvis, 1996:145).

The facilitator may therefore confront the learner with a problem that requires a solution or provide an experience and encourage reflection upon it. Facilitators can create the situation in which the learning cycle (see Figure 2.2) is activated, and may help in the process of observing and reflecting. Thus the facilitator is one who assists in the learner's learning, even to the extent of providing or creating the environment in which that learning may occur, but is never one who dictates the outcome of the experience. The learning-experience is therefore open-ended (Jarvis, 1996:111-112) (see Figure 2.3).

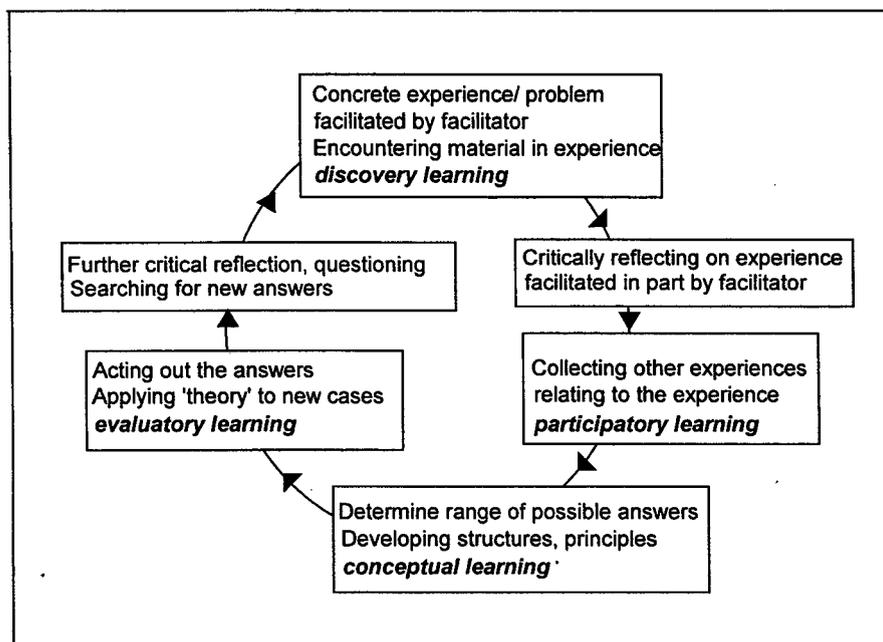


Figure 2.3 A facilitative learning and teaching cycle (Jarvis, 1996:112; Rogers, 1996:192)

2.3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ADULT LEARNING

Bennett (in McCombs, 1997:5) states that from the point of the facilitator of adult learning an examination of learning theory is important. It was mentioned previously (see 2.2.1) that there are many strategies for learning and that one should therefore be wary of adopting an all-embracing theory of learning which implies exclusivity (Rogers, 1996:96).

In order to simplify matters the different learning theories will be divided into three main groups. These are:

- the *behaviourist* theories which stress the role of the teacher-agent in providing stimulus and selecting and reinforcing approved responses whereas the learner is often seen as more passive
- the *cognitive* theories, which emphasize the content of the material, based on a different view of the nature of knowledge whilst giving direct attention to the activity of the learner in processing the response
- the *humanist* theories which rely on various analyses of personality and of society and gives direct attention to the active involvement of the learner (Rogers, 1996:96-97).

The humanist learning theories stress the *active nature* of the adult learner (see 2.2.1) and the particular social settings within which learning operates. Humanist theories further stress the autonomy of the learners and emphasize that all the other theories discuss the learner being controlled by the stimuli, facilitator or subject matter. The humanist views see learning as part of a process of conflict in which the learners are seeking to take control of their own life processes. It is the engagement of the learners with the world around them and with themselves that creates the learning milieu (Rogers, 1996:99-100).

From within the meta-approach adopted in this study, it is clear that although learning is perceived as being necessarily autonomous it is also assumed that learning always takes place within a social context and therefore learning is also a social process. In order to understand adult learning properly, it is necessary to describe the particular *learning process of the learner* and the *facilitator* as well as taking the *broader context* in which such learning occurs into consideration.

Paulo Freire and Malcolm Knowles, both humanist theorists, have in different yet integrative ways contributed significantly to the theoretical knowledge of adult learning. Freire's social learning theory places considerable emphasis on the learner in his *context* or social environment and the context in which his pedagogy was formed, is very similar to that of past oppression in South Africa. Knowles on the other hand focuses more on the *self* and the need for *self-development* (Criticos, 1996:161; Rogers, 1996:102; Knowles, 1985:6; Freire, 1983:36,45). Their humanist theoretical perspectives on adult learning will subsequently be discussed.

2.3.1 Paulo Freire

Freire has a more radical but moral approach to education (Jarvis, 1996:35). Freire regards education as a liberating force, striving to release the individual from the false consciousness in which he has been imprisoned as a result of the dominance of the culture of the colonizers. Freire therefore incorporates two opposing cultures into his understanding of the teaching-learning process - that of the ruling elite and that of the oppressed (Jarvis, 1996:85). Freire (1973:23) believes that since the culture that is transmitted (referring here to the culture of the colonizers/oppressors) is foreign to the values of the learners (oppressed), who are its recipients, it leads to the subordination of the culture of the indigenous people. Since the masses have a construction of reality imposed upon them, which is false to their own heritage, the idea of a false self-identity emerges, one that perpetually underestimates the indigenous culture and therefore native people come to see themselves as subordinate. Hence the oppressed are imprisoned in a cultural construction of reality that is false to them, but one from which it is difficult to escape.

This habit of submission led men to adapt and adjust to their circumstances, instead of seeking to integrate themselves with reality (Freire, 1973:23).

But Freire not only regards learners as recipients of cultural information and experiences, but also as agents who are able to act upon their environment in order to try and change it (Jarvis, 1996:85). It is for this reason that Freire emphasizes that education should make the learners critically aware of their false consciousness and of their social condition (the process which he refers to as *conscientization*). In other words conscientization is a process whereby learners develop a critical understanding of their society and an awareness of how to change it (Walters, 1989:85). In becoming aware learners should reject many of the myths, created by the ruling elite, that

prevent them from having a clear perception of their own social reality (Jarvis, 1996:35). Through acquiring critical consciousness the oppressed are able to challenge the oppressors' definitions of reality and overcome their own self-deprecation.

The awakening of critical consciousness leads the way to the expression of social discontents precisely because these discontents are real components of an oppressive situation (Freire, 1983:20).

Instead of internalising the oppressors' views of them (being incapable of learning, lazy and unproductive), stereotypes which the oppressed had been internalising, the oppressed may come to see themselves as inherently capable and creative (Mayo, 1997:26).

The peasant begins to get courage to overcome his dependence when he realizes that he is dependent. Until then, he goes along with the boss and says, 'What can I do? I'm only a peasant' (Freire, 1983:47).

The principle of *conscientization* is therefore based on the premise that human beings are makers of culture. By understanding this in literacy classes, they come to realise that aspects of their lives which they had thought were unchangeable are in fact person-made and may be changed. Conscientization thus changes one's perceptions of the facts, based on their critical understanding (Freire, 1996:182). The Freirean approach therefore depicts the role of the learner as becoming actively involved in the making and shaping of history. What this means is that learners should be aware of their position within society. A new self should emerge from the culture of silence that dominates learners' lives and they should begin to participate actively in the making of history (Morphet, 1992:99).

The life experience of the learner and a critical analysis of this form the centre of this process of conscientization. As the learner subsequently interrogates his own experience he is able to reinterpret this experience and understand the societal context within which he finds himself. This understanding leads the learner to action, which again becomes experience to be reflected upon. Life experience is therefore the source of the learner's knowledge which liberates him and provides him with the tools for changing the society in which he lives (Saddington, 1992:43).

It is this combination of action and reflection upon the world in order to transform it that Freire calls *praxis* (Jarvis, 1996:86; Freire, 1983:36). Thinkers such as Freire, Mezirow, Kolb and Boud have all examined the process of reflection (Jarvis, 1996:79) and they recognised that the human being is able to shift and evaluate the external stimuli received from his experiences. Having received and processed inputs from the objectified culture that engulfs them, learners can externalise and act upon their socio-cultural milieu. Accordingly, one of the conclusions drawn from Freire's work is that unless an experience is examined, it has no educative value. Effective learning therefore does not follow from a positive experience, but from effective reflection (Jarvis, 1996:99).

Freire consequently places considerable emphasis on the teacher-learner and the learner-teacher dialogue. He recognises that the teacher may facilitate the learning experience upon which reflection occurs, which thus becomes a learning process. Thus Freire regards the role of the teacher as a facilitator who is able to stimulate the learning process rather than as one who teaches the correct knowledge and values that have to be acquired. His approach furthermore concentrates upon the humanity of the learner and places great value on the human being, but with a more structural and political emphasis. He thus recognises that learners are able to create their own roles rather than become role players performing roles prescribed by others (Jarvis, 1996:84).

However, a great deal of criticism has been levelled at Freire for failing to explain precisely how conscientization translates into action, or in other words, how understanding the causes of oppression leads to transformation. In his later work Freire acknowledges this and becomes more overtly political. He now believes that literacy education must be located within organisational structures which have overtly political aims (Lyster, 1992a:38). It must further be noted that conscientization seems to refer to the process of overcoming a "state of false consciousness" with only the oppressed having a "fragmented consciousness". Although this criticism against Freire's work is substantial, it is still, however, helpful due to the fact that we are concerned with adult learners who were oppressed and with their state of consciousness. Freire furthermore uses the two simple categories of "oppressed" and "oppressor" which are very inadequate for describing the complexities of societies (Walters, 1989:89) and this must be taken into account by the reader when these terms are used.

2.3.2 Malcolm Knowles

Although many theorists place considerable emphasis on the self it is most exemplified in the works of Knowles (Jarvis, 1996:99). Knowles (who may almost be regarded as the father of andragogy - the science of helping adults how to learn), places a tremendous emphasis on the self and the need for self-development and self-direction which reflects the humanistic concerns of adult education, something with which many adult educators would agree. Despite the apparent weaknesses and the many criticisms being levelled at the andragogy-concept, it is becoming a popular term in adult education. Andragogy is used by Knowles to refer to the mode of teaching and learning most appropriate to adults. This is contrasted to pedagogy, the mode most suitable to teaching and learning with children. Although Knowles initially formulated the distinction in dichotomous terms of andragogy versus pedagogy he now speaks of andragogy and pedagogy as points on a continuum of teaching and learning styles (Jarvis, 1996:93,98).

The concept of andragogy is premised on the following assumptions regarding adult psychology which Knowles (1980:44) articulates as follows:

- The learner's self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality towards being a self-directed human being. The psychological definition of adult is, one who has arrived at a self-concept of being responsible for one's own life, of being self-directing (Knowles, 1985:6).
- They (learners) accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning (Knowles, 1980:44). Adults therefore have a greater volume and a different quality of experience than youth (Knowles, 1985:6).
- Their readiness to learn becomes orientated increasingly to the developmental tasks of their social roles (Knowles, 1980:44). The andragogical model assumes that adults become ready to learn when they experience a need to know or do something in order to perform more effectively in some aspects of their lives. Adults therefore do not learn for the sake of learning; they learn in order to be able to perform a task, solve a problem, or live in a more satisfying way (Knowles, 1985:12).
- Their motivation to learn is mostly internal - self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, greater self-confidence, self-actualization, and the like (Herzberg & Maslow in Knowles, 1985:12).
- Their time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge

to immediacy of application and accordingly, their orientation towards learning shifts from one of subject-centredness to one of performance-centredness (Knowles, 1980:44).

Although many criticisms have been levelled at the andragogy concept and despite its apparent weaknesses, it has gained much support. Andragogy focuses upon the *self-directed learner* and emphasizes the place of the self in the learning process, both of which are very significant to learning theory. The emphasis on self-direction has resulted in Knowles' designing *learning contracts* assuming considerable importance in many circles. The learning contract is one made between facilitator and learner, for the learner to undertake specific work by a given date (Jarvis, 1996:93). In the learning contracts a diagnosed learning need is related into a learning objective. The learner next identifies, with the facilitator's help, the most effective resources and strategies for accomplishing each objective. The learner then specifies what evidence will be collected for indicating the extent to which each objective was accomplished. Finally, the learner specifies how this evidence will be judged or validated (Knowles, 1985:18).

Knowles (as well as Freire) also places considerable emphasis on the *experience* of the learner as a resource for learning and this view is shared by many theorists in the field of adult education (Jarvis, 1996:136). Knowles (1985:11) acknowledges that "because an adult defines himself largely by his experience, he has a deep investment in its value." To an adult, his experience is him. He defines who he is, establishes his self-identity, in terms of his unique series of experience (Saddington, 1992:53).

Consequently, this phenomenon that adults have accumulated a great volume and different kinds of experience (Knowles, 1971:44) throughout their lives, has significant implications for the teaching-learning process. Because an adult derives his self-identity from his experience (Knowles, 1985:11) a situation in which his experience is not being used, or its worth is minimized, may be perceived by the adult as not just his experience that is being rejected, but he feels rejected as a person (Knowles, 1971:44). Hence the great importance of using the experience of adult learners as a rich resource of learning is especially important when working with illiterate adults, who have little to sustain their dignity other than their experience (Knowles, 1985:11).

2.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING ADULTS

2.4.1 Paulo Freire

Freire represents a radical approach to teaching and he regards it as a method by which learners may act upon their socio-cultural environment in order to change it. The teacher is therefore regarded as a facilitator of learning and education as a process of change (Jarvis, 1996:151). At the heart of Freire's educational ideas lies a humanistic conception of people as learners, but also an expectation that once they have actually learned they may not remain passive, but become active participants in the wider world. Human beings are therefore not passive recipients of their cultural heritage, but they receive, process and externalize it (Jarvis, 1996:83).

Freire (1985:63) has a more explicit theory of teaching. The basic components of Freire's literacy method are:

- Participant observations of educators "tuning in" to the vernacular universe of the people. Freire advocates and practices, going to those that have a learning need and listening to them, so that the facilitator can become the listener. Here the facilitators learn the language of their potential learners and also identify with them.
- A search for generative words (Jarvis, 1996:149). In languages like Portuguese or Spanish, words are composed syllabically. Thus every non-monosyllabic word is, technically generative, in the sense that other words can be constructed from its decomposed syllables, although certain conditions must be present in the search for generative words (Freire, 1985:63).
- An initial codification of these words into visual images which stimulate people "submerged" in the culture of silence to "emerge" as conscious makers of their own culture (Jarvis, 1996:149). Codification refers alternatively to imaging of some significant aspect of the learner's concrete reality (like a slumdwelling). As such it becomes both the object of the teacher-learner dialogue and the context for the introduction of the generative word (Freire, 1985: 64).
- The decodification by a "culture circle" under the self-effecting stimulus of a coordinator who is no teacher in the conventional sense, but who has become an educator-educatee in dialogue with educatee-educator too often treated by formal educators as passive recipients of knowledge. At the outset of the teaching and learning the facilitator bridges the gulf between him and the learners in order to create a genuine dialogue (Jarvis, 1996:149). Decodification therefore refers to a

process of description and interpretation, whether of printed words or pictures, or other codifications (Freire, 1985:64).

- A creative new codification, this one explicitly critical and aimed at action, wherein those who are formally illiterate now begin to reject their role as mere “objects” in nature and social history and undertake to become “subjects” of their own destiny. Here learners are encouraged to participate in dialogue and to problematize the reality in which they are immersed. This is a deliberate attempt to make the learners question what they have previously taken for granted, so that they may become aware that they have been socialized into the culture of the colonizers and that their construction of reality may be false within the context of their indigenous heritage (Freire, 1985:64).

Freire therefore distinguishes between education for “domestication” and education for “freedom”. In essence, Freire (1985:114) believes that one of the radical differences between education as a dominating and dehumanizing task (education for domestication) and education as a humanistic and liberating task (education for freedom) is as follows:

Education for domestication is an act of transferring knowledge, whereas education for freedom is an act of knowledge and a process of transforming action that should be exercised on reality (Freire, 1985:102).

Freire further recognizes that there are two types of response in his forms of education: the one he calls the “banking concept of education” in which the learning is non-reflective, and the other he calls the “problem-posing education” in which the learning is innovative (Jarvis, 1996:74). Banking education refers to a situation in which narrating teachers deposit information into the minds of passive receiving learners. It further assumes that “knowledge is ‘a gift’ bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing” (Freire, 1983:58). It is thus assumed that everything learners need to know has already been determined by others who know better. Education is therefore simply a matter of passing prescriptions on down to those whose life task it is to absorb and observe them (Bernstein & Gray in Costas, 1989:23) and the social structures of society are accordingly reproduced (Jarvis, 1996:73). As Freire (1983:58) states:

Narration (with the teacher as narrator) leads the students to

memorize mechanically the narrated content. Worse yet, it turns them into 'containers,' into 'receptacles' to be 'filled' by the teacher. The more completely he fills the receptacles, the better a teacher he is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are.

Freire (1985:117) further contemplates that:

... it is not hard to find educators whose idea of education is to adapt the learner to his environment. (In this scenario) ... the so-called good student is one who repeats, who renounces critical thinking, who adjusts to models.

Freire also places considerable emphasis on the teacher-learner and learner-teacher dialogue (Jarvis, 1996:85). According to Freire (in Allman, 1994:153-155) teachers and learners are a unity of opposites, or in other words a dialectical contradiction. Each group is what it is by virtue of its relation to the other. For Freire (1996:127) this is an antagonistic contradiction which must be overcome.

The second basic principle is the existence of subjects, educators and learners, which does not mean that they are equal to each other. The fact that both are subjects of the practice does not nullify the specific role of each one. The former are subjects of the act of teaching; the latter are subjects of the act of learning. The former learn as they teach; the latter teach as they learn. They are all subjects of the knowing process, which involves teaching and learning.

The teacher possesses already existing knowledge which learners need. An antagonism results because learners, due to their dependency, are subordinate and teachers as a dialectical consequence are dominant. Therefore teachers and learners constitute different groups in which the processes of teaching and learning have become separated or dichotomised. All of these separations are antagonistic because they limit the learning and creative potential of both groups.

Therefore, "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" (Freire, 1983:59). Freire believes that banking education maintains and even stimulates the contradiction through the following

attitudes and practices which mirror oppressive society as a whole:

- the teacher teaches and the students are taught
- the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing
- the teacher thinks and the students are thought about
- the teacher talks and the students listen - meekly
- the teacher chooses and enforces his choice and the students comply
- the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher
- the teacher chooses the programme content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it
- the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority which he sets in opposition to the freedom of students
- the teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the students are mere objects (Freire, 1983:59).

With Freire's approach the idea is to conceive teaching and learning as two internally-related processes within each person. This is why he uses the rather cumbersome terms, teacher-learners and learner-teachers, to express necessary transformations. Teachers do not cease being teachers but cease being the exclusive or only teacher in the learning group. They will need to relinquish authoritarianism but not authority. Learner-teachers likewise do not cease being learners but join with teachers in a mutual process, a unity of teaching and learning. However, how simple and straightforward as this transformation may sound, it is extremely difficult. Teachers on their own can not transform this relation. They can initiate the change by challenging learners to consider the limitations of existing relations, but it is only when the learners accept the challenge that the actual, the collective struggle to transform the relations begin. It is impossible authentically to effect transformation of the teacher-learner relation until both teachers and learners transform their relation to knowledge. In other words, being or relating differently is inextricably bound up with knowing differently. Knowledge therefore can not be conceived as a static possession (similar to the views of constructivism), but only as a mediation or tool between people and the world which either helps or hinders a critical perception of reality (Allman, 1994:153-155).

Freire subsequently seeks to reduce the distance between the teacher and the taught so that learners may be involved in their own learning. The vehicle by which this is accomplished is *dialogue* (Cohn, 1988:5). Through dialogue the traditional role and

function of the facilitator and learner is radically transformed. The facilitator is no longer seen as the source of all knowledge and as the depositor of valuable knowledge into the empty vessel that is the mind of the “ignorant” learner. Education is no longer a donation from above, but a dialectical process in which the learner and facilitator together come to “read the world as well as the word”. Notwithstanding, common educational practices do not measure up to these prerequisites, and are rather dehumanizing (Lyster, 1992a:37).

Therefore Freire (1985:22) depicts that the role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process should not be to describe something to the learners to be memorized, but rather that they should problematize situations that they are confronted with everyday. When the learner is therefore regarded as an active rather than a passive participant in the learning process, power (locus of control) is shifted away from the facilitator in the direction of the learner. The learner is then, as Hobbs (1992:1) so strikingly describes him “not perceived as an empty vessel to be filled full of facts,” but is seen as “a candle to be lit; a potential to be developed.”

Freire (in Jarvis, 1996:151) therefore highlights the fact that facilitators have to break down the barriers between teacher and taught, should speak the same language as the learners, should be aware of how they construct their universe of meaning and what they say are their learning needs, should start where the learners are and encourage them to explore and learn from their experience. Therefore facilitators should not only *talk to* the learners but *talk with* them (Freire, 1998:63).

... if teachers are consistently authoritarian, then they are always the initiators of talk, while the students are continually subjected to their discourse. They speak to, for, and about the learners. They talk from top to bottom ... and even when they talk with the learners, it is as if they are doing them a favor, underlining the importance and power of their own voices (Freire, 1998:64).

However it is important to note that Freire does not imply that facilitators never teach. According to Freire and Faundez (1989:34) educators can not refrain from putting forward ideas, nor can they refrain from engaging in discussion with their learners on the ideas they have put forward.

Basically, this has to do with the near mystery of the praxis of educators who live out their democratic insights: they must affirm

themselves without thereby disaffirming their students (Freire & Faundez, 1989:34).

Freire (1998:60) therefore describes the relationship between facilitators and learners as complex, fundamental and difficult.

At the heart of Freire's educational ideas lies a humanistic conception of people as learners, but also an expectation that once they have actually learned they may not remain passive but become active participants in the wider world. Hence, for Freire, education can not be a neutral process; it is either designed to facilitate freedom or it is "education for domestication" (Jarvis, 1996:82).

... there can be no educational practice that is not directed toward a certain objective, which does not involve a certain dream, an idea of utopia. The direction of educational practice explains its political nature ... the impossibility of an asexual, 'neutral endeavor'. That educational practice can not be neutral, however, must not lead educators to impose, subliminally or not, their taste on learners, whatever those tastes may be. This is the ethical dimension of educational practice (Freire, 1996:127).

2.4.2 Malcolm Knowles

While andragogy is not a theory of adult learning, its humanistic perspectives might provide some guidelines for the practice of teaching adults (Jarvis, 1996:94; Brookfield, 1985:151).

Knowles (in Jarvis, 1996:153) specifies sixteen principles of teaching in response to conditions of learning. He regards teaching as the process of designing and managing learning activities. These principles indicate the process of teaching. Knowles specifies the following principles.

The facilitator:

- exposes learners to new possibilities for self-fulfilment
- helps learners clarify their own aspirations
- helps learners dialogue
- helps learners identify life-problems resulting from their learning needs

- provides physical conditions conducive to adult learning
- accepts and treats the learner as a person
- seeks to build relationships of trust and co-operation between learners
- becomes a co-learner in the spirit of mutual enquiry
- involves learners in mutual process of formulating learning objectives
- shares with learners potential methods to achieve these objectives
- helps learners to organize themselves to undertake their tasks
- helps learners exploit their own experiences on learning resources
- gears presentation of his own resources to the levels of learners' experiences
- helps learners integrate new learning to their own experiences
- involves learners in devising criteria and methods to measure progress
- helps learners develop and apply self-evaluation procedures

The list of principles clearly demonstrate the facilitative teaching style of a humanistic educator of adults (Jarvis, 1996:153).

Knowles applies these principles to the process of teaching, which he regards as having seven stages:

- setting a climate for learning. According to Knowles a climate that is conducive to learning is prerequisite to effective learning. A climate for learning encompasses mutual respect, collaborativeness, mutual trust, supportiveness, openness, authenticity, pleasure and humanness
- establishing a structure for mutual planning
- diagnosing learning needs
- formulating directions for learning
- designing a pattern of learning experiences
- managing the execution of the learning experiences
- evaluating results and rediagnosing learning needs (Jarvis, 1996:154; Knowles, 1985:14-18; Knowles, 1980:44-45).

Knowles (1990:77) claims that the aim of education must be the facilitation of learning because man lives in an environment which is continually changing. Therefore, what the economy of the future needs are people who are lifelong self-directed learners. And what education needs now is facilitators who are able to empower learners to be lifelong self-directed learners (Knowles, 1984:92). Knowles' (1984:88-89) own vision of the ideal educational system for the twenty-first century therefore contains the following elements, with a deep debt to the concepts of

systems theory:

... that there would be no teachers in this system, instead, there would be educational diagnosticians, educational planning consultants, resource people, and, of course, systems management and logistical personnel (Knowles, 1984:88).

The basic format of the andragogical model is a process design. The andragogical model assigns a dual role to the facilitator of learning: first and primarily, the role of designer and manager of processes or procedures that will facilitate the acquisition of content by the learners; and only secondarily, the role of content resource. The andragogical model assumes that there are many resources other than the teacher, including peers, individuals with specialized knowledge, skills in the community and so forth (Knowles, 1985:14). Knowles therefore regards the learners as active explorers in the learning process, participating in every stage, and the facilitators as resource persons for both content and process (Jarvis, 1996:154).

Knowles consequently defines the role of the teacher as that of a facilitator of learning. The traditional definition of the role of the facilitator as didactic instructor - one who makes all the decisions for the learners about what should be learned, how it should be learned, when it should be learned and if it has been learned - must give way to a new definition, namely that of the facilitator of learning (Knowles, 1984:91). This role will require a very different set of skills, attitudes, and values from those of the traditional classroom facilitators and administrators and Knowles (1984:89) therefore recommends that a process of retraining existing personal would be required to put such a system into operation.

2.4.3 Conclusion

While reflecting on the theoretical perspectives of Paulo Freire and Malcolm Knowles regarding learning and teaching important factors concerning the adult learner, adult learning and the role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process emerges.

It becomes clear that Freire considers the socio-cultural context as a significant factor in the learning-teaching process and omitting the socio-cultural context would therefore do injustice to our understanding of learning and teaching. Experiential learning is also central to Freire's considerations, since Freire recognises that the adult

learns most effectively when the learning process is in response to a problem or need (Jarvis, 1996:99). Freire therefore represents a radical approach to teaching and regards teaching as a method by which learners can act upon their socio-political environment in order to change it (a process which he refers to as *conscientization*). Freire further emphasizes that the facilitator should reach out to learners in order to learn from them and therefore in Freire's theoretical perspectives the role of the facilitator is regarded as one in which learning is facilitated. In the teaching of adults Freire therefore respects and emphasizes the humanity of the learners (Jarvis, 1996:151).

On the other hand Knowles places considerable emphasis on the self, which also reflects his humanistic concerns for adult education. Knowles provides us with a better understanding of who the adult learner is. Knowles claims that the adult learner experiences a change in self-concept, since adults need to be more self-directed - or experience more autonomy in the learning process. Self-directed learning may therefore be regarded as one of the manifestations of andragogy (Brookfield, 1985:139).

The experience of the adult learner is also central to Knowles' considerations. He views experience as a rich resource for learning. Similar to Freire, Knowles claims that adults want to learn within the problem areas with which they are confronted and therefore have a problem-centred orientation as opposed to a more subject-centred orientation (Jarvis, 1996:90). Knowles (resembling Freire) views the learners as individuals who are motivated to learn, so that the role of the facilitator of adult learning is mostly facilitative (Jarvis, 1996:155). Knowles consequently claims that the notion of teacher should be replaced by that of the facilitator of learning (Knowles, 1990:77).

In addition, Brookfield (in Garrison, 1989:55) stresses the importance of clear and unambiguous definitions of learning and teaching. So while reflecting on what teaching and learning consist of and considering the different theoretical perspectives thereof, the following definitions of learning and teaching will be prevalent in the course of this study.

Learning may be regarded as a process of receiving and assessing any elements of culture, by whatever means it is transmitted (Jarvis, 1996:58). It is further assumed that learning is voluntary, begins with experience (Rogers, 1996:77; Jarvis, 1996:136) and is therefore continuous (Rogers, 1996:80). Learning is also

active and a personal, individual activity. Although learning is perceived as necessary autonomous (that is self-directed) (Knowles, 1985:6) it is assumed that learning always takes place within a social context and therefore learning is also a social process and may to some extent be controlled by society or other collectives (Jarvis, 1996:85; Brookfield in Rogers, 1996:80). Learning can further be described as a process of freeing mankind from forces that limit their options and control over their lives, forces that have been taken for granted or as seen beyond their control (Freire, 1983:45; Brookfield in Costas, 1989:99).

Teaching (education) on the other hand is restricted to a purposeful, planned learning activity pursued by the learner. The position of this study is therefore that education is inherently a collaborative and active process between learner and facilitator. It is that activity concerned with assisting adults in their quest for a sense of control of their own lives, within their interpersonal relationships, and with regard to social forms and structures within which they live (Brookfield in Costas, 1989:99). Any reference to learning is viewed within an educational context.

2.5 THE FACILITATION OF ADULT LEARNING

Against the background of the discussion it becomes clear that both Knowles and Freire regard learners as active in the learning process and the facilitator more as a resource of learning (Jarvis, 1996:154). Both Knowles and Freire emphasize facilitating learning rather than teaching.

In order to describe the process of facilitating learning the researcher will consider the following factors:

- antecedents to facilitation
- principles of facilitation
- consequences of facilitation

2.5.1 Antecedents to facilitation

Before effective facilitation can occur the following factors or antecedents must be present. The antecedents for facilitation identified in the literature are:

- *Facilitator qualities (realness, caring and empathy)*

The facilitator qualities are antecedents because they are prerequisite to the process of facilitation. A facilitator possessing these qualities would be more likely to establish a climate for learning with the learner (Cross, 1996:353). Facilitators need to create an ethos in which no adult feels threatened or inhibited - especially at the outset of any new course of learning (Jarvis, 1996:103).

- *Access to a learning situation*

Access to a learning situation is an obvious prerequisite to learning and therefore must be considered as an antecedent.

- *Motivation and social influences*

The positive effects of motivation and the social influence of another person affect the learning desire and performance. These factors normally occur as a precursor to the learning experience and make learning more likely and are classified as antecedents (Cross, 1996:353). It was previously suggested that it must always be the person-in-context that is the subject of discussion. This conclusion is quite significant when learning is related to teaching, since the way the facilitator creates the learning environment will greatly influence the way that the situation is experienced and, subsequently, the ensuing processes of learning (Jarvis, 1996:79).

2.5.2 Principles of facilitation

An extensive literature survey undertaken for this study revealed the following four critical and educationally promising principles of facilitation which will be discussed:

- Facilitation presupposes an intellectually active learner
- Facilitation values learner control and self-direction
- Facilitation endorses a dynamic view of knowledge
- Facilitation is not quintessentially a matter of telling or explaining (Case, Harper, Tilley & Wiens, 1994: 291-292).

2.5.2.1 Facilitation presupposes an intellectually active learner

According to Bentley (1994:10) facilitation is a word which describes an activity. It is something that someone does. It is a process. Yet, it also includes non-action, silence and even the facilitator's absence. Bentley believes that the key to facilitation, is empowering individuals (learners) to achieve for themselves. To empower people is to help them to believe in themselves and from this base to explore their potential.

According to Bentley (1996:75) good facilitation is the process of guiding people towards their own wisdom rather than trying to instil someone else's wisdom in them. It is therefore seen as a process of learning and growth.

When an intellectually active learner is presupposed, it is understood that the learner takes responsibility for his participation and learning in the process. The learner thus finds out for himself rather than being informed by experts. According to Costas (1989:187) a learner who is restricted from participating responsibly in the learning process will in fact be hindered in his learning. But conversely Costas states that it is important to expect a level of responsibility on the part of the learner only to the extent that the learner has the appropriate experience and skill to fulfil that responsibility. Costas consequently cautions against making the mistake of "throwing people into a learning deep-end without the necessary swimming gear."

Therefore the major way in which a commitment to learner responsibility can be given in educational practice is through giving the learner an active role. The basic core is that the learner acquires a self-directing competency and facilitators engage in a consultative and collaborative relationship with the learners. This self-directing competency is at the core of learning how to learn which is a primary aim of education and which brings us to the second principle (Costas, 1989:105).

2.5.2.2 Facilitation values learner control and self-direction

The key to facilitation, according to Bentley (1994:11) is empowering individuals (learners) to achieve for themselves. Bentley accurately describes this process as follows:

... if we grow and develop as people, we do so because we make a choice to do so. We can not be 'developed' by others.

To empower people is to help them to believe in themselves and from this base to explore their potential. Once this process is started it is difficult to return to a position where control can be exercised by the facilitator. In truth, facilitation is not relinquishing control to the group (learners) because the facilitator never had control in the first place, but rather the recognition and acceptance that the group is in the process of taking control from the very beginning, even if they have to be reminded that this is the case.

For the facilitator, it involves a significant shift in the locus of control and a radical change from providing instruction to a class, to facilitating learning for individual learners (Wedemeyer in Candy, 1991:224). Bentley (1996:79) furthermore describes facilitation as a way of encouraging people to say things like, “I am wrong, I don’t know, I need help,” so that they can take responsibility for their own growth and development. It is interesting to note here that Heron (1992:21) mentions good and bad methods of facilitating any given group, but there is no one right and proper method. Bentley (1996:77) differs here when he remarks that there is no good, bad, worse or better in these options. According to Bentley facilitation consists of a range of ways that can be called upon as the situation demands when interacting with people. Figure 2.4 depicts this range of options from doing nothing to directing. Bentley however cautions that as facilitators move down the spectrum their input into and control of the activity of learners increase and they face the danger of disempowering learners.

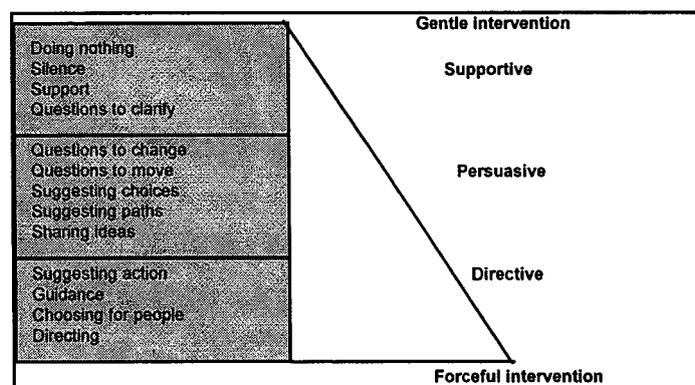


Figure 2.4 The facilitation spectrum (Bentley, 1996:78)

In order to truly understand what control and learner self-direction encompasses, it is necessary to study what is actually meant by self-directed learning, learner support and learner control.

- ***Self-directed learning***

According to Cheren (in Garrison, 1989:56) “to achieve greater self-direction in learning is to achieve greater control over one or more aspects of the learning situation.”

Self-directed learning might be regarded as a teaching technique and a development from andragogy. Knowles regards self-directed learning as one of the manifestations of andragogy. Underlying the whole idea is the learner as an autonomous learner

(Brookfield, 1985:139). Self-directed learning is a major concept in the literature on adult education, where its implications have received extensive discussion - notably by Brookfield, Candy and Gerstner (Grow:1991b:57). According to Candy (1991:19) the development of self-directed individuals - that is, people who exhibit the qualities of moral, emotional, and intellectual autonomy - is the long-term goal of most, if not all, education endeavors. Candy believes that the rapid rate of political, social, and technological change with which we are currently confronted has furthermore increased the need for self-directed citizens.

Few people have ever with precision defined self-directed learning. When one reviews the body of literature on self-directed learning, it becomes evident that there are multiple definitions to describe the term (Grow, 1991a:128; Bonham, 1989:24). Self-directed learning is for instance perceived as part of the natural progression from the dependency of childhood to the independence in adulthood (part of maturing into adulthood) (Mtetwa, 1991:569; Knowles in Grow, 1991:57; Knowles in Langenbach, 1993:165). According to Knowles (1975:18) self-directed-learning is:

... a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes.

Some describe self-directed learning as not so much a method of teaching as a characteristic of learners - a personal attribute, or if you will, a preferred learning style or a preference for certain approaches to learning (Bonham, 1989:37; Candy, 1991:7) that develop in stages - as well as a situational response, which is dependent upon the learners' competence, confidence, commitment at a given moment in time (Pratt in Grow, 1991a:147).

When endeavoring to define self-directed learning it is also important to consider what is meant by lifelong-learning. Candy (1991:10) states that lifelong learning takes, as one of its principal aims, equipping people with skills and competencies required to continue their own "self-education" beyond the end of formal schooling. In this sense, self-directed learning is viewed simultaneously as a means and an end to lifelong education.

It must be pointed out that Brookfield (in Garrison, 1989:54) has clearly stated his

suspensions and doubts concerning the accuracy and utility of the self-directing concept. He goes on to say that the fundamental problem is the fact that a prescriptive aim (that we should encourage learners' independence) has become confused with an empirically-based proposition (that adult learning styles are inherently self-directed). To add to this confusion surrounding self-directed learning, Brookfield also questions the validity of the prescriptive aim of making learners more independent. A large portion of the ambiguity surrounding the prescriptive aim of self-directed learning can be attributed to what it means to be independent in an educational transaction. Intimately related to the idea of independence is the facilitation of self-directed learning in the institutional and non-institutional setting. There is precious little empirical support for what goes on under the guise of self-directed learning facilitation.

Likewise, Garrison (1989:53) points out that while we have gained considerable understanding of this long existing phenomenon, the preoccupation with defining and describing self-directed learning may have prevented an adequate exploration of the means of facilitating it. Caffarella and O' Donnell (in Garrison, 1989:53) state that of the various categories of research on self-directed learning, little emphasis has been given to questions concerning the role of the facilitator. Considering this lack of emphasis in facilitating self-directed learning, the purpose of this study is to explore the importance of this issue in ABET.

In order to understand self-directed learning it is important to understand what is meant by learner autonomy. Candy (1991:101) explains that when self-directing is used in the sense of personal autonomy or if you will independence, it may have one of two meanings: either a broad disposition toward thinking and acting autonomously in all situations (which can be referred to as self-determination) or, more narrowly, an inclination to exert control over one's learning endeavors (referred to as self-management).

Long (1989:1) claims that learning itself is necessarily autonomous, that is self-directed. But self-direction in learning may be very misleading if we misinterpret autonomy as the learner being entirely independent. While at first glance it may seem somewhat contradictory, nonetheless, self-directed learning involves external support and guidance (Garrison, 1989:55) from tutors, teachers, mentors, peers and others (Langenbach, 1993:163). Learning does not take place in a vacuum, mediation is thus inevitable (Garrison, 1989:55). According to Chene (in Garrison, 1989:55) we tend to forget that knowledge and skill competency are social products. The value of

independence or self-reliance is an illusion and adults are trapped in other forms of dependence if they are not aware of the necessity of mediation by others and of recognition in learning. Brookfield (1983:27) prefers the term independent learning to autonomous learning. According to Brookfield the word *independent* implies an absence of institutional affiliation or connection while *autonomous* carries with it the sense of learner control, but it also implies separateness from fellow learners, as well as from institutional recognition. It therefore suggests that the learner operates in a social and intellectual vacuum with no contact with fellow learners.

It appears that research in self-directed learning has progressed to the stage where there is sufficient understanding of the nature of the method (i.e. how learning proceeds) to realize that self-directed learners often require help and yet fail to obtain it. According to Brookfield (in Garrison, 1989:54) two ways to reduce the difficulties of self-directed learning are to increase learners' competence and provide much better help. Both of which strongly suggests a role for the facilitator.

Cheren (in Garrison, 1989:60) shares this view when he states that facilitating the transition to greater self-direction in learning is not well served by throwing out all external structure. On the contrary, he argues that self-directed learning usually requires more careful planning and structure to support the enhancement and expansion of the learner's control over his learning, or development efforts than is required in more traditional learning contexts.

In self-directed learning the facilitator might therefore provide information and guidance where the learner and facilitator share control over the educational process. According to Candy (1991:121) there are many educational situations where the learner would gladly give up some independence for increased support in order to achieve the desired outcome more efficiently and effectively. Candy therefore remarks that:

... anyone who is unfamiliar with a subject or topic may well choose to submit to being taught, at least at the beginning. This does not necessarily imply any pathological lack of (personal autonomy), but rather an acknowledgement that the best way to master the rudiments of a new area is to be taught by an expert.

It therefore becomes apparent that the use of the term autonomy in the teaching-learning process does not imply that the facilitator becomes totally redundant

in the teaching process, but is used to describe situations in which the learner is able to *choose* between dependence and independence as he perceives the need. Paradoxically, by giving up independence for guidance and support the learner therefore gains control in regards to the outcome of the educational experience since the desirable worthwhile goal will be more apparent and achievable. It is important to note here that Tough (in Garrison, 1989:54) distinguishes between help and control because it helps us to realize that a learner can receive a great deal of help without giving up any of his control or responsibility.

- ***Learner support***

Mercer's (in Steinberg, 1997:71) description of the concepts of scaffolding and the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as developed by Jerome Bruner and Lev Vygotsky respectively, provides a useful framework through which to understand facilitation and subsequently the support and help provided to the learners in the teaching-learning process. The concept of scaffolding looks at the teaching and learning process from the perspective of teaching, while the concept of ZPD is useful to understand the same process from the perspective of learning. Vygotsky defines the ZPD as the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more able peers. The concept of ZPD therefore implies that learners can always understand more than what they can produce. The learner has knowledge, but can not yet express or perform it in the way required by the particular practice being learned. But with some scaffolding from a facilitator, achievement becomes possible (Steinberg, 1997:73).

On the other hand scaffolding provides an effective conceptual metaphor for the quality of facilitator intervention in learning. It is the support that a facilitator provides to learners who are striving to understand new ideas or master new skills. It is not a particular methodology, but a process that involves many different techniques and ways of interacting. Scaffolding techniques change over time as learners grow in ability. Scaffolding implies an orientation towards teaching that sees the learner as active and motivated, with the facilitator in the role of guide, mediator, support (Jarvis, 1995:29). In practical terms scaffolding can be explained as follows: the facilitator at first mediates the subject matter and then the facilitator should gradually withdraw, urging the learners to encounter the material face to face, until he (the facilitator) has rendered himself to a large extent (ultimately/completely) redundant to

the learning process. Scaffolding is help which enables a learner to accomplish a task which they would not have been quite able to manage on their own and it is help which is intended to bring the learners closer to a state of competence which will enable them eventually to complete such a task on their own (Steinberg, 1997: 71).

- *Control*

In order to understand self-directed learning, it is also important to have a clear comprehension of what the term control actually entails. To understand the concept of control Kasworm (in Long, 1989:3) describes a number of conceptual dimensions regarding self-directed learning. In the sociological dimension self-directed learning is defined by the social isolation of the learner. In the pedagogical dimension (Knowles refers here to andragogy as opposed to pedagogy, nevertheless the actions are similar) the degree to which learning is self-directed is determined by the freedom which the learner is given to set learning goals, to identify and use resources, to determine the effort and time to be allocated to learning and to decide how and what kind of evaluation of the learning will take place. It means that the learner is given this responsibility by the facilitator, but that he does not necessarily accept it. According to this view, sociological isolation of the learner is not required, neither must the learner be completely autonomous. A third definition which refers to the mental activities of the learner resides in a psychological concept. This dimension is important, because learning is basically a psychological event. This is where the learner consciously accepts this responsibility/freedom to make decisions, to be his own learning change agent, rather than submitting the responsibility to external sources or authorities. It thus implies the degree to which the learner, obtains and maintains active control of the learning. Long (1989:6) further emphasizes that an emphasis on the pedagogical procedure to the neglect of psychological process is a dead-end approach to a study of self-direction in learning.

Garrison (1989:55) conceptualises control as a pedagogical element. According to Garrison control is not transferred automatically to a learner solely by giving freedom of choice (pedagogical dimension) as to time and place of learning without consideration of the learner's ability and resources (psychological dimension). Control is negotiated continuously through sustained interaction between the learner and facilitator. Pedagogical self-directed learning emerges from the interaction of psychological control and pedagogical control. When each of the forms of control are equal, or when psychological control (of the learner) exceeds pedagogical control (of a facilitator), the situation may be described as a self-directed learning condition.

When pedagogical control (of a facilitator) is excessive and the learner's psychological control is limited, learning becomes other-directed (Long, 1989:4). Walters (1989:90) points out here that "the opposite of being directive is not being non-directive - that is likewise an illusion." Psychological control may vary even within constant pedagogically controlled conditions (i.e. there will be learners who can not or will not assume psychological control and will passively await guidance).

Thus self-directed learning occurs when the learner primarily controls the learning (cognitive) processes. But Candy (1991:199) stresses that self-directed learning rarely exists in its pure form and like personal autonomy, is nearly always a matter of degree. Control over the teaching/learning situation is therefore more like a continuum than a dichotomy (Candy, 1991:9). It is interesting to note that Grow (1991a:128) does not adopt the term *learner control* here, because highly self-directed learners sometimes choose highly directive teachers. Garrison (1989:60) thus concludes that facilitating self-directed learning is important and does not represent a contradiction in terms.

Garrison (1989:53) points out that nearly all humans are capable of a degree of self-direction in their choices of learning approach, learning resources, and validation or evaluation techniques. However, much of the teaching used with adult learners, appears to be based on principles more of teacher-directed learning than self-directed learning. As Garrison contends, "considerable human potential is thwarted because learners are not able to take increased responsibility for learning that will be meaningful to them." Grow (1991b:58) supports Garrison's observation when he states that the educational system has almost been designed to discourage the development of self-direction.

Most learners are trained to do what they are told. They are for instance motivated, managed, scheduled and evaluated from the outside (Grow, 1991b:58).

It is therefore becoming increasingly evident that the traditional role of the instructor is now changing more rapidly and profoundly than at any time in history. Many educationists have begun to recognize that teacher-controlled instruction is unwieldy, undemocratic and unsound as a way of conducting education and that it ought to be abandoned in favor of a greater degree of learner-control (Candy, 1991:205). It is relatively easy to advocate a change from one instructional approach to another, but a different matter to see it through in practice. At the minimum, the change from teacher-control to learner-control has implications for facilitators, learners and

organizations. In the wider context, it frequently has an impact on others outside the immediate instructional setting, including other teachers or trainers, family, friends and perhaps even society at large. Ainsworth (in Candy, 1991:224) so fittingly describes the transition towards increased learner-control as not so much as “tinkering with accessories to the instructional machine” as to “rebuilding the mechanical core.”

Although self-directed learning theory is a major concept in the literature on adult education, it has been criticised for placing considerable emphasis on the self while leaving out the context in which learning occurs. In some of his later works Grow (1994:114) acknowledges the fact that the concept of an isolated self that is self-directing leaves out political, cultural, psychological, biological, spiritual, technological, and other interconnections that should be core concerns in education. Candy (1991:22) shares this view when he acknowledges the fact that knowledge is socially constructed and accordingly learning is a social process. Self-directed learning therefore does not necessarily imply solitary learning.

Even truly independent and solitary learning activities are commonly the result of the learner's membership in some group or society, and although the learning process itself may be largely solitary, its intention and justification is social (Candy, 1991:367).

The challenge for facilitators is therefore to assist people to reach their full potential, to maximise their opportunities and to accomplish their individual goals within a social context.

Whether at the level of the group, the community, the society, or human kind generally, learning in its fullest sense is a social activity, and the attainment of full personal autonomy - both in learning and outside it - must recognize this interdependence (Candy, 1991:22).

Candy (1991:22) therefore cautions that facilitators should not, in advocating self-direction in learning, lose sight of the fact that contact with other people is essential to most forms of learning.

Notwithstanding, the fact remains that to have some measure of personal control over the important areas of physical and social situations has emerged as a fundamental prerequisite for psychological well-being and social adjustment. With the importance

of continuing learning in an information society, it would appear that having some measure of personal control over the learning process is also crucial to the social adjustment and psychological well-being of the individual (Garrison, 1989:58).

Facilitation is therefore about empowering people to take control and responsibilities for their own efforts and achievements. Bentley (1996:11) further points out that at about 500 BC, Lao Tzu is believed to have written the Tao Teh Ching. This is what he stated about leadership (which can also be understood as facilitation):

*A leader is best
when people barely know that he exists,
not so good when people obey and acclaim him,
worse when they despise him,
'fail to honour people,
they fail to honour you',
but of a good leader, who talks little,
when his work is done, his aim fulfilled,
they will all say, 'We did this ourselves'.*

Facilitation echoes this message from Lao Tzu by trying to determine the way that the learners want to go and by trying to encourage and support them in this process. This can imply leading from the front, but it is *how* facilitators do this rather than *what* they are doing which is important. Sometimes they will lead from within the group, by example and participation rather than persuasion and there are times when it is important for them to lead from behind, to follow and by following willingly and with skill, to enable the learners to lead (Bentley, 1994:11).

2.5.2.3 Facilitation endorses a dynamic view of knowledge

Candy (1991:253) states that it is not possible to talk of any kind of learning without adopting some view of the nature of knowledge and proposes that *constructivism* may be viewed as an alternative way of viewing knowledge. Because constructivism (also exemplified in the works of Freire) endorses a dynamic view of knowledge as opposed to a more static form of knowledge, it will subsequently be discussed.

The basic concern of constructivism is how people make sense of the perplexing variety and constantly changing texture of their experience. The notion espoused by constructivists is that knowledge can not be taught, but must be constructed by the

learner. Here learners are not viewed as passive beings who respond to stimuli; instead learning is an active process of constructing meaning and transforming understandings (Candy, 1991:251). Costas (1989:23) further states that learning is more effective when it is an active rather than a passive process. Constructivist learning theory moreover supports this view which focuses on the process of learners actively integrating new information and experiences with their existing knowledge base (Carr, Jonassen, Litzinger & Marra, 1998:8).

Until comparatively recently, the dominant view of knowledge was derived from a positivistic perspective. Knowledge was thought of as an accumulated body of empirically verified facts, derived directly from observations and experimentation. Knowledge was therefore always tacitly assumed to be knowledge of an existing world. This objective or naive realist view has been very influential in shaping conceptions of teaching, because it implies that there is an objective reality, to which learners should be introduced (Candy, 1991:261).

The constructivist perspective differs significantly from the view of knowledge as deriving from a process of copying or replicating (Candy, 1991:262). While not denying the existence of an outside reality, it is fundamental to the constructivist's view that the environment can never be directly known, but that the conception determines perception. We know reality only by acting on it. This means that knowledge is neither a copy nor a mirror of reality, but the forms and content of knowledge are constructed by the one who experiences it. The active interaction between the individual and the environment is therefore mediated by the cognitive structures of the individual. What we learn in interaction with the environment is dependent upon our own structuring of those experiences (Candy, 1991:263). To the constructivist, knowledge does not necessarily reflect or map exactly the external reality, but consists of a set of workable hypotheses, or templates constantly being put to the test in interactions with other people's constructions of the same situation. Thus it seems certain that no two people would ever have exactly the same cognitive structures (Candy, 1991:265). Constructivism further leads directly to the specific proposition that knowledge can not be taught, but only learned (that is, constructed). Cognitive structures are never passed ready made from a facilitator to a learner because cognitive structures (knowledge) must under all circumstances be built up by the learner (Von Glaserveld & Smock in Candy, 1991:270).

The constructivist view of learning, based on the individual construction of reality, is

therefore particularly congruent with the notion of self-direction. Rathbone (in Candy, 1991:271) therefore regards the learner as an active agent in his own learning process.

He is not one to whom things merely happen; he is the one who, by his own volition, causes things to happen. Learning is seen as the result of his self-initiated interaction with the world In a very fundamental way, each [learner] is his own agent.

2.5.2.4 Facilitation is not quintessentially a matter of telling or explaining

Bentley (1996:75) acknowledges that good facilitation is the process of guiding people towards their own wisdom rather than trying to instil someone else's wisdom in them (Jarvis, 1996:103). Freire moreover feels that education should open minds to higher stages of consciousness rather than just deposit information for future use. This he refers to as the banking of education. The teacher as facilitator is thus one who guides and questions instead of providing answers and directions for the learner (Cohn, 1988:5).

2.5.3 Consequences of facilitation

Consequences are those events or incidents that occur as a result of effective facilitation. According to Cross (1996:353) the consequences of facilitation are: reciprocal change (usually measured through learning and understanding), reciprocal feedback and increased independence.

According to Brookfield (in Cross, 1996:351) effective facilitating includes the following key principles: voluntary participation in learning, respect among participants for each other's self-worth, a collaborative relationship where there is continual renegotiation of activities and a general spirit of critical reflection where the ultimate goal is self-directed, empowered adults.

2.6 CONCLUSION

While reviewing the theoretical perspectives regarding learning and teaching and the facilitation of adult learning, the tendency in adult education to talk about facilitating learning rather than teaching, becomes evident (Lyster, 1992b:174). Knowles, Freire, Brookfield, Candy, Gerstner and other theorists replace the notion of the teacher as expert by the idea that the teacher as facilitator must *facilitate learning* (Hobbs,

1992:7). It further becomes apparent that one of the most important principles regarding facilitating learning is the notion of *self-direction* in learning. This implies a significant shift in the locus of control in the teaching-learning process (from the facilitator providing instruction to a class, to the facilitator facilitating learning for individual learners) (Wedemeyer in Candy, 1991:224).

In addition, Knowles (1985:9) emphasizes the importance of the notion of self-directed learning when he makes the important point that the adult learner sees himself as a self-directed person - and would accordingly need to experience more autonomy in the learning process.

In order to understand the roles of facilitators and their subsequent training needs in ABET in South Africa the researcher accordingly perceives self-directed learning theory as an adequate approach to adopt for the following reasons:

- Due to the rapid rate of social and technological change with which people are confronted daily and specifically the rapid social changes that have taken place in South Africa since 1994, facilitators will need to become more flexible, responsive and relevant in their teaching endeavor. The fact that self-directed learning is linked with, and responsive to, the changing circumstances of people's lives it is considered as an adequate theoretical approach in order to understand learning and teaching in ABET (Candy, 1991:51).
- Learner-control further recognises the way adults actually learn (i.e. that adults are in their nature necessarily autonomous beings).
- In South Africa the goal of the educational process furthermore is to produce independent empowered lifelong learners (Hartley, 1997:25).
- Learner control also reflects the primacy of learning over teaching and allows for different learning styles as opposed to teaching which can be seen as artificially superimposed onto the innate drive towards learning possessed by all people (Candy, 1991:53).
- One of the primary reasons why self-directed learning would be an adequate approach to adopt in order to understand the role of the facilitator is that learner control models democratic principles and behaviour. The use of self-directed and learner-controlled methods therefore not only model such changed power relationships, but equips learners with the skills and expectations to deal with potentially oppressive situations which are very significant for South Africa in this day and age. What this implies in practice is that the facilitator avoids, as far as possible, imposing his agendas, values and expectations on learners and instead

facilitates discussions and acts as a responsive resource as required or directed by the learners. The facilitator must therefore be flexible enough to react to reasonable demands and to play a full and active role as a member of the learning team (Candy, 1991:55).

It is clear that self-directed learning strongly suggests a role for the facilitator and would accordingly provide an adequate theoretical perspective to embark upon our better understanding of the complexity of this role. In the following chapter the researcher describes the role of the facilitator from within an international perspective by using the Staged-Self-Directed-Learning Model proposed by Gerald Grow, in order to understand these complex relations and control in the teaching-learning process, and further contemplates the implications thereof for facilitators in general and their training needs in ABET in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a number of points have been raised about how adults learn and what facilitating adult learning entails and it is now necessary to draw many of these points together and relate them to the specific roles of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process. Chapter 3 provides the theoretical basis for the research and describes the roles facilitators need to perform in order to facilitate learning in ABET.

On reflecting on Chapter 2 it is evident that self-directed learning is a major concept in the literature on adult education. Its implications have been discussed extensively. The ultimate goal of effective facilitation in adult education is to provide self-directed, empowered adults. However, although self-directed learning has been extensively researched, a considerable lack of emphasis has been given to facilitating it, and to questions concerning the role of the facilitator. Because of this existing lack of research on how to facilitate self-directed learning, this chapter attempts to provide the theoretical base for a proposed teaching-learning model which will subsequently determine the research design and format of the qualitative case study.

To fully understand the different perceptions and perspectives regarding the role of the facilitator it is necessary to initially explore the different viewpoints in the literature from within an international perspective.

3.2 THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

3.2.1 The role of the facilitator

During an extensive literature survey it became clear that many roles (multiple roles) are equated to the facilitator and that different perspectives on the role of the facilitator exist. However, due to the limited length of this research it is impossible to provide all these different viewpoints concerning the multiple roles equated to the facilitator and therefore only a limited number are presented here.

According to Knowles (1985:182) the facilitator has multiple roles to perform. Knowles specifies the role of peer, facilitator, expert and exemplar and states further

that the facilitator has to be comfortable in his multifaceted role. According to Knowles facilitators must forego their traditional dominance in the group and present their goals when learners are presenting theirs, and make their special contributions in the same way that other people in the group make their special contributions.

In addition Rogers (1996:161) claims that the facilitator will have to play the part of leader as well as teacher:

- As leader of the group, the purpose is to keep the group together, to keep things going. Here the role is clearly recognised and accepted by the group.
- As teacher, the facilitator is the promotor of learning changes, the encourager of the learners, an agent of change. Rogers explains that the term change-agent which has been used for the teacher in some circles is a good one, since the aim is to use the group (learners) to bring about changes in knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and ultimately in behaviour. Teachers thus have to be stirrers to achieve change without breaking up the group entirely. Rogers claims that the teacher operates in two ways in relation to the learning group; as manager of the learning process and as instructor.

Dennison and Kirk (1990:10) distinguish the roles of the facilitator from that of learners and explain that they are responsible for the programme and can be held accountable if learning does not occur. But facilitators also have additional roles to perform. According to Bowes (1982:188) they have major roles as breadwinners, family members, and community representatives in addition to their part time responsibilities as ABE teachers.

Against the background of the discussion it is clear that many roles (multiple roles) are given to the facilitator and that different perspectives thereof exists. In order to simplify matters and provide some structure the researcher will combine some of these different perspectives and viewpoints under the following headings:

the conventional role of the facilitator as teacher, including the facilitator

- as instructor (also referred to as expert, formal authority, transmitter of knowledge) and
- as motivator (also referred to as personal model, guide, entertainer, enthusiastic shaper, performer, exemplar).

the new role of the facilitator as facilitator of learning, including the facilitator

- as facilitator (also referred to as local guide, supporter, resource, catalyst, negotiator) and
- as delegator (also referred to as consultant, mentor).

3.2.1.1 The conventional role of the facilitator

- **As instructor or expert/formal authority/transmitter of knowledge**

According to Jarvis (1996:101) facilitators may adopt a variety of approaches to perform their teaching role: either didactic, socratic or facilitative. If facilitators play their role in a didactic fashion, they provide the information for learners - they expound (interpret or describe) the knowledge to be learned by the learners; if they are socratic, they elicit the information from learners - they lead learners towards a conclusion to their enquiry by shrewd questioning; and if they are facilitative, they create conditions under which learning can occur, but they do not seek to control the outcome. Both the didactic and the socratic approaches are teacher-centred and may lead to the facilitator's perception of reality being accepted by the learner, although the socratic approach is more likely to result in conclusions other than those held by the facilitator (Jarvis, 1996:101).

Didactic teaching has traditionally been regarded as the process of making a selection of knowledge and skills from the cultural milieu, those aspects which it is intended that learners should learn, and transmitting it to them by the use of the same skilled technique. Such rewards as the facilitator's approval, would then ensure that the learner has learned. Thus the facilitator transmits the selection of culture and the learner faithfully reproduces the selection of culture (Jarvis, 1996:106). Didactic teaching is therefore mainly concerned with the transfer of knowledge and skills (Dennison & Kirk, 1990:31).

However, it should be emphasized here that Jarvis (1996:108) does not totally diminish the significance of the didactic approach. He points out that a didactic approach may prove very useful, especially if the learners are encouraged to analyse what is transmitted to them, rather than merely reproducing it. Jarvis proposes that facilitators can encourage learners to ask the questions, so that they actually initiate the learning process, but the fact remains that the facilitator still provides the answers. Knowles (1985:44) shares this view when he states that in some situations, such as when learners are entering a totally strange territory, they may be truly dependent on

didactic instruction before they can take much initiative in their own learning; and he therefore suggests that in such situations the pedagogical assumption of dependency is realistic, and pedagogical strategies would therefore be appropriate.

Nevertheless, it is still the facilitator who transmits knowledge (Langenbach, 1993:171) and expects it to be received and learned by the learners who are still the receptacles of knowledge, rather than the creators of it. The learners' questions therefore facilitate the facilitator's learning. In this situation the facilitator merely makes the learners more dependent, whilst the facilitator actually becomes a more independent learner. Jarvis (1996:108) therefore concludes that perhaps a good teacher leads learners from question to question rather than from answer to answer.

Knowles (in Langenbach, 1993:171) sees four major responsibilities associated with the conventional role of the facilitator as teacher. Stated as questions these responsibilities include:

- What content needs to be covered?
- How can this content be organized into manageable units?
- How can these units be organized into logical sequences?
- What means of transmission will be most efficient for transmitting each unit?

Langenbach (1993:171) asserts that the conventional teacher acts in a one-way channel - from the top down to the learners. Dennison and Kirk (1990:13) view the conventional role of the facilitator as a role in which it is usually easy to frame objectives or outcomes. This is then often done by an examining board. As far as the learner is concerned, by organising the lessons and the material the facilitator determines objectives and evaluates learner performance. Results in the examination therefore becomes the criteria for the facilitator's success. The design function of the facilitator is consequently well defined, as interpreter of objectives, transmitter of knowledge and evaluator of progress, as is the role of the learner; as recipient (Wright, 1987:63). This often leads to facilitator overload which often entails learner under-involvement since facilitators are doing the work learners could more profitably do themselves (Wright, 1987:55). Accordingly, Jarvis (1995:29) cautions that when education is so teacher-centred that the teaching and learning transaction is a process which facilitators control for their own personal or psychological benefit, then the learners are given no encouragement to grow or develop. Teaching or the facilitator's performance is therefore the end-product of the process and the learners' learning is consequently almost incidental. Jarvis mentions that the facilitator might

come away from such a class claiming that it has been a good session and untrained observers may also regard it as an excellent lesson. Ironically, even the learners, might also have enjoyed the performance, while the outcome of the session may be that they have learned very little. Unless the facilitator withdraws from this process of interaction between learner and subject-matter, learning will tend to cease when the class comes to an end or the group disperses (Rogers, 1996:167). Shor (1993:29) shares this view when he notes that in traditional classrooms, learners develop authority-dependence - a situation in which they rehearse their futures as passive citizens and workers by learning that education means listening to and that facilitators tell them what to do and what things mean. Accordingly this authority-dependence is matched by the authority-dependence of many facilitators, who follow the traditional syllabus and resist democratic transformation.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that facilitators and learners have beliefs and attitudes about each other when cast in certain roles, and these beliefs and attitudes directly and indirectly affect their expectations about classroom behaviour (Wright, 1987:24). Pratt and his team (in Steinberg, 1997:66) interviewed 258 adult educators in several countries about their actions, intentions and beliefs regarding teaching. The results were as follow:

- The concept of facilitator as transmitter of knowledge places a heavy emphasis on the transmission of information where knowledge is believed to be relatively stable and external to the learner. Here learning is measured in terms of specific competencies and/or mastering of a body of knowledge.
- A prime concern is the efficient means of delivering content and achieving goals. This concept is voiced most often by people working within an institution with accountability and well-defined content or skills to be learned.
- A transmission teacher as illustrated here will therefore need to maintain a high degree of control over his learners in order to create the conditions for learning. Here the subject is central and the facilitator therefore embodies the subject, almost as a protector of the body of knowledge that he is teaching (Wright, 1987:63).
- It subsequently seems as if the facilitator will tend to do much of the talking and thinking for learners, asking the questions, issuing the information and correcting errors (Canterford, 1991:286).

Dykstra (in Wright, 1987:49) characterizes the facilitator's role here by using the following illustration:

... near automatons who stand up, call roll, talk a lot, give cues, ask simple content questions, check for comprehension, check for recall, keep records, bestow grades and generally carry on with clerical tasks.

According to Brockett and Hiemstra (1985:35) this often appears to be the norm in traditional teaching-learning situations - an authoritarian role whereby the facilitator, in either an autocratic or a benevolent manner, adopts an expert posture and expects learners to recall and recite everything that they have been told. Grasha (1994:143) calls this role that of the *lion-tamer* - the one who tells. Here the facilitator possesses knowledge and expertise that learners need. He therefore strives to maintain status as an expert by displaying detailed knowledge - concerned with transmitting information. However, if overused the display of knowledge can be intimidating to inexperienced learners (Grasha, 1994:143).

Many reasons exist for the dominance of the teacher-centred role, among them the fact that facilitators saw this role modeled through most of their own schooling experience and that much of teacher education today prepares students for this type of role (Carey, 1993:107). Kaufman (1996:41) acknowledges the fact that facilitators' prior knowledge, beliefs, and experiences which they bring into a programme affect their assimilation and construction of new knowledge. Pratt (in Steinberg, 1997:66) confirms this view when he states that the teaching style is "...related to people's belief structure and to their educational context."

However, there is more to this than meets the eye. According to Rogers (1996:172) many facilitators feel safer being in charge of the whole teaching process. They are often anxious about letting the learner learn by doing on their own - fearful that learners "will get it wrong." They feel that they are not fulfilling their responsibilities as facilitators, not fulfilling their learners' expectations of them, even not earning their money. Rogers mentions that facilitators not only tend to express these fears verbally but also non-verbally.

How often do we stand up before the class unnecessarily, especially when pressed with a question. Standing above the learners reasserts our authority both to the learners as well as to the teacher, like reaching from a pulpit, six feet above contradiction. We convince ourselves that it is necessary to rise to point out something to the rest of the group or to use the blackboard, when it may not be necessary

for us to stand at all. In non-verbal ways we buttress our position when we feel challenged.

In addition Dennison and Kirk (1990:6) mention the following reasons which account for the predominance of didacticism. It is easier to designate objectives, design teaching programmes and examine learners when the knowledge to be transmitted is known than it is to discuss learning cycles over which facilitators have only limited control. Their knowledge will therefore be subject-based and they will rely to a large extent on their subject expertise. This will mainly form the basis for their authority. According to this view, facilitators therefore ought to be able to deal with every conceivable situation as it arises. The learners expect that. Consequently there is a perception that authority is related to prestige. When a didactic approach prevails a facilitator has status well above that of the learners. The facilitator is therefore concerned with providing positive and negative feedback, establishing learning goals, expectations and rules of conduct for learners. He is moreover concerned with the "correct, acceptable, and standard ways" of doing things. Grasha (1994:143) subsequently warns that a strong investment in this style can lead to rigid, standardized ways of managing learners and their concerns. An emphasis on the expert/formal authority blend sends out a message to learners that, "I'm in charge here." It also creates a neutral or cool emotional climate where the expression of emotions is usually held in check. Such an autocratic atmosphere (produced by a dominating facilitator who controls direction), produces in learners apathetic conformity and increasing dependence upon authority, with consequent submission, anxiety, shyness and acquiescence (Watson in Knowles, 1990:81).

However, Dennison and Kirk (1990:6) caution against having a mistaken view of authority. Such a view can assume that a facilitator must impose authority, rather than enabling it to emerge through interest in the learning. Therefore it must be noted here that when referring to the terms authority and authoritarianism notable differences in meaning can be implied. According to Heron (1992:66) we need to distinguish a benign, luminous and truly educative authority from a punitive, indoctrinating and intimidating authority. The latter is the oppressive authoritarianism and has been the bane of education at all levels. Freire (1996,163) clearly distinguishes between authority (as indispensable in the teaching-learning process) and authoritarianism (which implies an abuse of authority) in the following remark:

It is not necessary authority of teachers that make them obstacles to

liberation. The teacher's authority ... is indispensable to the development of the learner's freedom. What may frustrate the process is the abuse of authority by the teacher, which leads to permissiveness.

Heron (1992:66) believes that traditional teaching, still strongly with us, is beset by authoritarianism because it runs the different kinds of authority into each other. He explains that traditional, old-style teaching confuses the three kinds of authority (which he refers to as cognitive, political and charismatic authority) in the crudest possible way. Cognitive authority means that the facilitator has mastered some body of knowledge and skill and can communicate effectively with learners. Political authority means that the facilitator makes decisions that affect the whole content and process of learning. Charismatic authority means that the facilitator models an educated person in his presence, style and manner, that is, in how he exercises the previous two kinds of authority. It assumes that because facilitators have cognitive authority - as repositories of knowledge - they should therefore exercise total political authority in a directive way, making all educational decisions for their learners. Thus the traditional facilitator decides what learners shall learn, when and how they shall learn it and whether they have learned it. Learner autonomy is relegated to in-the-head following of large numbers of long lectures, to answering questions or asking them, writing or practical tasks. Heron states that the challenge of all teaching is therefore to integrate the *authority* (italics mine) of the facilitator and the *autonomy* of the learner.

Another very significant point that Dennison and Kirk (1990:6) raise here is the issue related to the attitudes, beliefs and feelings of the learners. For some, didactic teaching, induces a spirit of security which facilitators might wish to reinforce. Learners can therefore remain passive in a transmissive lesson. They do not have to participate in an active sense and what they have or have not learned from the lesson will be determined some time afterwards in a test or examination. Simultaneously, the facilitator is also secure because he has organized activities as planned - the emphasis not on the potential learners, but on the material to be transferred.

If it is assumed that the facilitator teaches and the learners learn, a highly instrumental view of education follows. In this view the focus quite understandably will fall upon the material to be transmitted or the skills to be acquired, and all the arrangements necessary to support the process of transfer. As a result the needs of the learners will receive much less attention. A pedagogy may emerge which tries to provide the

answers when the potential learners have not yet asked the questions (Dennison & Kirk, 1990:3). Wright (1987:63) summarizes this tendency towards a more teacher-centred approach by pointing out that facilitators tend to favour particular modes of instruction which suit either the personality of the facilitator, the materials being used, the expectations of the learners, the prescriptions of organizations, the subject matter being treated and the facilitator's interpretation of the idea of instruction.

Examples of teaching methods used in this approach include lectures, discussion lectures and tutorials (Jarvis, 1996:116-122).

- **As motivator or guide, entertainer, enthusiastic shaper, performer, exemplar**

Knowles (1985:182) states that facilitators' most potent influence is through their role as exemplar. Therefore their conduct should, as far as possible, model the behaviour of self-directing persons and demonstrate commitment to their learners. Rogers (1996:164) calls this role that of the *entertainer* - the one that sells. Here the facilitator believes in teaching by personal example and establishes a prototype for how to think and behave. The facilitator therefore oversees, guides, and directs by showing how to do things and encourages learners to observe and then to emulate his approach. In the role of motivator or guide there is thus an emphasis on direct observation and following a role model - as Rogers characterizes it - a sort of hands on approach.

According to Wright (1987:54) the primary management role of facilitators is learner motivation. Wright suggests several ways in which facilitators may achieve this: namely by adopting a positive attitude towards the learners; giving learners relevant and interesting tasks to do; being motivated and interested themselves; involving learners more actively in the classroom process; introducing learners to the concept of self-appraisal and self-evaluation and giving positive feedback. Moreover Grow (1991a:131) mentions that this type of teaching is known as good teaching in many educational institutions. Here the facilitator brings enthusiasm and motivation to the class, sweeping learners along with the excitement of learning. Such a facilitator will persuade, explain, and sell, using a directive but highly supportive approach that reinforces learner willingness and enthusiasm.

Pratt (in Steinberg, 1997:66) describes the role of the learner here as that of an apprentice. Different ways of being is thus modelled to the learner. This conception

therefore sees the body of established wisdom and knowledge as embedded in expert facilitators where these experts are then expected to introduce novices (the learners) to the best ideas, values and methods of practice available. Here the facilitator resembles that of a *shaper*:

... the facilitator who views learners, or at least learner brains, as raw material (metal, wood or clay) to be shaped, or molded, or turned to a predetermined and often detailed specification (Fox in Grow, 1991a:132).

Grasha (1994:143) has some reservation about adopting this type of role. He cautions that some facilitators may believe their approach is the best way, leading some learners to feel inadequate if they can not live up to such expectations and standards.

Examples of teaching methods used in this approach include a lecturer as inspiring performer, teacher-led discussions, demonstrations by an expert followed by guided practice, structured projects with predictable outcomes, close supervision, ample feedback and highly interactive computerized drill. These examples furthermore involve the combination of two elements: strong personal interaction and a strong focus on subject matter (Jarvis, 1996:115; Grow, 1991a:132).

3.2.1.2 The new role of the facilitator

- **As facilitator or local guide, supporter, resource, catalyst, negotiator**

During an extensive literature survey numerous metaphors attempting to describe the new role of the facilitator were discovered. Rogers (1996:164) calls this role (the democratic role) the *cultivator* - the one that consults and joins. Farber and Armaline (1992:109) compare the role of the facilitator to that of a *midwife teacher*:

... assisting the students (learners) in giving birth to their own ideas, in making their own tacit knowledge explicit and elaborating it.

Wight (in Candy, 1991:225) likens the role of the facilitator in this new paradigm to that of *coach*.

In the beginning, he (the coach) provides the rules and structure, he helps each person develop the skills and understanding to play the game or to perform effectively, and he works with each individual to

help him continuously improve his performance But it is the player, not the coach, who plays the game, and in participative education, the game is learning.

Van Deusen and Donham (1987:33) use the image of a *mountain climber* to illustrate how the facilitator's role shifts from evaluator to facilitator.

The leader of a mountain expedition has choices: He can climb independently to the top and extol the beauty and virtues of the mountain, and then try to pull everyone else up the mountain; or he can work with the climbers every step of the way as a fellow mountain climber, albeit one with more experience and knowledge.

It becomes clear that these metaphors place increasing value on learner-control in the teaching-learning process.

It is noticeable that different views or perspectives exist in describing the new role of the facilitator in situations of increasing learner-control. Many theorists and writers have attempted a specification of these roles. Tough (in Candy, 1991:225) for instance, emphasizes the transition from the role of "director" to that of "resource" or "helper". The function of the facilitator in this relationship is providing information, advice (or suggestions and recommendations) and reasons that help the learner make the decision and understand the reasons for it. The helper therefore provides detailed information about the various possibilities that are open, but lets the learner himself make the decisions.

Langenbach (1993:171) states that the responsibility of the facilitator will entail easing or guiding the learner through an experience such as learning. According to Jarvis (1996:113) the facilitator is one who assists in the learners' learning even to the extent of providing or creating the environment in which that learning may occur, but is never one who dictates the outcomes of the experience. Because the learning experience is open-ended, facilitation is often a difficult role to play since the learners may reach conclusions other than those held by facilitators who should not seek to impose their opinions on the learners. Within this vision of the classroom, which represents a shift away from behavioural theories and toward cognitive developmental theories of learning, learners assume more control of their own learning and the learning site becomes a resource provider that learners access to achieve their learning goals (Carey, 1993:108). Here the facilitator will shift his psychic reward system from

getting rewards from controlling learners to getting rewards from empowering learners (Knowles, 1990:77).

The new role, facilitator of learning, requires more collaboration with learners and supports a two-way channel of communication. The facilitator's role will therefore require a change from content transmission to one that is concerned with content acquisition (Langenbach, 1993:171). The facilitator will thus be perceived as a resource of learning rather than a source of information and can therefore serve as one of many content resources (Bentley, 1994:10). Brockett and Hiemstra (in Brookfield, 1985:36) list the following tasks of the facilitator as resource person: facilitators can locate resources and present new information pertaining to derived learner needs; they can furthermore arrange for, manage, and employ a variety of resources necessary to accomplish learning goals; they can use a wide variety of learning techniques and supportive instructional devices to maintain learner interest and to present certain types of information; they can stimulate the interest and motivation of learners toward the chosen content areas; they can help learners to develop positive attitudes and feelings of independence relative to learning; they can promote discussion, questioning, and self-directed inquiry skills and they can serve both to evaluate learner progress and stimulate self evaluation by learners. The emphasis in this new role is therefore on the *process* of helping the learners to acquire the knowledge and skills chosen. In the new role learners are now encouraged to talk, frame questions and work through problems (Canterford, 1991:286).

In addition Rogers (1996:161) claims that the facilitator will have to play the part of a member of the group, subject to the pressures it exerts, as well as audience, outside of the group - the person before whom the group members will perform their newly acquired learning in search of evaluation and reinforcement. When a facilitator becomes a group member not only will it enable him to experience something of what the other group members (learners) will be experiencing, it will directly assist the facilitator in helping the various members to learn. The facilitator can become a model of learning for the learners. The most important attribute of the facilitator is therefore that he must be a learner himself. If he has lost his capacity for learning, he is not good enough to be in the company of those who have preserved theirs. All of the group members, including the facilitator, are learners, and may all learn from each other how to learn (Kidd in Rogers, 1996:168). Knowles (1990:80) shares this view when he states that the facilitator can only participate as a member of the group when he actually feels that he and his learners have an equality as learners.

However, Rogers (1996:173) prepares the facilitator to expect a life of isolation since the facilitator will rarely be possible to join the group fully. He will always have one foot outside the group, however much he joins in. He will nearly always be the audience before whom the participants will practice their newly acquired learning and who will be expected to evaluate and judge their performance. The facilitator will therefore be “in” but not always “of” the group.

Bentley (1994:9) elaborates on the fact that facilitators always have to remember that whenever a group meets there is a group process that comes into being. This process belongs to the group. It is a combination of the living processes of all the people in the group and has to be respected. He further reminds the facilitator of the following:

Remember that you are facilitating another person's process. It is not your process. Do not intrude. Do not control. Do not force your own needs and insights into the foreground. If you do not trust a person's process, that person will not trust you.

When adopting a facilitative style which Pratt (in Steinberg, 1997:66) refers to as the *cultivating conception* of facilitation it implies that knowledge is never taken for granted and authority is open to question. What learners already know and think about something significantly influence their learning. The focus is therefore on the learning process, with content as a vehicle by which facilitators can help learners to learn how to learn and achieve higher levels of thinking. According to Pratt a nurturing conception (facilitating personal agency) describes a way of relating where genuine regard for the other person and concern for the relationship binds the facilitator and learners together. Here a common theme that exists is the balance between caring and challenging, supporting and directing. Learning is to be self-initiated, personally involving and evaluated by learners. Significant learning is not associated with content or higher forms of cognition, but with the enhancement of self concept and personal agency. Pratt points out that this concept is most evident in ABE and literacy programmes. Steinberg (1997:66) likewise finds it interesting that internationally the nurturing conception was linked to ABE and literacy work. According to Steinberg:

If one surveyed ABET teachers in South Africa, it would probably be the dominant conception here too. If one observed teachers, the influence of the transmission conception might well become visible.

However, it would be wrong to conclude that some conceptions (or styles) are better

than others. Each has philosophical and epistemological roots which are consonant with particular people, purposes and contexts (Pratt in Steinberg, 1997:66).

It is interesting to note that Hobbs (1992:9) cautions against facilitators adopting a facilitative style. He implies that just as there is a risk for facilitators so there is a corresponding risk for learners. What does the risk for facilitators then entail? According to Hobbs (1992:7) instead of being the all-known expert, the facilitator must deliberately place himself in a vulnerable position, in a situation where the idea of expertise is replaced by a process in which the expert becomes facilitator. Such a situation can cause many facilitators of adults to feel threatened (Rogers, 1996:174). The prospect of having to guide and enrich the learning of learners who exercise a degree of autonomy over their learning, can be frightening to facilitators trained in traditional classroom norms, techniques and psychology (Wedemeyer in Candy, 1991:224). In such circumstances, there is a danger of the facilitator falling back onto authority - the claim to leadership which the role of teaching endows (Rogers, 1996:174). Especially in experiential learning situations where control of the nature and content of learning is shifted away from the facilitator towards the learner may involve the facilitator in feelings of personal and professional risk and uncertainty with which he or she may not be familiar. According to Hobbs (1992:7) responsibility lies with each learner for the success of the learning enterprise in which he is engaged. Hobbs claims that unless the facilitator is able to accept this fact and let go, the learner is maintained in a position of dependency. The facilitator has to be prepared to become redundant. And this may further involve learning how to cope with feelings of being unwanted. But becoming redundant can be hard. This is why, according to Dennison and Kirk (1990:40) the job of a facilitator is very difficult. But Saddington (1992:96) does not agree with Dennison and Kirk at this point. According to Saddington, without the facilitator the learner can still complete his learning cycle. However, Saddington points out that it may take a long time and sometimes the learner may even end up at the wrong destination. Saddington therefore does not share the view of facilitators becoming largely or completely redundant to the learning process. He subsequently emphasizes that the task of the facilitator is to speed up the learning process of the learner, guide him or her in the right direction and make sure he or she will end up in the right place.

It is not only the facilitator, but also the learners that are at risk. Learners have expectations about pedagogy as well as content. This often expresses itself to the learners' desire to be given the facts, to be told the truth, to see the facilitator not as facilitator but as leading expert. This will furthermore imply that learners will not be

able to remain hidden in a passive fashion, but will actively be called upon to reveal aspects of self-experience about which they may feel vulnerable or defensive (Hobbs, 1992:9).

Jarvis (1996:80) therefore stresses that facilitators of adults need to be sensitive about the emotional state of their learners. He states that this ability may be more significant in the educator of adults than many of the others generally assumed essential to the facilitator's role. Therefore Jarvis (1995:34) emphasizes the fact that the manner through which facilitators interact with learners is probably more important than the actual teaching methods employed. Rogers (1996:174) affirms this viewpoint when he points out that the facilitator of adults needs to allow and indeed encourage the group to be learner-led without feeling that his role has been unutilized. Rogers therefore suggests that social skills may be more important in selecting facilitators of adults than subject specialism. Freire (1996:129) provides a shift in focus when he comments that literacy education must also be premised on remembering the insecurity of illiterate adults who will become upset if they feel they are being treated like children. According to Freire there is no more effective way to respect them than to accept their experiential knowledge for the purpose of going beyond it. Working with learners to create a climate of confidence in which they feel secure is therefore beneficial to the learning process.

- **As delegator or consultant, mentor**

When adopting a delegative style the facilitator is concerned with developing learners' capacity to function autonomously. This style implies that learners work independently and the facilitator is available at the request of learners as a resource person (Grasha, 1994:143). Here learners may perceive themselves as independent learners. But Grasha cautions that some learners may become anxious when given autonomy. Grasha furthermore recommends a blend of the expert/facilitative/delegative style. According to Grasha such a blend will send a different message to learners that, "I'm here to consult with you on the projects and issues you are exploring." Grasha mentions many advantages in adopting such a flexible style. He states that the nature and quality of the interactions between facilitators and learners will be different. Here facilitators and learners work together, share information and the boundaries between facilitators and learners are not as formal. The emotional climate is also warmer. There are also more opportunities for learners to express openly how they feel about tasks and perhaps about each other.

However, Grasha (1994:145) recommends that this combination of teaching styles work best when learners are capable and have appropriate levels of knowledge, can take initiative and can assume responsibility. In addition facilitators must be willing to give up some control over tasks. The combination of these styles demands that the facilitator empowers learners. The facilitator must also be viewed as approachable in order to consult effectively with learners. In turn learners must learn how to improve their interactions with each other to work effectively together.

3.2.2 Competencies required for the new role of the facilitator

The researcher stated earlier that even though it was at times tempting to portray the facilitator with a list of desirable attributes, it was decided not to give way to this temptation. However, this is not meant to imply that the qualities or competencies required by facilitators are of less significance in the teaching-learning process. The researcher will therefore only touch briefly on some of these competencies.

The critical element in performing a facilitative role is the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner which in its turn is dependent on the facilitator possessing three attitudinal qualities:

- realness or genuineness
- non-possessive caring, prizing, trust and respect
- empathetic understanding and sensitive and accurate listening (Knowles, 1990:77).

But facilitators also need certain skills such as setting an appropriate climate conducive to learning (Knowles, 1990:77; Rogers in Candy, 1991:189). The presence of facilitative behaviours such as using open and closed questions; asking reflexive questions; summarizing and checking understanding and effective listening; communicating own thoughts, feelings and ideas can be observed and may indicate the presence of facilitative skills (Cross, 1996:354; Bentley, 1994:11).

3.2.3 Modifying styles

Perhaps the most important conclusion that emerges from a review of the international perspective is that a tendency exists to replace the notion of the teacher as expert by the idea that the facilitator must facilitate learning. One may wonder if there is a need for facilitators to modify their teaching styles and if so, what factors

would they have to consider? According to Rogers (1996:167) it is impossible to answer such questions with universal rules. Facilitators must think about them and answer them for themselves in the context of their own styles of teaching. Rogers for instance claims that the fact that there are different ways of describing the relationship between the facilitator and learner, prompts a number of thoughts.

- The first is that there can be no universally applicable way of depicting the very complex series of relationships that exist within a learning group. Each of us can define these interactions in different ways. Figure 3.1 indicates the two main sets of factors controlled by the facilitator and the sort of activity that may result from the varied teaching styles and class/learning group environments. Facilitators should ask themselves where they prefer to operate on this matrix.

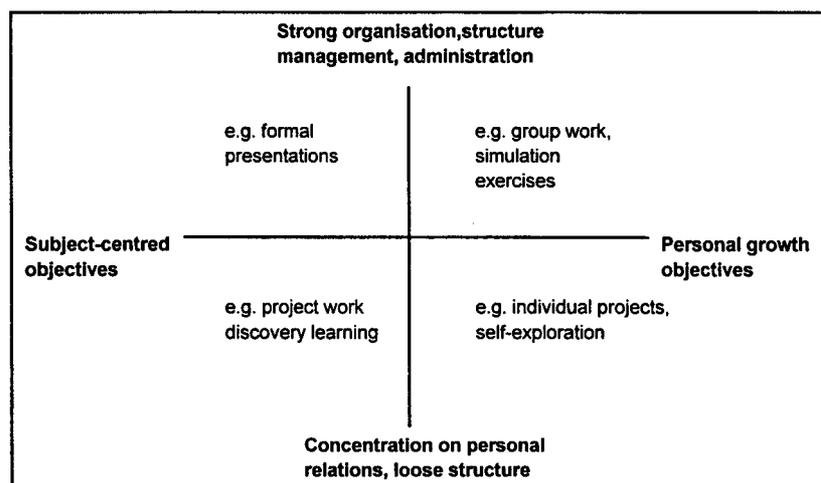


Figure 3.1 Matrix of class/learning group climate (Rogers, 1996:166)

- Secondly, Rogers points out that most of the facilitators do not adopt any one approach consistently. They move about throughout these styles as the need presents itself. The effective facilitator will probably use many of these different ways of relating to the learners in the group during the course of the teaching.
- Thirdly, facilitators will sometimes find themselves torn between the style adopted in relation to the whole group and the style needed for certain individual learners. They may ask themselves which comes first, the welfare of the individual learner or the whole group?
- Finally there may be -and often is- a tension between the role which the facilitator wishes to adopt in relation to the adult learning group and the role which the learners wish the facilitator to adopt. Many learners want the facilitator to teach formally, to present information; they sometimes regard discussions as a waste of time and some facilitators find this a role which they can not easily adopt. Real tension can arise

from dissatisfied facilitators who are unable to reconcile themselves with the desired approaches of the learners. Rogers maintains that if learners have their own learning style, which they have come to use effectively, it is also true that facilitators have their own particular teaching style that they are happiest with and this will to a large extent determine how they will react in their learning groups. Rogers therefore suggests that facilitators need to recognise their own particular style for what it is, to improve it with practice and to try to make sure that it accomplishes what it is intended to accomplish - learner learning.

In order for facilitators to modify their teaching styles (to move for example from the combination of expert/formal/authority styles to expert/delegator/facilitator styles) Grasha (1994:145) suggests that a facilitator would need to exercise *flexibility*. Direct control of classroom tasks would need to decrease. Work would need to occur on building relationships and the capability of learners to handle the content would have to be high.

3.2.4 Resistance to change

Candy (1991:226) cautions that depriving facilitators of their traditional roles and simultaneously requiring them to acquire sophisticated new roles will produce trauma. Grasha (1994:143) agrees that changing from existing practices may be very difficult. This is particularly true of making the large leaps from the teacher-centred methods to the learner-centred processes. Grasha furthermore points out that learners with the needed expertise who can take initiative and responsibility for their learning are a minority. Consequently, "facilitating and delegating is frustrating for those brave souls willing to innovate." According to Wedemeyer (in Candy, 1991:225) it is hardly surprising to find that at least some facilitators feel threatened by learner-control and the consequent redefinition of their role as a facilitator of learning. Like learners, facilitators too have self-concepts, and they will tend to reject a role which seems to violate the concept of self-as-teacher built up over many years of preparation, modeling and experience. According to Candy (1991:231) whenever people react emotionally to an issue, either for or against, it almost certainly indicates that deeply held beliefs are involved.

Rogers (1996:172) claims that learners also resist change for many reasons. Knowles (1985:182) comments that it is not only the facilitator but also the learner that has to accept new roles. No longer is he (the learner) a somewhat passive recipient of courses designed by others. He has to accept greater responsibility. The success or

failure of the course is undeniably in the learner's hands. Rogers (1996:172) also mentions that learners come to classes for many reasons, among which socio-emotional needs may be strongest - and these reasons often militate against change. Sometimes the roles played by the learners establish their status in the group and any abandonment of these roles may be seen as damaging to their status in the group. Several adults also find engaging in group learning exercises embarrassing; they see such activities as damaging the picture they believe others have of them.

Learning changes can therefore be uncomfortable and even painful to make, more so as the adult grows into a concept of self-maturity. To admit to learning needs is in itself challenging to some adults, while others resist the effort needed to change their views and attitudes. Perhaps most frequently most adult learners will object to the facilitator who abandons the traditional role of instructor and expert, especially the facilitator who occasionally admits ignorance. Some learners may become anxious when a facilitator engages in participatory activities. A number of learners want to be taught; they want authoritative guidance or reassurance and even discipline from a superior person. Many groups will go to considerable lengths to keep the teacher as teacher and the learners as learners. Many learners therefore expect the facilitator to occupy the teaching role and the learners to occupy the learning roles all the time. They see the facilitator as both *an* authority (a specialist in the subject) and *in* authority (in command of the class/group) (Rogers, 1996:172).

What should the facilitator do when there is a conflict of expectations between learners? According to Hobbs (1992:10) it is absolutely crucial to have a clear answer to this question of whether it is something about the facilitator or something about the group (or both) that is causing this blockage.

It is clear that using a facilitative or learner-centred form of instruction probably contributes to tension and anxiety among learners comfortable with more traditional methods. Grasha (1994:149) therefore recommends that such processes are best employed when they are introduced gradually into a course; a clear rationale for their use is provided, learners are given explicit instruction about what is required of them, facilitators monitor the reactions of learners and intervene appropriately to reduce the impact of possible negative reactions. Grasha (1994:146) further suggests that facilitators need to adopt a new perspective on control. Grasha notes that concerns about losing control over what happens in class or having their roles diminished are understandable. However, it must be recognised that control is not relinquished. Rather, it is redirected towards a broader set of goals and objectives such as

developing critical thinking, teamwork or the capacity to work independently.

It is clear that facilitators have very challenging and difficult roles to perform in the teaching-learning process. Rogers (1996:174) claims that if the task of the facilitator of adults is so demanding, it follows that they should seek out all the help they can get. According to Rogers most facilitators of adults are in isolation from each other and rarely spend enough time searching for the resources available in the community to assist in the task. They need support and it is up to them to find it.

3.2.5 Training of facilitators

Leumer (1998) comments that by helping and facilitating learning processes the role of the facilitator is to bring out the full potential and creativity of learners.

The profession of adult educators and facilitators is to help lift the treasures that lie within people. And for this difficult task of treasure-lifting it needs skills, focusing on facilitating intellectual development and personal autonomy (Leumer, 1998).

To acquire the necessary skills facilitators need adequate training. According to Jarvis (1996:105) in most courses preparing individuals to become facilitators of adults, considerable emphasis is placed upon a variety of methods with which facilitators should be familiar, but much less is placed upon teaching styles. Perhaps this is a major omission in teacher training since the style that the facilitator adopts may play a considerable part in the outcome of the learning process. Facilitators may say that they are facilitative, but their style, might actually communicate that they expect learners to reach the outcome that they would have been taught had the session been didactic. Furthermore Chadwick (1995:4) points out that in courses dealing with teaching methods facilitators themselves may retain hints and tips on technique, but fail to apply them in their own classes. According to Chadwick a move away from didactic presentation of material to reach goals or outcomes has led towards a more learner-centred approach towards their achievement. In this regard the approach of the facilitator of adults, based on who he is, as much as on what he knows, is gaining momentum.

There is still much evidence to suggest that a great emphasis is placed on cognitive material, or the assumption that the more information the facilitator has, the better he becomes. The notion that (good) facilitators are produced by the trainer passing on

knowledge didactically to the trainee, has grave defects; moreover, it leads to the view that training courses provide useless theory and the place to become a (good) facilitator is in the actual teaching situation. An alternative view is that a (good) teacher is a facilitator of learning, creating situations in which learners manage their own learning, although this is not an argument for no teaching ever to be done but rather that the teaching-learning engagement is a partnership (Jarvis, 1996:105).

In addition, Chadwick (1995:4-5) mentions that attitudes are of some importance - not only facilitator's attitudes towards learners, but their attitudes towards their whole teaching approach. But Chadwick cautions that attitude change is notoriously slow. A key training objective is to stimulate internal change, especially in how the facilitator as learner comes to view the work. This objective moves us a long way from the slowly changing view of teaching teachers how to teach. An important issue is how to cultivate a facilitator's desire to improve and, as an independent learner, continue with self-training in order to become more sensitive to learner's learning needs and more able to become self-critical as a thinking practitioner.

3.2.6 The role of the learner in the facilitation of learning

Rogers (1996:71) has selected seven characteristics which have implications for the facilitator of adults. These seem to be true of the large majority of adult learners whatever their situations or stage of development.

- Some adults are more adult than others; some search in education for dependency, others for autonomy.
- They are all growing and developing, but in different directions and at a different pace.
- Some bring a good deal of experience and knowledge, others bring less; and there are varying degrees of willingness to use this material to help the learning process.
- They have a wide range of intentions and needs, some specific, some more general and related to subject-matter under discussion, and others unknown to themselves.
- They are all at different points in the continuum varying between those who require to be taught everything, and those who wish to find out everything for themselves. All have some consciousness of what they can and can not do in the way of learning.
- They all have competing interests of much more importance than their learning.

- They all have by now acquired their own ways of learning which vary considerably from one another.

Although it is easy to view these characteristics in negative terms there are many aspects that give cause for hope. Adults have a well of resources that can be used; they have a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience. All adults are already engaged in some form of learning; they have a greater use of reasoning powers, and when provoked may accept the facilitator's word less readily. The desire of many of the learners is also to apply what they learn in their lives.

In adult education, our students are not there just to be taught; they are our greatest resource in the learning process (Rogers, 1996:72).

Saddington (in Costas 1989:185) remarks that learner responsibility is an important concept in the field of adult education and cautions that any diminishing of this responsibility contradicts a principle goal of adult education which is to help learners become autonomous adults. Costas claims that in the field of adult education learner responsibility operates as a powerful value position. Responsibility is part of a whole cluster of value terms assigned to the adult learner, and this cluster includes terms such as *participation, autonomy, involvement* and *self-directing*. Hallendorff (1993:23) mentions that a model for the Constructivist approach places the responsibility for learning in the hands of the learners. Here learners are viewed as people who possess innate knowledge - not empty vessels that must be filled, but people who already have knowledge inside their heads; people who will incorporate new increments of knowledge by making sense of it in terms of existing knowledge. The basic premise which calls for this approach is that conceptual knowledge can not be transferred ready-made from one person to another. Conceptual knowledge must be constructed and internalized by the learner. Furthermore, the facilitator's way of understanding a concept is not necessarily the only way of understanding it. The effects for the learners when using such an approach are: it promotes self-reliance and self-esteem, confidence to tackle new problems, there is a lack of anxiety and reduction of pressure, learners do not rely on interpretive learning, but on the construction of knowledge, learners do not forget knowledge they have constructed themselves. Learners therefore use their own logic and construct and build knowledge for themselves. They internalize it from within, based on the ideas already in their heads rather than being expected to internalize it from without. Costas (1989:187) therefore suggests that a major way in which a commitment to learner responsibility can be given in educational practice, is through giving the learner an active role. One

of the ways of defining these responsibilities more clearly is through the use of learning contracts.

According to Costas the tension between facilitator and learner responsibility relates back to the power relationships that exist in the learning environment and an important question in any learning group is therefore the relationship between facilitator authority and learner responsibility. The more the facilitator exercises authority, the less will be the amount of freedom and responsibility for the learner and vice versa (Costas, 1989:190) (see Figure 3.2).

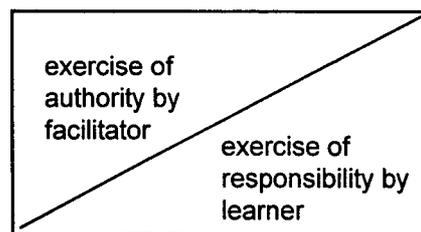


Figure 3.2 Modified version of Tannenbaum-Schmidt Leadership Grid (Costas, 1989:190)

According to Costas (1989:190) there is no right place on the continuum - rather it is a question of the appropriate stance to be taken by both the learners' and facilitators' relation to the factors inherent in the learning process. Factors include the facilitator's own preferred educational practice and his view of learner responsibility as well as the learner's readiness to assume such responsibility. Clearly a tension exists when the facilitator wishes to be at one point of the continuum whilst the learners are at a different point. Costas suggests that the gap can be bridged by a change of approach by both learners and facilitators to the degree of responsibility which the learners will exercise and this is where the learning contract comes in. Learners would then be entering a learning situation within which there are clearly defined and renegotiable rules and roles. This would therefore be a step forward in decreasing the learners' dependency and would help to define the role relationship between learner and facilitator. The sharing of responsibility which is a sharing of power, does not mean a handing over or an abrogation of power by facilitators, as they still have a range of responsibilities in the roles they must play (Costas, 1989:196).

In order to negotiate the roles and rules, the facilitator must therefore be able to diagnose the learning needs and learning styles of learners. One common element in modern discussions of adult learning relates to what is called *learning styles*. Learners have for their whole lives engaged in natural learning and from time to time in the more purposeful and structured learning episodes. In the course of this, they

have developed their own learning styles. Each of the stages of the learning cycle (see Figure 2.3) calls for different learning approaches and appeals to different kinds of persons. Every individual develops through experience one or more *preferred* learning styles. Although learners tend to use all of these styles they may feel stronger at learning through one approach than through any of the others. Learners all have preferences in the way they learn (Rogers, 1996:110-111) (see Figure 3.3).

3.2.7 Implications for the facilitator of learning

Booyesen (1995:160) suggests that facilitators must have knowledge of the skills that are going to be taught as well as education in general, "I can not teach what I do not know." In addition facilitators should know the social circumstances of their learners, must get to know them personally and be sensitive. Knowing the learner is therefore of utmost importance, "I can not teach who I do not know." Facilitators should furthermore use the experience of learners. They must find out what learners know and what they think learners should know (Vella in Booyesen, 1995:160). Facilitators subsequently have to learn how to be more receptive to understand underlying motives of adult learners to become aware of the potential and creativity of learning folks. The professionalism of facilitators is not that they know and they just have to extend this knowledge. Freire has criticised this approach as the banking concept. The facilitation of learning has to consist of give and take. And good practice in adult education is the one that is deeply inclined to serve the demands and interests of learning communities or individuals as an ongoing process. The best practice for adult education is therefore practice related to needs (First practitioner conference of AETASA, 1997:49).

However, Lyster (1992b:174) cautions that at this higher level of learning it becomes more difficult to specify learning outcomes, the goals are beyond content objectives and have to do with learning styles and problem-solving. It is therefore understandable that facilitators' own uncertainty and ignorance may grow. This is when the facilitator needs to relinquish his expert role and develop a learning community of equals where the search for learning is a shared co-operative enterprise.

Nevertheless, at this level the learner is also in a state of ambiguity, anxiety and perplexity. The role of the facilitator will therefore entail to develop the learners' ability how to learn. Facilitators will need to recognise that their task involves them in preparing learners for the difficulties and situations they will encounter at this

<p>Active learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prefer to learn by doing something immediately ● Want to get on with the job; try to find out how something works ● Become impatient when someone tells them about the task first ● Give immediate answers to questions ● Tend to be enthusiastic about new things; they like lots of new experiences ● Want to pass quickly from one activity to the next ● Want to see as many new things as possible, like to meet new people ● Often volunteer to take the lead in any activity ● Like short-term goals ● Tend to believe what they are told ● Want to find out things for themselves
<p>Reflective learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prefer to wait and see; sit back and watch others doing the task first ● Take time to think, hesitate and are often uncertain ● Want more information before giving a real answer ● Think through all the implications for themselves and others before making a decision ● Like sharing their learning with others
<p>Theorising learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Like to build systems; want to understand the whole, general principle first ● Don't want to deal with 'real cases' ● Speak in general rather than in concrete terms ● Question the basic assumptions ● Make rules out of all cases ● Think problems through step-by-step ● Try to make coherent pictures out of complex material ● Try to be objective, detached ● Want the world to be logical; they do not like too many different opinions
<p>Experimental learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Like to experiment; apply new insights ● Do not believe something until they see it for themselves ● Try to find new and more effective ways of doing things ● Take short cuts or devise new modes of working ● Tend to be confident, energetic, impatient of what they see as too much talk ● Like solving problems and see new situations as a challenge from which they can learn ● Like being shown how to do something, but become frustrated if they are not allowed to do it for themselves

Figure 3.3 Preferred learning styles (Rogers, 1996:111)

higher level of learning. Included in such learning is the learning of independence, the ability to learn from situations, the ability to find resources and the social skill of

relating to others. These goals can only be learnt as there is no way to teach them. Hallendorff (1993:28) shares this view when he states, "It is not the teacher's responsibility to teach as much as the learner's responsibility to learn." Such learning must therefore involve the learner in practicing these behaviours, and learning from his own experience and not accepting that of the facilitator as necessarily valid for his circumstances. It is in this form of learning from one's own experience that experiential learning is appropriate for learners as they explore new problem-solving processes and become self-directed learners (Saddington in Costas, 1989:188). When the facilitator therefore assumes a facilitative role, providing a variety of well structured learning experiences through the posing of relevant, real life problems, the learner is able to construct the methods of numeracy and/or literacy (Hallendorff, 1993:28).

According to Steinberg (1993:33) it is therefore the learners who need to be active during the lesson more than the facilitator. The facilitator, while providing learning resources, must encourage the learner to add his own resources to a common resource for learning. Resources include books, materials, personal knowledge and experience (Lyster, 1992b:189). However, Steinberg (1993:33,71) points out that learner materials can not scaffold. They can provide support and guidance, but not feedback. According to Steinberg at some point the learners will always hit a problem and need the supportive intervention of the facilitator. The facilitator must therefore mediate between the text and the learners by pacing the lessons, by introducing topics and eliciting learner responses, by adding his knowledge to fill the envitable gap between learners and text and by supporting learners whenever they experience difficulties with lessons. Steinberg therefore asserts that the text is responsible for the overall progression of content and skill, while the facilitator is responsible for interaction and feedback. According to Steinberg scaffolding is most effective here when it is given within a learner's zone of proximal development, i.e. given to a learner for whom that learning is within grasp. According to Steinberg, if the task to accomplish lies beyond the learner's zone of development, then scaffolding becomes ineffective. Either the facilitator ends up doing the task for the learner or the learner does not perform the task. Facilitators should therefore encourage learners, introduce innovation and encourage independence and critical thinking in their learners (Roup & Blues, 1993:60).

3.2.8 Conclusion

It is clear that facilitators of adults are faced with a difficult task from the start.

Groups of learners may consist of a wide variety of people bringing their own advantages and disadvantages to the learning situation. Two conclusions for the facilitator of adult learning come from this view of learning styles. The first is that in any adult learning group there will always be people with a range of different learning styles. This means that it is necessary for any facilitator to adopt a wide range of teaching-learning activities in order to help those who prefer to learn through active engagement with experience, those who prefer to reflect critically, those who prefer to develop more generalised views and those who prefer to experiment and test out other people's theories (Rogers, 1996:111-112).

One mission of the facilitator should furthermore be to develop the attitude that learning is a lifelong process for which the skills of self-directed learning must be acquired (Knowles, 1971:23). Knowles therefore defines the role of the teacher as that of a facilitator of learning.

This conversion of roles and what it implies in practical terms for the facilitator as well as the learner are best illustrated in the Staged Self-Directed Learning Model (SSDL) which may be considered as an effective model for understanding facilitation. The SSDL Model is based on the Situational Leadership model of Hersey and Blanchard (1988) and adapted by Gerald Grow. The SSDL model will presently be discussed in detail.

3.3. THE STAGED-SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING (SSDL) MODEL

3.3.1 An introduction to the SSDL Model

For the purposes of this study the concept *self-directed-learning* was researched in more depth due to the fact that it encourages an increasingly self-directed individual and according to Mezirow (1981:166) not a dependent learner as is the case in teacher-directed procedures currently employed in many educational practices. The SSDL model is founded on the widely (but not universally) held belief that in enhancing learners' ability to be self-directed, learners will enhance their ability to be self-directed in general (Grow, 1994:57).

The SSDL model (see Figure 3.4) proposes that learners advance through stages of increasing self-direction and that facilitators can help or hinder that development. Good teaching, according to Grow (1994:57) matches the learner's stage of self-direction and helps the learner advance toward greater self-direction. In this

model specific methods are proposed for teaching learners at each stage, although many teaching styles are good when appropriately applied. Several pedagogical difficulties are explained as mismatches between teacher style and learner stage, especially the mismatch between a learner needing direction and a non-directive facilitator (see Figure 3.5). This model suggests how facilitators can actively equip learners to become more self-directed in their learning and further explores the roles facilitators should take with learners who have differing degrees of self-direction (Grow, 1991a:127).

In a way the SSDL model is a defense for a variety of appropriately applied teaching styles and is aimed at adult educators who have focused predominantly on facilitative methods at the expense of directive methods (Grow, 1994:109).

In developing this model Grow became aware of holding certain assumptions. They are as follows:

- The goal of the educational process is to produce self-directed, lifelong learners. But Grow notes that many educational practices do more to perpetuate dependency than to create self-direction.
- Learners can progress toward greater control of their learning, but simply being an adult does not assure the ability to take a high degree of learner control.
- Facilitators can assist in that progression by cultivating not only the basic knowledge but also the metaskills (the integration of which makes greater learner control possible). Programmes can be designed to increase gradually the degree of learner control as learners master basic content and skills. Facilitators can shift their teaching styles productively to stimulate learner progress or respond to learner needs. The SSDL model provides workable labels for such shifts.
- There is more than one way to teach well. With some exceptions, good teaching is situational - it varies in response to the learners. There is no one way to teach or learn well. Different styles work for different learners in different situations. Good facilitators understand and use the learners' present stage and help the learners progress toward greater self-direction characterized by greater learning readiness, flexibility and learner control.
- The ability to be self-directed is situational in that one may be self-directed in one subject, a dependent learner in another. Self-direction, however, is not entirely situational; it is partly a personal trait analogous to maturity. Once developed, certain aspects of self-direction are transferable to new situations. It is, however, interesting to note here that Tennant (in Grow, 1994:109) (a critique of the SSDL

model) points out that self-direction should not be considered a genetic quality like psychological maturity. Tennant (in Grow, 1994:113) remarks that we should not be too eager to consider self-directed learning to be synonymous with autonomy, psychological growth and maturity because certain individuals can be intensely self-directed learners without being mature, wise or even, as Grow puts it “sane”.

- The degree of learner control depends in part on the situation and in part on learners’ ability to transfer skills and metaskills to a new situation.
- Self-direction is advantageous in many settings and this model is built upon a strong belief in its value, but there is nothing inherently wrong with being a dependent learner, whether the dependency is temporary or permanent, limited to certain subjects or extending to all.
- Just as dependency and helplessness can be learned, self-direction can be learned and it can be taught (Grow, 1994:113; Grow, 1991a:127).

However, while investigating the SSDL model it is important to note that the model can not arrive already proven. According to Grow (1991b:58) it is at best plausible, useful and provocative. Since a good model does not answer research questions so much as it raises and focuses them, it is more important for a model to be clear than for it to be correct; to raise questions rather than settle them and to invite challenge rather than claim authority. Therefore this model forms part of the on going conversation on how to teach more effectively what learners need to learn.

3.3.2 The Model

Stage	Student	Teacher	Examples
Stage 1	Dependent	Authority Coach	Coaching with immediate feedback. Drill. Informational lecture. Overcoming deficiencies and resistance.
Stage 2	Interested	Motivator Guide	Inspiring lecture plus guided discussion. Goal-setting and learning strategies.
Stage 3	Involved	Facilitator	Discussion facilitated by teacher who participates as equal. Seminar. Group projects.
Stage 4	Self-directed	Consultant, Delegator	Internship, dissertation, individual work or self-directed study-group.

Figure 3.4 The Staged Self-Directed Learning Model (Grow, 1991a:125)

3.3.2.1 Stage 1: Learners of Low Self-Direction

According to Grow (1991b:57) dependent learners need someone to tell them what and how to learn. They require explicit direction, external motivation and external reinforcement. At Stage 1 of development, which Wright (1987:24) refers to as the “black and white” stage, the learner sees the world in terms of good and bad, black and white. Authority therefore rests with the facilitator who is assumed to know all the answers; who can give them explicit directions on what to do, how and when to do it. For these learners, learning is teacher-centred. They either treat facilitators as experts who know what they need to do, or they passively slide through the educational system responding mainly to facilitators who make them learn. According to Grow (1991a:129) being a dependent learner is not a defect; it can, however, be a serious limitation. However, all learners may become temporarily dependent in the face of new topics.

- **Teaching Stage 1 Learners**

Coaching

According to Grow (1991a:130) there are at least two ways to approach the teaching of dependent learners; through coaching and through insight. To use the coaching method, the facilitator must first establish his credibility and authority. In this stage the facilitator is an expert. Grow recommends that the facilitator should provide direction to learners at stage 1, because dependent learners respond best to a clearly organized, rigorous approach to the learning material. Therefore the facilitator should prescribe clear-cut objectives and straightforward techniques for achieving them.

Other recommendations include:

- organizing the course clearly with rigorous assignments and definite deadlines
- teaching learners specific, identifiable skills
- setting standards beyond what learners think they can do
- doing what is necessary to get them to succeed
- creating and rewarding success
- avoid giving choices to learners
- keeping communication clear and thorough, but mainly one way
- instruction focusing on the subject - not on the learners
- feedback being immediate, frequent, task-orientated

These characteristics may sound terrible to proponents of learner-centred styles of teaching. Fox (in Grow, 1991a:130) criticizes this method as the transfer theory of teaching where facilitators pour knowledge into learners. Freire (1983:58) calls it the *banking* approach (as discussed in Chapter 2). But Grow points out that although Stage 1 teaching can be limiting and very punitive; the SSDL theory proposes, however, that Stage 1 teaching is only bad when it is applied to the wrong learners or used to perpetuate dependency. Learning in a dependent mode goes against the grain of progressive, humanistic and adult education (as discussed in Chapter 2). Yet, as Pratt (in Grow, 1991a:130) emphasizes there is nothing inherently demeaning or destructive in pedagogical, temporarily dependent, relationships.

Insight

Grow also mentions different approaches to teaching Stage 1 learners who require involving them in the design and content of the learning. Learners begin from insight into who they are and what they want or need to learn. Another learner-involvement approach, critical pedagogy, is derived from the work of Paulo Freire. Facilitators in this approach lead learners to take responsibility for their own learning, especially confronting the ways they are held back by society and by themselves (see Chapter 2). According to Grow (1991a:131) although insight methods are often used with Stage 1 learners, the SSDL model calls them Stage 3 approaches. Grow comments that some Stage 1 learners are not good candidates for insight approaches and they may resist sharing responsibility for learning.

Examples of Stage 1 teaching

- Formal lectures emphasizing subject matter, structured drills
- Highly specific assignments
- Behavioural reinforcement techniques and intensive individual tutoring (Grow, 1991b:58).

3.3.2.2 Stage 2: Learners of Moderate Self-Direction

Stage 2 learners are interestable, responsive, and available to learn. These are what most facilitators would refer to as “good students” (Grow, 1991b:59). At Stage 2 which Wright (1987:24) refers to as “everything is relative” the learner now accepts the potential diversity of belief and concept, and can perceive that everything is relative. At this stage, it is easier for the learner to see another person’s point of view. These learners respond to motivational techniques. They are willing to do assignments of which they can see the purpose. Learners at this stage go along if they

understand why, and if the facilitator provides direction and help. Or they will go along because they like the facilitator. Learners at this stage respond positively to personal interaction with the facilitator, something not always true of Stage 1 learners (Grow, 1991a:131).

- **Teaching Stage 2 learners**

Motivating

Stage 2 teaching is what is often called good teaching. The Stage 2 facilitator brings enthusiasm and motivation to the class. Even in a lecture the communication in Stage 2 teaching could be called two-way. The facilitator explains and justifies each assignment, takes the effort to persuade learners of its value and ties the subject to their interests. According to Grow when this teaching style works well, learners increase in self-motivation as they increase in knowledge (Grow, 1991b:59). Here Grow (1991a:131) suggests that the facilitator should show concrete results in what he teaches. Motivated and encouraged Stage 2 learners will continue to learn on their own. The part of the function of the Stage 2 facilitator is to prepare learners to become more self-directing, therefore it is important to begin to train learners in such basic skills as goal setting. The facilitator should use praise but with an eye to phasing out praise (extrinsic motivation) and phasing in encouragement (which builds intrinsic motivation) and build confidence while building skills. However, Grow (1991a:131) states that Stage 2 teaching is still quite directive.

Examples of Stage 2 teaching

- Lecturer as inspiring performer
- Teacher-led discussions, demonstration by an expert, followed by guided practice
- Structured projects with predictable outcomes, close supervision and ample encouraging feedback (Grow, 1991b:59).

3.3.2.3 Stage 3: Learners of Intermediate Self-Direction

Stage 3 learners see themselves as participants in their own education. They are ready to explore a subject with a guide - they have skill and knowledge, but they need to develop a deeper self-concept, more sense of direction and a greater ability to work with and learn from others. At Stage 3 which Wright (1987:24) refers to as the "commitment" stage, the learner can now commit himself to an idea or concept. Learning can be seen as a means of realizing one's true identity or worth. Grow (1991a:133) believes that by Stage 3, as part of the process of weaning from

other-direction, learners will benefit from instruction in critical thinking, problem-solving, and learning strategies (learning more about how they learn).

Learners may need to examine themselves, their culture, and their milieu in order to understand how to separate what they feel from what they should feel, what they value from what they should value, and what they want from what they should want (Grow, 1991a:133).

They learn to identify and value their own experiences in life and the personal experiences of others. This may involve a therapy-like shift of a personal paradigm - a "perspective transformation" (Mezirow in Grow, 1991a:133) - or it may come as a gradual enhancement of developing power (Brookfield in Grow, 1991a:133). Learners should accordingly be developing individual initiative, self-esteem, responsibility and a sense of themselves as co-creators of the culture that shape them (Grow, 1991b:59). These learners will subsequently see themselves as future equals of the facilitator, as worthwhile adults in the making, but they may not be experienced or motivated enough to continue on their own. They want to be involved with facilitators and other learners and to be respected for what they are and what they can do. Consequently, a vital part of Stage 3 is for learners to create lifelong learning situations for themselves (Grow, 1991a:133).

Tennant (in Grow, 1994:112) raises an interesting question here: namely what style should a facilitator adopt if the ability is present in the learners but the will is lacking? According to Grow a facilitative approach will be the obvious answer, because some Stage 3 learners who have the knowledge and ability, may not be experienced or motivated to continue on their own.

- **Teaching Stage 3 learners**

Facilitating

The facilitator comes closest at this stage to being a participant in the learning experience (Grow, 1991a:133). Here facilitator and learners share in decision-making, with learners taking an increasing role. The facilitator concentrates on facilitation and communication and supports learners in using the skills they have. The facilitator can serve in the role Fox (in Grow, 1991a:133) calls an experienced "local guide". The facilitator leads learners through terrain that is well-studied but full of variety. The facilitator offers tools, methods, techniques and ways of interpreting the experience. The facilitator-guide shares experiences and opens others to those experiences. As learners mature toward greater self-direction, the Stage 3 facilitator will help them

structure the transition toward independence. The facilitator may begin by negotiating interim goals and then give learners more rope. Standards at this level are negotiated with the learners and often related to some external standard. The facilitator's goal is therefore to empower learners (Grow, 1991a:134).

Learners at any stage can learn from one another, but Stage 3 learners are especially well suited to work in collaborative learning groups on open-ended but carefully designed projects. A number of tools can be used to facilitate the learning process: i.e. written criteria, evaluation checklists, and Knowles' learning contracts (see Chapter 2) help learners manage their projects and monitor their own progress. It must be noted here that in essence a learning contract is a written plan in which an individual documents, in varying degrees of detail, what and how he or she intends to learn in a given learning experience. The learning contract serves as a tool for communication between the facilitator and learner (Grow, 1991a:134). According to Brookfield (1985:35) a major difficulty faced by most facilitators who advocate a self-directed approach is keeping track of the wide range of learning activities in which learners choose to engage. Grow (1991b:59) further states that as learners become more competent at setting goals and pace, learners can take on greater freedom and more difficult assignments.

Examples of Stage 3 teaching

- Seminar with facilitator as participant
- Learner group projects approved and facilitated (but not directed) by the facilitator (Grow,1991b:59).

Models for Stage 3

Examples of Stage 3 models are especially found in humanistic education, critical pedagogy, collaborative learning and in non-directive teachers who develop learners' own motivation rather than provide that motivation (Grow, 1991a:134). The approach of Rogers (in Grow, 1991b:60) is a good example of Stage 3 teaching where the facilitator listens, draws out, facilitates, encourages and cultivates personal awareness and interpersonal respect. Critical pedagogy which Grow considers to be a Stage 3 approach, was developed by Freire and others for use with dependent adult learners who have the ability to reflect on their considerable life experience. The considerable literature on adult education emphasizes Stage 3 approaches.

3.3.2.4 Stage 4: Learners of High Self-Direction

Stage 4 learners increasingly set their own goals and standards - with or without help from experts. They make use of experts, institutions and other resources to pursue these goals. Though independent, the ideal Stage 4 learner works well with others. Learners at this stage become increasingly confident, resourceful, persistent, and able to take responsibility for their learning, direction, and productivity. Some Stage 4 learners can learn from any kind of facilitator; most, however, do best in an atmosphere of autonomy while others have some difficulty learning from directive teachers. It is interesting to note here that Stage 4 learning does not completely do away with facilitators. As Candy (in Grow, 1991b:60) maintains, "there are certain skills and other bodies of knowledge which are best and most easily mastered under the tutelage of an expert."

- **Teaching Stage 4 Learners**

Delegating

According to Grow (1991b:60) the ultimate subject of Stage 4 is the learner's own personal growth and empowerment. The progression is now complete from the subject-matter focus of the earliest stages to the learner-focus of Stage 4. Facilitators at this stage resemble Fox's "gardener" (Grow, 1991b:60). They cultivate the learner's ability to learn. The Stage 4 facilitator may consult with learners to develop learning contracts that include written criteria, an evaluation checklist, a timetable, and a management chart for each project; hold regular meetings so learners can discuss progress and problems; encourage learners to work together, but not to abandon individual responsibility; focus on the process of being productive, as well as on the product; emphasize long-term progress in career or life; and require self-evaluation. Due to the psychological maturity of Stage 4 learners, the facilitator gradually reduces both two-way communication and external reinforcement. As enjoyable as it is to interact with such advanced learners, such a facilitator will fade away, so that the learner's own efforts become the unequivocal focus. The relationship between facilitator and learner becomes collegial and distinctly not intense. The facilitator actively monitors progress to ensure success, but steps in only to assist learners in acquiring the skills to be self-directing and self-monitoring. The facilitator therefore weans the learner from being taught.

But there are other Stage 4 roles besides delegating. Another Stage 4 facilitator might inspire and mentor. Another might challenge or provoke the learner, then step back.

Grow (1991a:135) also remarks that fully self-directed learning is not possible in an institutional setting.

Learners who are almost self-directing may still require periods of intensive supervision, so Stage 4 facilitators must be prepared to adopt Stage 1 to Stage 3 teaching styles when they are appropriate. However, too much teaching at this stage may only perpetuate dependency and the ultimate task of the Stage 4 facilitator will be to become unnecessary. Nevertheless, along the way the Stage 4 facilitator may inspire, mentor, provoke, or incite the learner. In contrast there can be Stage 4 learners who may not need a facilitator at all. Here a Stage 4 facilitator might set a challenge, then leave the learner mainly alone to carry it out, intervening only when asked to help - and then not help meet the challenge, but instead help empower the learner to meet the challenge himself (Grow, 1991b:60). The ultimate task of a Stage 4 facilitator is therefore to become unnecessary (Grow, 1991a:136). However, Grow (1991a:142) cautions that we should never underestimate how difficult it is for the facilitator to move from being a requirement to being just one among many choices in how to learn. Judging from the Tao Te Ching, Lao Tzu must have been one of the ultimate Stage 4 teachers (Grow, 1991b:60).

Examples of Stage 4 teaching

- Internship, independent study and dissertation

3.3.3 Implications for teaching

The SSDL model defines good teaching as having two basic features:

- the facilitator matches the learner's level of self-direction
- the facilitator prepares (empowers) learners for greater self-direction

According to this definition there is no single best way of teaching. Learners at different levels of self-direction require different teaching methods (Grow, 1991b:60). Therefore Grow (1994:113) believes that good teaching is situational, but promotes the long-term development of the learner. But problems may arise when the two conditions of good teaching are not met. Figure 3.5 maps problems that may occur when the teaching style is mismatched with the learner stage. The worst problems according to Grow occur in two extreme mismatches: The first between independent learners and directive facilitators (Teacher Style 1 - Learner Stage 4) and

the second between dependent learners and non-directive facilitators (Teacher Style 3/4 - Learner Stage 1).

S4: Self-directed learner	Severe mismatch Learners resent authoritarian teacher	Mismatch	Near match	Match
S3: Involved learner	Mismatch	Near match	Match	Near match
S2: Interested learner	Near match	Match	Near match	Mismatch
S1: Dependent learner	Match	Near match	Mismatch	Severe mismatch Learners resent freedom they are not ready for
	T1: Authority, Expert	T2: Salesperson, Motivator	T3: Facilitator	T4: Delegator

Figure 3.5 Match and mismatch between learner stages and teacher styles (Grow, 1991b:61)

In other words the most severe problems occur when dependent learners are mismatched with non-directive facilitators and when self-directed learners are mismatched with directive facilitators (Grow, 1991a:137). Contrary to this view Tennant (in Grow, 1994:113) points out that a mismatch between facilitator and learner styles may be at times more effective than a match. Grow's response to this analysis is that one of the strengths of the SSDL model is precisely that it enables one to think about situations like these.

- *Teacher Style 1 - Learner Stage 4 mismatch*

In the Teacher Style 1 - Learner Stage 4 mismatch self-directed learners are paired with a Stage 1 authoritarian facilitator. In this mismatch, learners will be bored. Some learners will resent their facilitator for overteaching and rebel against it. To make things worse, some facilitators will misinterpret this mismatch by blaming the learner as being uncooperative or unprepared or rude. However, Long (in Grow, 1991a:136) points out that some learners do develop the ability to function well and retain overall control of their learning, even under directive teachers.

- *Teacher Style 1 - Learner Stage 2/3 mismatch*

Learners who are capable of more individual involvement in learning are often relegated to passive roles in authoritarian classrooms. Adults who return to learning institutions may find themselves faced with a similar mismatch. Their life experiences and learning skills enable them to learn at the Stage 3 or Stage 4 level in many subjects. Furthermore, after many years of responsibility, adults may experience

difficulty learning from Teacher Style 1 facilitators. Adults may not be accustomed to doing blindly what they are told without understanding why and consenting to the task. Many of them are accustomed to having authority. But according to Grow the Teacher Style 3 mode is sometimes not used with older learners, even when it is possible and appropriate, simply because facilitators lack experience in this type of teaching (Grow, 1991a:138).

- *Teacher Style 4 - Learner Stage 1 mismatch*

In the Teacher Style 4 - Learner Stage 1 mismatch learners may resent facilitators for giving them freedom to learn when they do not possess the skills necessary for self-directed learning. Using Pratt's (in Grow, 1991a:139) words, they may feel "frustration and anger when, in a misguided spirit of democracy, they are expected to make decisions without sufficient knowledge or expertise." Wanting close supervision, immediate feedback, frequent interaction, constant motivation, and the reassuring presence of an authority-figure telling them what to do, such learners are unlikely to respond well to the delegating style of a pleasant humanistic facilitator, hands-off delegator, or critical theorist who demands that they confront their own learning roles. In this scenario learners will resent their facilitator for underteaching. Learners may feel that the facilitator has little interest in their work and does not care about them personally. This form of leadership makes it difficult for learners to increase their ability and reinforces their lack of confidence (Hersey in Grow, 1991a:138-139). Facilitators may want learners to be more self-directed, but they have no pedagogical method for helping learners move from dependency to self-direction. With such learners humanistic methods may fail. Many will not be able to make use of the freedom to learn, because they lack skills such as goal-setting, self-evaluation, critical thinking, group participation, learning strategies, information resources and self-esteem which make self-directed learning possible.

Learner resistance

Grow (1991b:61) points out that learners may resist learning at any stage for fear of being controlled, losing themselves or losing their cultural identity. There may be resistant learners that are subversive, openly defiant, or passively bored at Stage 1 while on the other hand there may be Stage 3 learners who will resist taking greater responsibility for their learning and cling to the safety of a well facilitated learning group. According to Grow (1991b:61) such resistance is a product of culture, upbringing, and most of all the public education system, where many learners become resistant as a result of years of dependency training. But Grow mentions another kind of learner that resists instruction whom he refers to as the "false

independent” learner who gives the appearance of being a Stage 4 self-directed learner, but turns out to be a highly dependent learner in a state of defiance.

It is important to recognize here that adult learners may be at any of the four learning stages while the literature on adult education is dominated by advocates of what the SSDL model would call a Stage 3 method - a facilitative approach. Grow (1991b:40) strongly believes that facilitators of adults may need to approach certain learners in a directive, even authoritarian style, then gradually equip those learners with the skills, self-concept and motivation necessary to pursue learning in a more self-directed manner. Shor and Freire (in Grow, 1991a:140) correspondingly acknowledge the paradoxical need to be directive:

On the one hand, I can not manipulate. On the other hand, I can not leave the learners by themselves. The opposite of these two possibilities is being radically democratic. That means accepting the directive nature of education. There is a directiveness in education which never allows it to be neutral ... My role is not to be silent.

Every stage therefore requires balancing the facilitator’s power with the learner’s emerging self-direction (see Figure 3.6). Pratt (in Grow, 1991a:140) makes a similar case for practitioners of andragogy to “acknowledge states of dependency as potentially legitimate” and provide the needed direction.

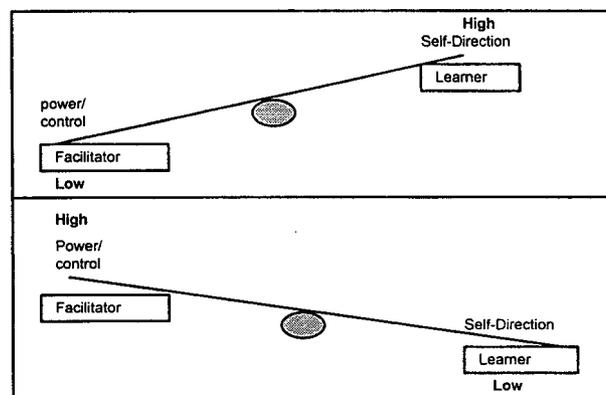


Figure 3.6 The delicate balance between facilitator power/control and the learner’s emerging self-direction

Candy (1991:10-11) combines the balance between facilitator control and the learner’s emerging self-direction with different instructional strategies (see Figure 3.7).

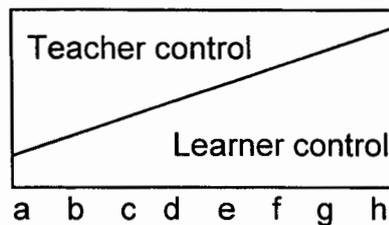


Figure 3.7 Hypothetical Learner-Control Continuum showing different instructional strategies

At the far left of the continuum might be **indoctrination** (a), with almost total teacher-control and little room for learner control. Then might follow, in sequence, **lectures** (b), **lessons** (c) **programmed instruction** (d), **individualized instruction** (e), **personalized instruction** (f), **interactive computer managed learning** (g), **discovery learning** (h) and so forth, until finally the point is reached where learners have accepted almost all control over valued instructional functions. This point, at the far right-hand edge of the continuum (i) is called **independent study**.

According to Grow (1991b:62) facilitators may make different kinds of mistakes. The temptation for the Stage 1 facilitator is to be authoritarian in a punitive, controlling way that stifles initiative, triggers resistance and creates dependency. The temptation for the Stage 2 facilitator is to remain on center stage, dominating the class. The Stage 3 facilitator can disappear into the group and demoralize learners by “accepting and valuing almost anything from anybody” (Fox in Grow, 1991b:62). The Stage 4 facilitator can withdraw too much from the learning experience, lose touch, fail to monitor progress and let learners hang themselves with rope they are not yet accustomed to handling. However, it is important to note here that this is not to indicate what the facilitators in the different stages are like, except when they fail in the manner described (Grow, 1994:109).

But it is not only facilitators but also learners that can fall into traps. Learners may give the appearance of being a Stage 4 learner, but may turn out to be highly dependent in a state of defiance. Other learners may get caught up in resisting direction. They can coerce facilitators into an authoritarian mode. Learners do not naturally arrive in an adult education programme at once dependent upon facilitators and resentful of being taught. They become that way as a result of years of dependency training. Quigley (in Grow, 1994:109) describes sources of resistance in adult basic learners, including threats to cultural identity. Therefore Grow (1991a:142) acknowledges that we need a better understanding of dependency in context and we may have to face the possibility that certain forms of help may only make the problem worse.

The SSDL model suggests why good teaching is widely misunderstood. Most people think there is only one way to teach well. What is good teaching for one learner at one stage of development may not be good teaching for another learner or even for the same learner at a different stage of development.

Grow (1991a:142) comments that in his experience facilitators of the Teaching Style 1/2 types and facilitators of the Teaching Style 3/4 types have an almost innate antipathy for one another's methods. Humanistic educators often ridicule or reject Teaching Style 1 and Teaching Style 2 methods. "Back-to-the-basics" facilitators, conversely, often ridicule those they consider fuzzy and non-directive. In typical polarizing fashion, each group compares its virtues to the other's faults. Therefore Grow (1991a:140,141) believes that whatever the SSDL model's shortcomings, it provides a way to honor the strengths of a broad range of teaching styles.

3.3.4 Applying the SSDL Model

It appears that to be able to apply the model the facilitator should be able to determine the learner's stage of self-direction. Is this possible? According to Grow (1994:109) facilitators can detect a learner's degree of self-direction by observations (though this may be difficult). In the absence of an accepted instrument for making such a diagnosis, Grow believes that a facilitator can reasonably estimate a learner's learning stage from classroom behaviour and work submitted (Grow, 1994:111).

The SSDL model may thus be considered as an overall guide to instruction in adult education. The fundamental movement implicit in the SSDL model is the movement from dependent to self-directing learning. Teaching is matched to learners with the explicit purpose of helping them attain the knowledge, skills, motivation and goal of becoming more autonomous in learning and in life (Grow, 1991a:143). Inherent in the SSDL model, is the concept that the facilitator leads learners from their comfortable learning style towards greater self-direction. The facilitator's task is first to work with the learner's comfortable style, then to introduce a creative mismatch that promotes growth. Grow admits that his thinking here was influenced by Hersey and Blanchard, but additionally focused by Vygotsky's concept of the "zone of proximal development," the degree of challenge that stimulates learning (Grow, 1994:111).

However, Tennant (in Grow, 1994:110) raises an interesting question here. "Does the facilitator follow or lead learners?" Grow comments that as for how to change

teaching styles, the facilitator can change styles both proactively to lead learners toward the skills that enable them to be more self-directing, and reactively in response to needs that learners present for skill, information, encouragement, or motivation.

When blocking out the mismatches (see Figure 3.5) ten areas in which teaching style and learner stage are matched or nearly matched are highlighted. Those ten areas constitute an area of workable match - which Grow (1994:110) refers to as a learning field (see Figure 3.8).

Hersey (in Grow, 1991a:143) describes an experimental course in which learners were moved through more dependent roles into self-directed roles. The course began with lectures (delivered in a Stage 1 teaching style), moved to directed discussions (Stage 2), then to less directed discussions (Stage 3) and finally to learner-directed discussions (Stage 4). During the semester the facilitator gradually changed roles from expert, to guide, to facilitating participant, to consultant for learner-directed activities. Consequently, learner roles changed during this time in response to the facilitator's role, from dependent to learner-led learning. Although some learners revealed resistance to moving into Stage 3 and Stage 4 learning, Millar, Morphet and

S4: Self-Directed Learner			Independent projects Learner-directed discussions Discovery learning. Instructor as expert, consultant, and monitor	
S3: Involved Learner		Application of material Facilitated discussion Teams working closely with instructor on real problems. Critical thinking. Learning strategies		
S2: Interested Learner	Intermediate material Lecture-Discussion Applying the basics in a stimulating way Instructor as motivator			
S1: Dependent Learner	Introductory material Lecture. Drill Immediate correction			
	T1: Authority, Expert	T2: Salesperson, Motivator	T3: Facilitator	T4: Delegator

Figure 3.8 Applying the Staged Self-Direction Model to a course (Grow, 1991a:143)

Saddington (in Grow, 1991a:144) still found the course to be more successful than a control course taught in the regular way.

Following this example, Grow proposes that the SSDL model may be used to plan a course, so that learners move from dependent to more self-directed learning over a

semester. Grow (1991a:144) even suggests that a single class meeting could be organized so that learners move from dependency, through intermediate stages, to more self-directed learning. He illustrates this by suggesting that the facilitator may demonstrate a skill, coach the learners through using the skill, facilitate their application of it and then have them work in groups to create new situations in which to practice the skill on each other. On a small scale, this progression takes learners through the stages of increased self-direction and empowerment as the facilitator moves from a directive role to one of facilitating and monitoring.

But Grow (1991a:145) specifically points out that the SSDL model describes a linear progression of stages. To avoid confusion he emphasizes that the progress of a class or a learner will rarely be linear and therefore remarks that most classes will contain learners at different stages of self-direction. A more realistic, though more complicated version of the model would therefore be non-linear. A course may therefore be organized around a specific style, with other styles used as supplement (see Figure 3.9). When the group or some learners are deficient in basic skills, they may need drill and practice (Teaching Style 1). But sometimes the (Teaching Style 3) facilitator may determine that coaching or confrontation are necessary to reach a learner. A class may therefore loop back to the Stage 1 mode for a while, then return to Stage 3. The need may arise for continued motivation and encouragement. Then the facilitator may shift to the salesmanship mode of Teaching Style 2. Sometimes the facilitator's knowledge will be more important than anything else, then lecturing may be the best possible response (Teaching Style 1). Therefore, a facilitative style could be preferred as base while the class may loop out to the other three stages when they are ready. According to Grow (1991a:145) looping may be a more effective way of using the SSDL concept than trying to use a sequence of linear stages.

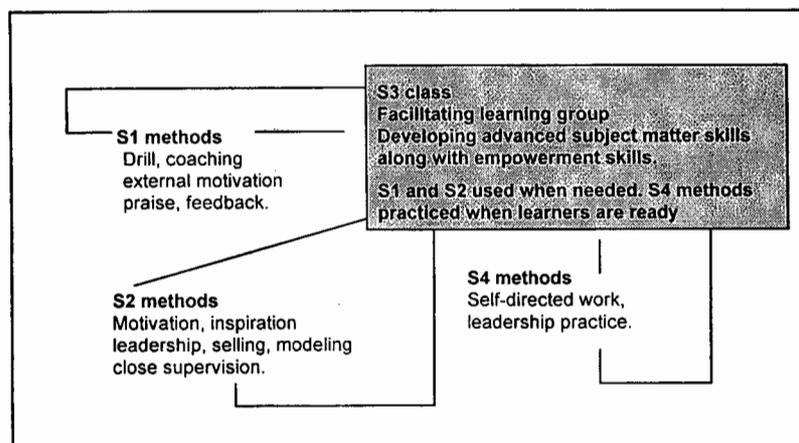


Figure 3.9 Loops around the active style (Grow, 1991a:145)

However, Grow (1991a:145) cautions that a rigid application of this model would, of course, lead to just another unfortunate orthodoxy, yet even if that may be the case until a better way arrives, the SSDL model helps one stay focused on the task of developing self-direction.

3.3.5 A critical view of the SSDL Model

The SSDL model provides a way to honour the strengths of a broad range of teaching styles. It borrows several key concepts from the Situational Leadership Model of Hersey and Blanchard and may unwittingly carry the limits of a management model into the much wider arena of education. One may speculate at what points management models and education models clash and how their differences may be reconciled (Grow, 1991a:146)?

Against the background of the discussions in Chapter 2, it is clear that the ultimate goal of the educational process is to produce independent empowered, lifelong learners (see Chapter 2). The key to facilitation is subsequently the process of guiding people towards their own wisdom (facilitation) and empowering individuals to achieve for themselves rather than trying to instill someone else's wisdom in them (directive teaching) (Bentley, 1996:75). However, the fact that teaching is more about managing and facilitating does not necessarily denigrate directive teaching methods (Grow, 1994:109); a point which is clearly illustrated in the SSDL model. If the goal of facilitators are to empower people to become lifelong learners, then the practices of facilitators should reflect that vision. A facilitator who honours such a vision could adopt a Stage 1 teaching style when the need arises (i.e. the learner lacks the necessary knowledge or skills to empower him towards more self-directiveness). To teach directly is therefore not a felony; however if the goal of facilitators would consciously or unconsciously be to keep learners in a dependent mode through their teachings - that would be a felony.

Notwithstanding the fact that the model provides a brisk illustrated interpretation of the stages that learners advance through toward more self-direction as well as indicates how facilitators may help or hinder that development (Grow, 1991a:125) it lends itself to more questions than answers:

- Nowhere does the SSDL model ask what learners think. This is a major omission (Grow, 1991a:147).
- An even greater concern is that the model omits to describe the *facilitator as*

learner. Facilitators are also adult learners, engaging in learning episodes with their own preferred *learning styles*. Against the background of the previous discussion (see Chapter 3) Chadwick (1995:4) mentioned that a key training objective should be to stimulate internal change in the facilitator, especially in how the *facilitator as learner* comes to view the work instead of just focusing on teaching facilitators how to teach. Would it not therefore be essential for facilitators to reflect upon themselves as learners first before embarking upon teaching adults? If the learners have outgrown a certain stage can facilitators help them to progress towards a next stage without advancing through these stages themselves? Another question that arises is which of the preferred learning styles would most successfully prepare facilitators to teach adults?

- Teacher expectations may also play a greater role than this theory allows. How much is directiveness a matter of instructional method (doing-mode) and how much is it a matter of personal style (being-mode)? Can facilitators separate their beliefs and own past experiences from what they do? It was stated previously that facilitators and learners have beliefs and attitudes about each other when cast in certain roles and that these beliefs and attitudes (being-modes) directly and indirectly affect their expectations about classroom behaviour (doing-modes) (Wright, 1987:24). If training courses consequently teach facilitators to adapt their ways of teaching by also learning the other styles as proposed by the SSDL model they are still in the doing-function and not addressing their being-functions. One could further ask whether learners of all kinds will act more self-directed merely because that is what the facilitator expects (Grow, 1991a:146)?
- The model focuses on the directiveness of the facilitator. A question that arises is what about directiveness that is hidden in instructional materials, designed exercises or computer-assisted instruction? Do learners relate to hidden directiveness the same way they relate to overt directiveness? Does either promote dependency? Is there a difference in directiveness between a facilitator telling the learner what to do and the learner reading a computer screen that tells the same thing (Grow, 1991a:146)?

According to Tennant (in Grow, 1994:113) the SSDL model lacks explanatory power, internal consistency and is not capable of handling a range of observations. But Grow's reaction to this criticism is that a model must be treated more as a "ladder to pick fruit with, and not as the fruit itself." Accordingly, Grow's suggestions about using the SSDL model is:

Use it but fear it; depend on it but explore alternatives (Grow, 1994:113). The SSDL model is a powerful concept, and like all powerful concepts, not to be trusted. Onto the many complexities of learning, it imposes a brisk, no-nonsense interpretation. It is valuable in the sense of a bright, single-minded colleague who keeps explaining everything so clearly that one is challenged to uncover what is missing and find a better explanation (Grow, 1991a:147).

3.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

3.4.1 Introduction

During the course of this study it became clear that the facilitator at grass roots level in ABET has a central role to play in the success of literacy programmes although the importance of this role is clearly underestimated in South Africa (see Chapter 1). While reflecting back on Chapter 2 it became clear that teaching has become decentred and is now about managing and facilitating (typified by a more progressive, humanistic and critical pedagogy). It was further suggested that facilitators would need pedagogical methods for helping learners to move from dependency to independence. One of these methods (as proposed by the SSDL model) entails that facilitators should be able to recognise the specific learning stage of the learner and should therefore be able to maintain a delicate balance between control of the learning situation in accordance with the learner's level of self-direction. It is apparent that this ideal balance between facilitator and learner control in the teaching-learning process will have significant implications for the role performance and subsequent training needs of facilitators in ABET. In order to truly understand these implications it is necessary to consider the realities within the South African context taking into account current South African views regarding the role of the facilitator; how these views are reflected in current policy formulation and programme implementation whilst also providing tentative guidelines to enhance the training of facilitators.

3.4.2 Realities within the South African context

3.4.2.1 South African perspectives on the conventional role of the facilitator

Kell (1997:55) remarks that after many hours of interviews with ABET facilitators and observations of ABET classes she came to the conclusion that much ABET

teaching was falling in between two stools - it was neither one thing nor the other. On the one hand, it was trying to give people access to formal education they had been denied; and on the other hand, it was trying to help people with their everyday needs and demands in terms of literacy and numeracy. She noticed a problematic process that could be called the "schooling" of literacy. In this process it seems that ABET facilitators were trying to help learners in everyday matters, but that these were turned into school tasks. According to Rall and Putinski (1991:355) such an approach also referred to as the traditional approach or the generic approach to literacy (the back to basics) which is more teacher-centred tends to promote baseline skills. These skills are not applied to any individual's background, current or future occupations, culture or needs. The traditional approach furthermore, uses a pedagogical model (i.e. starting with basics such as letter recognition and phonics).

The conventional approach to teaching (as discussed in 3.2.1.1) tends to be authoritative and prescriptive. Here the facilitator possesses the knowledge and seeks to transfer this knowledge into passive receptacles by prescribing methods or recipes (albeit often in a creative and exciting fashion). Consequently this encourages, what Hallendorff (1993:23-24) refers to as, interpretive learning i.e. learning by trying to interpret taught representations of knowledge. Here the facilitator will tend to stand in front of the class and talk. Learners will seldomly be actively involved in the act of learning. Lesson planning will generally involve outlining the material to be covered, with the preparation of an occasional visual aid to supplement teacher talk. Assessment, if it takes place at all would come in the form of rather vague questions regarding learners' understanding (e.g. asking at the end of the lesson, "any questions?" or in the form of a paper-and-pencil activity). In these scenarios it is always something done by the facilitator to the learners (Farber & Armaline, 1992:103-104).

Hallendorff (1993:23) mentions the following problems that may be experienced when the facilitator in his role performance adopts a more conventional approach to teaching (here he refers specifically to the teaching of numeracy):

- learners will tend to seek out the recipes from the authority and do not attempt to solve problems independently, thus producing learners who are receptive, passive and dependent
- the priorities of trying to understand what is actually achieved by certain methods and why they produce certain results are not brought to the fore
- learners learn rote fashion

- they are generally unable to tackle new problems without the necessary prescriptions
- learners build up a fear and dislike in subjects (which translates into poor performance)

Problem-solving is therefore not at the forefront of the conventional approach. Rather, what is attempted is to transfer knowledge ready-made from the mind of one person to the minds of his audience and the learners are required to rely on their ability to interpret what the facilitator is saying. This further strengthens the learner's dependency on the facilitator (Hallendorff,1993:23).

The relationship between facilitators and learners in South Africa is most often seen as one of authority and associated with it is the problem of dependency (Saddington in Costas, 1989:189). According to Costas (1989:189) this problem of dependency can not be wished away. The norms of the institution, the rules and conventions governing the course and the role of the facilitator all have an impact on the learner's dependency and therefore have to be explained. Costas subsequently recommends a process of discussion and negotiation of the rules and conventions between learner and facilitator. This will accordingly give the learner access to and an understanding of what is required of him as well as the parameters of his responsibility. This will also provide the learner with clearly defined procedures and roles (Saddington in Costas, 1989:189).

Harley *et al.* (1996:358) furthermore distinguish between a traditional teacher-based system of instruction and a media-based system of instruction. They note that in the traditional teacher-based system the burden of instruction rests on the facilitator. The stress is on the facilitator teaching and materials are used to supplement or aid what the facilitator does (which is usually talking to the class). The facilitator remains the principal medium of instruction and the principal learning resource at the learners' disposal. In a media-based system most of the instruction is taken over by various kinds of media-resources, for example computer-based instruction, materials and texts. It is interesting to note that the computer has already become an immensely powerful influence in ABET in South Africa on instructional materials and on instruction in general. Here the facilitator may still play important roles, but the actual direct delivery of instruction is not one of them. That task is handled by means of well designed materials. Steinberg (1997:147) points out that media-resources are by their nature passive - they need to be picked up and used. Course materials, no matter how authoritative they are, can not enforce anything. They are passive in the classroom

compared to the facilitator who is active. They wait for the facilitator to enliven the possibilities they contain. The nature of the relationship between the facilitator and the course materials (texts) is a complex one, with the authority moving back and forth between facilitator and text at times. Here facilitators accept the authority of the text (or other media-resources) while at other times they impose their authority on the text. They can further collaborate as partners with the text. However, facilitators will see and use what a textbook offers in different ways depending on their own conceptions of teaching.

Facilitators may further tend to adopt an authoritative teaching style due to past experiences that they were exposed to. In addition, the person of the facilitator (he's beliefs, own past experience and own empowerment) can have a significant effect on the teaching-learning process. Some facilitators may as yet still have internalised the oppressors' views of learners as incapable of learning, uncommitted, lazy and unproductive, as helpless and ignorant who must be supported, carried and guided by a facilitator who dispenses knowledge and wisdom (Wedepohl, 1984:20). These views can have a significant effect on the teaching-learning-process and therefore on the facilitator adopting a more authoritative style.

The facilitator's attitude may therefore influence how much social distance he feels or chooses to keep and whether or not he chooses to impose power on others (Wright, 1987:21). Mtetwa (1991:567-573) supports this view and points out that the attitudes of the facilitator could be condescending and this will be indicated in the methods of teaching used that do not suit the different learning styles of adults. Mtetwa remarks that this does not appear too often in the writings or evaluations of Adult Basic Education. Facilitators will therefore need to ask themselves whether their teaching styles attempt to meet the individual needs of their learners within a context. Leumer (1997:37) shares these views when he suggests that learners not only drop out of classes due to their living conditions, problems of transport, security reasons, family restrictions or cultural barriers, but also very often motivation drops due to modes of delivery, poor command of adult learning methods, funneling methods instead of dialogue and hierarchical relationships between learners and facilitators.

3.4.2.2 South African perspectives on the new role of the facilitator

In keeping with international trends the teacher's role in adult basic education in South Africa has been redefined as a facilitator of learning. There is subsequently a

change in focus from being teacher-centred to being learner-centred in the teaching-learning process. The educator is now a facilitator, a resource, a catalyst, a negotiator rather than an expert, an instructor and a transmitter of knowledge who ensures a positive learning environment; who fosters learner participation and control, who is sensitive towards learners and who ensures that content is accessible. When facilitators are prepared to implement learner responsibility then their role becomes one of sharing the responsibilities for the learning process. Their basic task is therefore to help the learner achieve his own learning goals, and the relationship is one of “open and free” inquiry (Lyster, 1992b:174).

Kell (1997:56) ultimately concedes that some classroom observations revealed ABET facilitators that were expert facilitators and very learner-centred. Here the facilitators would, according to Rall and Putinski (1991:355) adopt an applied approach to literacy which is more learner-centred and which would provide greater task transfer along with a greater level of success and motivation for the individual learner. It would therefore focus on the outcomes to be achieved for each learner based upon their backgrounds, culture, learning style and current or future occupations and it is therefore a more holistic approach to learning. However, Kell (1997:55) makes an interesting observation here when she notes that these facilitators are not developing any new knowledge in their learners, only re-cycling their learners’ existing knowledge. She believes that:

You can facilitate until the cows come home, but unless you as teachers, have a clear picture of how you are going to take learners from what they already know to what they have yet-to-know, not much learning ... is going to take place (Kell:1997:58).

3.4.2.3 South African Programmes

Many South African programmes are currently assigning a more facilitative role to the facilitator. Due to the limited length of the research only three programmes will be touched on briefly.

The *Amazwi (Voices) project*, run in Pietermaritzburg in 1995 was used by a local community radio (Radio Maritzburg) combined with an existing local ABE newspaper supplement (Learn with Echo) over a period of eight months. The programme targeted adults in Pietrmaritzburg, especially those who had not had a basic education. The programme was an example of the possible role that can be

played by community radio in ABE and the ways in which print and electronic media can be effectively combined. Of particular importance was the way in which the project empowered learners to take control of learning by using their own experience (Harley *et al.*, 1996:429).

The information did not, as is so often the case, come from the teacher's head. For once the teacher came into the classroom with content she at times knew very little about. Immediately power was put in the hands of the learners - allowing for learner initiation of discussion and responses, which seldom occurs (Harley et al., 1996:430).

Amazwi had a number of the key ingredients as necessary for successful education radio:

- it used the voices of listeners, rather than those of highly trained professionals
- it explored issues relevant to the lives of the listeners, so that listeners were engaged and empowered
- it used an educative rather than an overly educational stance, so that learning happened within a context of people's daily lives
- it presented different views rather than trying to give the answer to a problem (Harley *et al.*, 1996:430).

The *Interact programme* of the Project Literacy (Prolit) Organization encourages facilitators not to see themselves as the source of all knowledge. The Basic Mathematics course (ABET level 1) is based on the constructivist approach of Human, Olivier and Associates and is learner-centred and problem-solving. The facilitator is assigned a facilitative role and builds on the prior knowledge of learners whereas learners need to describe, analyse, interpret, communicate and justify solutions. The course is outcomes-based and at the end of the course learners should therefore be able to count, add and subtract, divide and multiply and devise methods to solve everyday numerical problems relevant to their lives (Harley *et al.*, 1996:345).

The Training in English Language and Literacy (TELL) organisation has developed an ABET level 1 and 2 course (untitled) which has been written to comply with IEB outcomes. TELL did a needs analysis of learners and looked at the problems learners encounter because they do not know English. This course was accordingly developed because there was a perceived gap and learner demand. The course is

aimed at industrial workers and domestic workers in particular and learners in general. Facilitators are trained by TELL to perform a facilitative role to help learning and fill in information gaps for learners. It is therefore expected that learners actively participate in discussions and their prior knowledge and experience is used for further learning (Harley *et al.*, 1996:348).

Steinberg (1997:141) raises an important point when suggesting that ABET courses need to take care that the concept of teaching contained in their pedagogy sufficiently fits the concept of teaching held by the majority of facilitators and the educational context in which the courses will be used.

3.4.2.4 Training of facilitators

In order for facilitators to perform their multiple roles sufficiently they will need certain skills and to acquire skills they will need adequate training. But in order to provide facilitators with sufficient training their training needs have to be understood and met. According to Motala (1992:8) the training needs of ABE facilitators can only be understood in the context of the roles and tasks they have to perform. If you therefore can not adequately describe the facilitator's roles or tasks in the teaching-learning process, you can not provide adequate training that meets these needs. New policies attempting to address the basic and essential skills required to facilitate or teach an adult learning group enrolled in ABET have emerged.

- ***Policy***

AETASA has developed a draft paper in September 1995 entitled "setting standards for the training of adult educators and trainers in the field of ABET" which outlines national standards for the training of adult educators and trainers. These standards were set according to domains of functioning, that is, what facilitators and practitioners are expected to know and be able to carry out according to levels. This document identifies four domains which encapsulate the essential aspects of adult educator and trainer functioning:

- context (areas of competence: management, communication and liason, human resources development, policy analysis)
- teaching and learning interface (designing learning events, adult learning, curriculum, materials, learner support)

- quality assurance (assessment of learning, evaluation of programmes, research and development)
- content and subject specialisation (Literacy, Numeracy and Communication in English) (Harley *et al.*, 1996: 466,467).

AETASA additionally identifies five levels for the training of adult educators and trainers. These levels are as follows:

- **Level 1 (Roles: assistant tutor/educator)**
A level one practitioner is a practitioner who is competent in a basic and appropriate method or approach for use in a defined and supportive context. (This level articulates with the NQF level 1 and comprises of ABET 1-4 or in the formal schooling system Grade 9).
- **Level 2 (Roles: Tutor/educator/field worker/assistant trainer)**
A level two practitioner is a practitioner who is competent in a limited number of methods and approaches and who functions autonomously within a defined context. (This level articulates with the NQF 2-4 level and comprises of N1 - N3 or in the formal schooling Grade 12).
- **Level 3 (Roles: senior tutor; co-ordinator of a small programme, trainer)**
A level three practitioner is one who is competent in a broader range of methods and approaches, supported by some theoretical understanding, and who functions in more than one context. (This level articulates with the NQF level 5 and comprises of a National Diploma in the Formal system).
- **Level 4 (Roles: 'expert' teacher; co-ordinator of large programme, training manager)**
A level four practitioner is competent in a wide range of methods and approaches, supported by theoretical understanding, and who provides leadership and support and initiates development. (This level articulates with the NQF level 7 and comprises of a Degree or advanced/ postgraduate Diploma in the formal schooling system).
- **Level 5 (Roles: System manager, policy analyst, etc).**
A level 5 practitioner is competent at an advanced level of theory and practice and provides intellectual and managerial leadership, initiates new developments and innovations, and formulates new areas of knowledge and understanding. (This level articulates with the NQF 7 & 8 level and comprises of Master's PhD in the formal schooling system) (Harley *et al.*, 1996:468;9).

When reviewing these draft standards (specifically referring to NQF level 1 which comprises of ABET levels 1-4), it appears that these levels are hierarchically comprised which excludes most skilled people from the ABET field. However, the extensive literature survey reveals that teaching literacy at a basic level is no easy task and that the skills and dedication of individual facilitators at grass roots level have a very significant role to play in the success of literacy programmes (Motala, 1992:8;

Wedepohl, 1984:8). If it rings true that teaching literacy at a basic level to adults is such an important and difficult task to perform, the question arises whether competence in one basic method or approach (one-fits-all) without some theoretical understanding is adequate even in a supportive context. Another question that arises here is what “basic method” would be viewed as “appropriate” to address adults at different learning stages in the learning process.

On reflecting on these draft standards it becomes apparent that there is still this tendency to think it is easy to teach adults at grass roots level. This further strengthens the notion that implementing particular courses using “fail-proof” materials (i.e. relying on media-based instruction) or training facilitators to teach within very set parameters would be sufficient (Harley *et al.*, 1996:139). The role of the facilitator at grass roots level is therefore still clearly underestimated in South Africa and facilitators still do not get the recognition they so well deserve.

However, these draft standards do address the pressing concern of a few qualified people working at higher levels because as Wydeman and Kamper (1990:130) maintain, “the quality of the staff at grass roots level will be directly related to the quality of higher level staff.” Nevertheless, the fact remains that these draft standards do not address a significant problem experienced up to now - namely that facilitators at grass roots level do not possess the necessary skills needed to facilitate learning.

To address this problem the ABET Standards Generating Task Team has recently produced Draft Standards for ABET facilitators at National Qualifications level 5 for the ABET National Stakeholder Forum. These standards attempt to encompass the basic and essential skills required in the teaching of a group of adult learners enrolled in an ABET programme. It is interesting to note that these draft standards do address the training needs of facilitators at grass roots level by explaining and applying a variety of teaching methods and aids supported by some theoretical understanding that sustain the particular approach used while additionally focussing on facilitating learning.

These draft standards were compiled for ABET facilitators/educators/tutors/practitioners who teach a learning group of up to 30 learners (Draft Standards for ABET Facilitators, 1997:8).

The following draft core unit standards have been produced for facilitators:

- 01 Plan and prepare for learning experience
- 02 Communicate a framework for an adult learning programme to learners and other stakeholders
- 03 Fulfil the administrative requirements of a facilitator in an adult learning programme
- 04 Manage small group learning for adults (persons credited with this unit standard are able to: explain the application of group learning theories; construct groups to enhance the learning experience; manage interactions within groups to facilitate learning; manage interactions between small groups)
- 05 Facilitate/Teach adults (persons credited with this unit standard are able to communicate effectively with adult learners; explain and apply different theories about adult learning, teaching performance)
- 06 Explain assessment
- 07 Manage own professional development
- 08 Select, adapt and prepare materials for adult learning
- 09 Provide a support service to Adult learners in ABET programmes

It is thus clear that competencies in a broader range of methods and approaches are advised. In unit standard 05 the term *facilitate* is defined as: employing whatever means are necessary to achieve the learning outcomes, within a learning programme and the broader context of learning theory. Examples include: simulation, role play, group work, problem-solving, lecture, instruct, etc. (Draft Standards for ABET Facilitators, 1997:50). This correlates with the more flexible approach a facilitator should adopt as proposed in the SSDL Model in comparison to the isolated basic-method approach suggested by AETASA.

The *specific outcomes* for unit standard 05 are therefore:

- (1) communicate with adult learners
- (2) explain the theories that sustain the particular approach used
- (3) explain and apply a variety of teaching methods and aids
- (4) facilitate adult learning
- (5) assist individual learners
- (6) evaluate own facilitation performance

Groupwork as well as individual approaches are required.

The following *assessment criteria* for the specific outcome: facilitate adult learning are as follows:

- the method of facilitation is consistent with the chosen learning theory
- the strengths of the sustaining learning theory are maximised and the weaknesses minimized
- application of the chosen approach remains consistent and deviations are justified in terms of situational constraints and developments
- learner understanding of key concepts is frequently checked during the lesson
- opportunities for practice are provided within the design and delivery of the lesson
- links are made between discrete items of learning
- previous learning is revised and built on
- the lesson is summarized and the facilitator indicates what is planned in future within the learning programme
- the needs of individual learners in the class are addressed
- learning is consolidated during and after the learning experience

The unit standards were tentatively assigned to NQF, level 5, mainly in order to create a post-school qualification (Draft standards for ABET facilitators, April 1997:4).

- *Current training practices*

Despite the emergence of new policy emphasizing the important role that facilitators play in ABET, it is ironic that very little attention is presently given to their training - the upshot being that generally speaking they are inadequately equipped for their onerous task (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:10). The training situation in South Africa up to the present follows a similar pattern to that of many other countries. In the last few years there have been moves to formalise the initial training of ABE facilitators. However, the bulk of initial teacher training for ABE is still done by vendors of particular short courses. Most often these teacher training courses prepare facilitators to teach a particular course using a particular set of materials. In addition they usually have a general introduction to participatory adult education methodologies. At best they teach facilitators relatively well within very set parameters and at worst, they teach facilitators to implement a course through rote repetition of a 'fail-proof' set of materials. Consequently, these short courses training ABE facilitators, produce facilitators with very minimal competencies, usually just the ability to teach the basics

according to a very particular course and using specific materials. As soon as learners progress beyond the very basics, these facilitators are at a loss as to what to do next as they have seldom been trained in broader educational theory and methodology (Harley *et al.*, 1996:139). In addition many facilitators, notably those at night schools, do not generally receive any specific training in ABE at all as it is assumed that their training as primary or secondary school teachers will be sufficient (Harley *et al.*, 1996:141). Subsequently, one of the main effects of poor training is that facilitators resort to teaching methods they previously practiced or experienced as learners (Motala, 1992:23).

At present very little theoretical background can be provided for training ABE facilitators (Booyesen, 1995:ii). Farber and Armaline (1992:106) furthermore state that despite the fact that it appears increasingly unlikely that there will be a dramatic expansion of ABE provision in the near future, there is still the serious need for initial training, in-service training and especially re-training of existing facilitators. Farber and Armaline refer to it as “the exploration of the deskilling and resultant reskilling of facilitators” and other levels of ABE staff. They further point out that at the same time there are under-resourced rural areas which are also likely to develop.

Many universities and other tertiary training institutions have initiated training courses in order to address some of the needs of adult educators, but most of the courses run at tertiary level are not specifically aimed at ABE facilitators, but provide a generic professional training for adult educators and trainers. In some cases there may be a course or module specifically on literacy or ABE or ESL (English Second Language) teaching methods, but the certificate, diploma or degree as a whole is about adult education, not ABE (Harley *et al.*, 1996:461).

3.5 TENTATIVE GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING OF FACILITATORS

From the international literature survey it is evident that the person of the facilitator (what he is) should be just as important as what he knows. It was mentioned that attitudes of facilitators towards learners and the whole teaching approach are of utmost importance and because attitude change is notoriously slow, a key training objective should be to stimulate internal change, especially in how the facilitator as learner comes to view his work instead of primarily focusing on teaching facilitators how to teach. A further important point raised for training practices was how to cultivate a facilitator’s desire for self-improvement and furthermore motivate him as an independent learner to continue with self-training (Chadwick, 1995:4).

It was further suggested that recognition should not only be given to the variety of methods which facilitators should be familiar with, but also emphasize facilitators' own preferred learning and teaching styles. Facilitators should therefore need to recognise their own particular learning and teaching style, improve it with practice and try and make sure it accomplishes what it is intended to accomplish, namely self-directed lifelong learners (Grow, 1994:109; Knowles, 1984:92). Facilitators should therefore be trained to adopt a new perspective on control of the teaching-learning process and be flexible and varied in response to their learners' needs so as to accommodate learners at different learning stages. In order to accomplish this they should be trained in how to detect a learner's degree of self-direction through classroom observations. They should furthermore not only cultivate knowledge, but also metaskills, the integration of which makes greater learner control possible (Grasha, 1994:146).

Sebakwane (1995:208) likewise emphasizes that the content of training courses or other forms of training provision in South Africa should be reviewed critically in terms of quality assurance. According to Sebakwane the evidence suggests that experiential learning is probably the most effective method for trainers to use. However, in certain circumstances and for certain types of facilitators, other methods and approaches may be equally helpful. According to Booysen (1995:iii) facilitators in ABE should be trained as reflective practitioners so learners could be empowered to take control of their own learning. This further implies that facilitators should already be able to exercise control of their own learning. Lyster (1992a:38,73) raises another interesting point - in the same way as scaffolding is shared between the materials and the facilitator when it comes to supporting learners, so scaffolding must be shared between teacher training and the materials when it comes to supporting facilitators. As facilitators mediate the materials to learners with regards to content and skills, so the teacher training needs to mediate the materials to facilitators with regard to concept of teaching and methodology.

Sissel (1996:100-101) remarks that staff development must help facilitators learn to create dynamic interactions between learners, between learners and facilitators and between facilitators. This begins with the recognition of the interconnectedness of three key components: information about the reality of learners' lived experience, accurate appraisal of facilitators current practice, and critical recognition of facilitators' need for personal and professional growth and development. Sissel suggests that facilitators should be trained to ask certain questions, like:

- What does the face of low literacy look like in my community?
- What are the sociocultural and contextual backgrounds of my learners?
- What can I learn from them?
- How can I learn it?
- What programme aspects are incompatible with learners' needs?
- What should the future of literacy programming look like in my community?
- What more do I need to learn in order to implement that vision?
- What resources do I need?
- What type of partnerships need to be developed?
- How can I create connections among learners?

Nevertheless, the one undisputed fact in the provision of ABE still remains: that there are not enough well-trained people to do the jobs that are required (Wydeman & Kamper, 1990:130). Again it must be emphasized that in order to provide trained facilitators, their training needs need to be understood and addressed and this can only be done in the context of the roles and tasks they have to perform.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In order for facilitators to perform their roles adequately the following factors emerged from the international literature which can further significantly impact on the role performance and subsequent training needs of facilitators in South Africa. These factors are:

- the facilitator as person (his character)
- the attitude of the facilitator towards teaching and learners
- the facilitator's knowledge of the variety of approaches used on how adults learn
- the facilitator's own preferred learning and teaching style
- the facilitator's skills and competencies (i.e. empathy, listening skills, creating an atmosphere conducive to learning)
- the facilitator's own learning and development

On reviewing the international literature, it is evident that facilitators have multiple roles to perform in the teaching-learning process. In the ideal scenario facilitators should therefore be able to adopt a flexible approach towards teaching - moving from instructor to motivator to facilitator and delegator depending on the needs and different learning stages of learners. The SSDL Model which best describes the conversions of roles from teacher as expert, to facilitator of learning and what it

implies in practical terms was therefore discussed in depth.

Whilst the ideal scenario was portrayed in detail it is now necessary to investigate how current educational practices in ABET compare to this ideal. In order for the researcher to obtain a clearer understanding of the roles facilitators are currently performing in ABET in South Africa, the next chapter will describe the research methodology used by the researcher in order to execute the research.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

An outstanding characteristic of science is the emphasis it places on the trustworthiness and reliability of the research findings. The goal of research methodology is therefore to develop methods and strategies in order to maximise the credibility and trustworthiness of the research (Mouton & Marais, 1989). This chapter will provide the theoretical foundation for the methodology of the study in terms of research process, research design, research format, data collection methods and data analysis as well as provide concrete and specific descriptions of how the researcher went about the study so as to share methodological learnings. As Miles and Huberman (1994:310) maintain:

Perhaps we (qualitative researchers) can all be as vivid and rich in describing our own work as we are in describing the inner and outer lives of the people we are studying. We owe them, and ourselves, at least that much, and probably a great deal more.

It will further be indicated how the research design was structured to verify reliability and maximise the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

4.2 PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

Considering the many roles facilitators at grass roots level have to perform in the teaching-learning process and the lack of research on this phenomenon in ABET in South Africa, the purpose of this study is to make a meaningful contribution to understanding the challenging and important role of the facilitator by describing the roles facilitators have to perform and the problems they encounter in performing these roles, in order to make recommendations towards enhancing facilitator training.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Prior to the case study a review of suitable literature was undertaken to provide the *theoretical framework* and clarity for the research question and the interpretation of the conclusions. As a point of reference Figure 4.1 illustrates the overall shape of the research, including the time frames in combination with the four phases of the

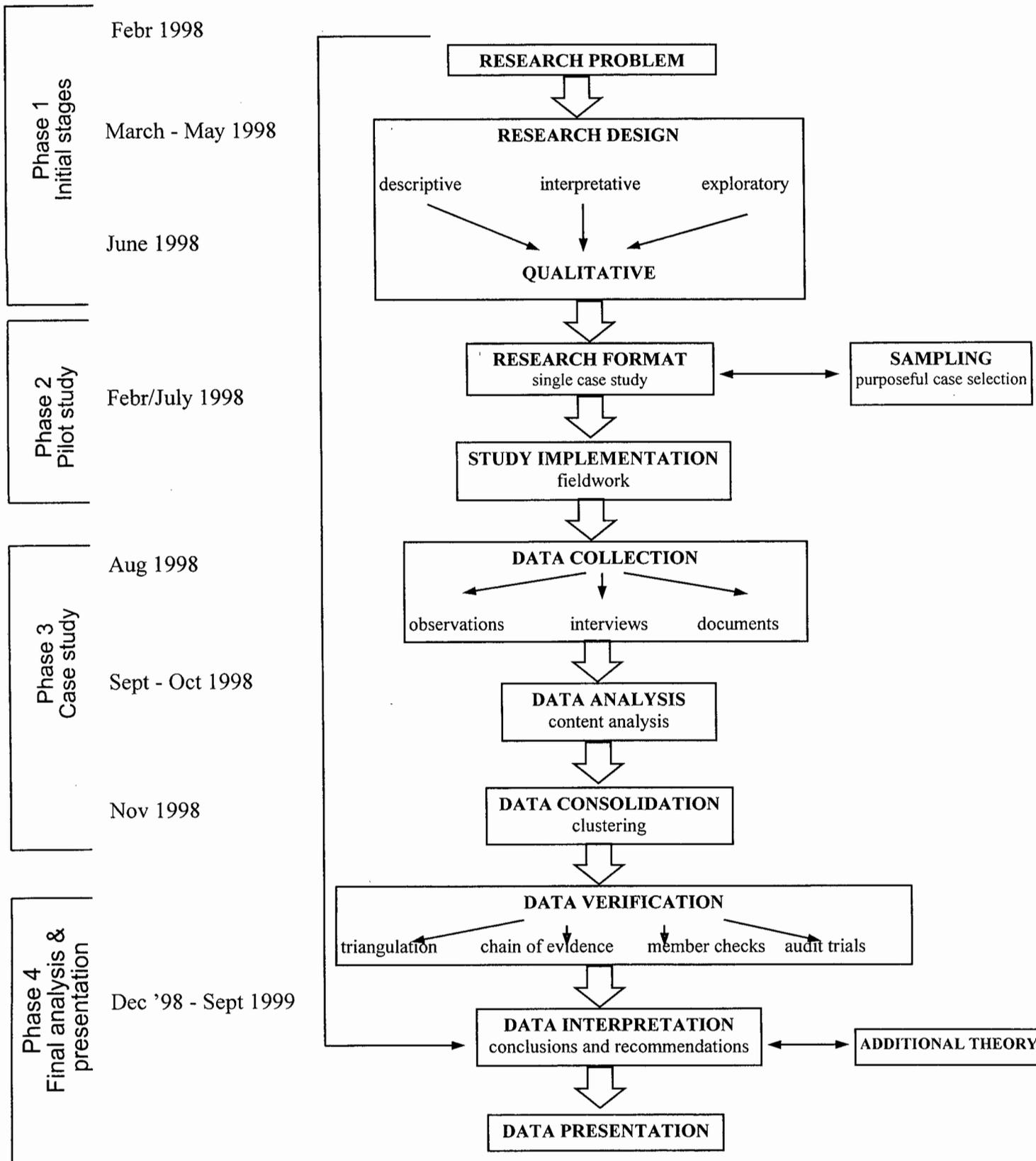


Figure 4.1 The overall shape of the research process

research. The researcher found that using various headings to identify developments were necessary to provide a sense of structure in recording the research, however, it must be stressed that there was overlapping between stages, and that the analysis of data was an ongoing process (Cocklin, 1996:88).

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Mouton & Marais, 1989:32).

This entailed that prior to embarking upon the research the researcher planned and structured the research by deciding what should be done and how it should be done in order to minimise mistakes and subsequently strengthen the validity of the research findings (Mouton & Marais, 1989:33). As discussed in Chapter 1 the research methodology is qualitative, explorative, descriptive and explanatory in nature.

4.3.1 Qualitative

Researchers using qualitative methods strive to understand phenomena and situations as a whole (Patton, 1986:40). The qualitative design was suitable for the research since it allowed rich descriptions of the role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process and the problems that were recorded as they unfolded over a period of eleven months (Ely, 1991:78).

The qualitative researcher abided by the following principles pointed out by Ely (1991:104) as a point of departure:

- while undertaking the research researchers can and should never attempt to remove themselves from what they are studying
- that they will be interested in documenting as much as possible of the total phenomenon they are studying rather than its fragmented parts
- that they will have more questions as they go along
- at the conclusion that they strive for insight and understanding rather than prediction and control.

In adopting a qualitative approach the research was therefore not embarked upon with specific objectives from the outset (Cocklin, 1996:89). It was important to the researcher that the phenomenon should manifest itself as it appeared naturally and that the researcher would simply register, record and attempt to understand it (Mouton

& Marais, 1989:70). The researcher would thus have limited control over variables within the context of the research (Fourie, 1997:32). In order to interpret the findings an extensive literature survey was conducted in order to develop a framework for interpretation (Bothma, 1997:8).

By abiding to these principles the researcher could relate personally to how Boud and Griffin (1994:9) describe qualitative research:

... it has its own standards of rigour, and not everyone is capable of doing it. It requires not only research skills, but also personal skills. Like any research approach, it is suitable for exploring only some kinds of questions - the meaning people attribute to their experiences, how people perceive themselves and their worlds and how they communicate their understandings to others.

Furthermore, as a qualitative researcher tacit knowledge was honored. This tacit knowledge was used in important ways. The researcher consequently took heed of her own feelings and often entered it in her log. As Ely (1991:104) puts it:

It is essential for qualitative researchers to understand that such hunches, insights, directions do not arise out of nothing and that, often they are the results generated from meaningful lived experience.

This research placed a considerable responsibility upon the researcher due to the fact that qualitative research depends on the researcher-as-instrument.

Qualitative researchers can only point to themselves and to how they decide to sample, to treat data, to work with others, to confer with experts, to carry out their research, and to share their findings. This is so because they are their own most important instrument (Ely, 1991:104).

4.3.2 Descriptive

Since the research aims demanded detailed descriptions of the phenomenon, the research design was descriptive in nature (Mouton & Marais, 1989:45). In descriptive research, the goal of the investigation first of all tends to be the careful mapping out of a situation or a set of events. The research objective is to describe what is

happening behaviourally in a specific situation (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). Causal explanations are not of direct concern except perhaps speculatively (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996:15).

The emphasis of this particular research was an in-depth description of a facilitator, a learner and a group of learners in an ABET classroom. The goal of the researcher was to describe *that what is* in the most accurate and exact way. The most important methodological deliberation in this descriptive study was collecting accurate data of the phenomenon being studied (Mouton & Marais, 1989:44).

The aim of the thick description in this study was to portray the class situation in its complexity and thus enable the reader to gain access to the conceptual world in which other people live and to converse with them. The researcher therefore needed to portray the facilitator's perception and actions in such a way that readers may engage with and learn from them. A good deal of time was therefore spent observing classroom dynamics between the facilitator and learners. The researcher then went on to describe as carefully as possible what was observed. The careful observation of the roles the facilitator performed could lead to some revision of traditional concepts of what the roles of the facilitator are, as well as suggest factors that may contribute to the development of the facilitator in performing these roles and to speculate about ideas for the remediation of these roles (Steinberg, 1997:31).

Rosnow and Rosenthal (1996:15) emphasize that the descriptive orientation is usually considered a necessary first step in the development of a programme of research because it establishes the cornerstone of any future undertaking. However it is rarely regarded as sufficient, because sooner or later someone will want to know why something happens or how what happens is related to other events and therefore these observations have to be interpreted. Description is therefore balanced by analysis and leads to interpretation (Patton, 1986:343).

4.3.3 Interpretative

Interpretative understanding that may emerge from a qualitative study is what it means to the people involved (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). Interpretation involves attaching meaning and significance to the analysis, explaining descriptive patterns, and looking for relationships and linkages among descriptive dimensions (Patton, 1986:268).

4.3.4 Exploratory

The research design also included elements of exploration and discovery since the study was intended to elucidate and provide new insight into the phenomenon (Mouton & Marais, 1989:45). Since this study may be regarded as a preliminary study towards research on the role of the facilitator on a broader scale, the exploratory nature was emphasized. The research design allowed for categories and themes to emerge from the subjects, rather than these being identified before the research began (Creswell, 1994:58).

4.4 RESEARCH FORMAT

A qualitative single case study was used as the research format. This format was chosen as the most effective means to investigate the field of study, since it allowed for a deep understanding of the phenomenon in a holistic manner, and included a myriad of dimensions, factors, variables, and categories woven together into an idiographic framework (Patton, 1986:304).

A case is an example of a phenomenon of interest which is studied in depth (Miles & Huberman, 1994:25). A qualitative single case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity or phenomenon (the case) bounded by time and activity (a programme, event, process, institution, or social group) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time (Patton, 1986:12).

Notwithstanding the fact that studying one case does not technically permit broad generalizations to all possible cases, the researcher found that logical generalizations could be made from the weight of evidence produced in studying the single, critical case (Patton, 1986:103).

4.5 SAMPLING

Sampling is crucial for later analysis. As much as a researcher would like to, she can not study everyone, everywhere, doing everything. The researcher's choices - whom to look at or talk with, when, about what and why, all place limits on the conclusions drawn (Miles & Huberman, 1994:27).

According to Shipman (1988:53) unless the method of sampling is spelled out,

scepticism is advisable. However reliable the methods used in sampling, the group selected may only be representative of the specific population from which it was chosen. It will often happen that the researcher is not able to collect data from the pre-selected sample and is obliged to make substitutions for the respondents lost, or is forced to make do with smaller samples. Therefore the researcher kept a precise and honest record of the changes made in the sample so that appropriate judgements could be made at the stage of interpreting data and results (see 4.6) (Bhola, 1990:232).

In this study the case was *purposefully selected* as opposed to randomly selected. Qualitative samples tend to be purposeful, rather than random (Miles & Huberman, 1994:27). Purposeful sampling or selection is used as a strategy when one wants to learn something and come to understand something about certain select cases without needing to generalize. It is a way of selecting informants that will best answer the research question (Creswell, 1994:148; Patton, 1986:100).

In order to select the case carefully it should meet certain criteria which have previously been set by the researcher. Thus criterion-based sampling was used. This entailed that the researcher did the picking and there was no simple way of assessing whether the sample was adequate (Shipman, 1988:53).

Against the background of the conclusions reached in Chapters 2 and 3 as well as the practical considerations the following specific criteria regarding the choice of a facilitator were chosen:

- variables such as gender, race, level of education, or amount of ABET training were not an issue
- a common feature was that the facilitator was employed to teach adults
- that she had at least three years experience in teaching adults at the site
- that she had learners who were attending her classes regularly
- that access for both the researcher and the learners to the site was relatively easy
- that she was willing to be observed for an extended period of time
- that she was being judged a good facilitator by a majority of learners, colleagues and administrators (Steinberg, 1997:35; Pratt, 1983:139).

4.6 STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

The research was divided into four time frames (See Figure 4.1).

- Phase 1: The initial stages of the research
- Phase 2: The pilot study phase
- Phase 3: The case study phase
- Phase 4: The final analysis and presentation phase

Phase 1: The initial stages of the research

During the preliminary stages of the research the site and sample were determined, access was negotiated, important background information about the sample was ascertained and rapport established. Surveys of methodological and theoretical literature were also initiated (Cocklin, 1996: 95-103).

The Southern Cape Regional Service (SCSC) office was informed about the research and the possibility of using one of their facilitators in the Southern Cape Literacy Project for research purposes. Information was given to the researcher as to the number of facilitators, learners and existing sites and the Service was very enthusiastic about the research and prepared to help the researcher in any way possible. One facilitator was recommended because of her experience as a facilitator. Because the facilitator met the criteria determined by the researcher an appointment was immediately scheduled with her.

During the month of February the researcher initiated the research by choosing facilitator A for the case study and obtaining her permission to participate in the research. During this month initial meetings were scheduled with facilitator A to start building a trust relationship and to ascertain her historical background and experience in ABET so far. During these initial informal meetings the researcher was also introduced and became acquainted with the UNISYS computer assisted learning programme which formed the basis of the Southern Cape Literacy Project. The researcher was also introduced to the learners and one class was initially observed.

From March to May 1998 facilitator A underwent two major operations which entailed that class observations had to be postponed until July. Although this time was constructively used for literature research the researcher still felt obliged to find another facilitator meeting the criteria.

Facilitator B was therefore contacted and was inevitably included for the duration of the research. Facilitator B immediately offered her assistance and started by completing the daily/weekly worksheets provided by the researcher. However, due to

internal matters facilitator B eventually had to be absolved from the research and all data collected from facilitator B had to be discarded.

Due to the fact that observations had to be postponed initially and the fact that the researcher felt obliged to make substitutions for the facilitator lost (Bhola, 1990:232) the danger of experimental mortality became a reality in this study. But this was no unique occurrence. According to Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991:317) the most obvious difficulty experienced in longer psychological studies emanate from the high percentage of subject attrition that in many instances may nullify any of the potential benefits of longitudinal research. In longer psychological studies, 30-50% drop out is normal, while higher percentages are not unusual. Although this entailed that only data obtained from facilitator A could eventually be used for data-analysis purposes they proved to be adequate (Visser in Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991:317).

In addition, the researcher kept a personal journal from the beginning of February to the end of December 1998, a total of 11 months with 44 entries and an average of one journal entry made per week. The content of the journal entry units related mainly to recorded personal experiences concerning the process, problems and concerns experienced by the researcher while conducting the research.

Phase 2: The pilot study phase

A pilot study was conducted. A facilitator in Still Bay was selected for the pilot study. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the facilitator in order to clarify any problems or mistakes made by the researcher. Minor adjustments had to be made to the semi-structured interview and it was decided that a tape-recorder would be included when conducting further interviews.

Phase 3: The case study phase

At the end of July facilitator A had recovered from her operations and was back in class; therefore another meeting was scheduled with both facilitators A and B and at that meeting it was decided that both facilitators were to be included in the case study.

The case study phase attempted to describe the roles facilitators are currently performing in facilitating learning in ABET and specifically the problems facilitators encountered in performing these roles. Meetings were scheduled for the

class-observations and semi-structured interviews to take place. The schedule consisted of:

- A first semi-structured interview scheduled with both facilitators A and B to obtain information on how they experienced their roles as facilitators in ABET and what their overall impressions, viewpoints and beliefs were of their roles and the problems they experienced in performing their roles.
- Weekly class observations in both facilitators' classes.
- Worksheets to be filled in on a weekly basis by facilitator B in order to get a clearer understanding of the tasks and roles she had to perform on a daily basis.
- A meeting with a UNISYS spokesperson to get a glimpse of the broader spectrum of ABET and specifically the Southern Cape Literacy Project.
- An attendance of a regional workgroup meeting for facilitators on the 14th of August 1998 in Riversdale attended by 13 facilitators in the Southern Cape Region.
- An attendance of the Adult Educator, Trainer and Development Practitioner conference of AETASA - Western Cape on the 4th and 5th of September 1998 at the Peninsula Technikon in Bellville where discussions were held on changes and challenges facing Adult Education, Training and Development (AETD).
- A first interview conducted with a learner at the onset of observations. The researcher observed many classes initially so as to build a trusting relationship with the learners before embarking upon the interview. In the first interview the researcher wanted to ascertain the learner's historical background and expectations of the literacy classes.
- A second semi-structured interview conducted with both facilitators to obtain information of their experiences as facilitators reflecting back on the year.
- A second interview was conducted with the same learner at the end of the observation phase to ascertain if her expectations were met.

During the observations and interviews the researcher was caught up in the process of making sense of events and afterwards, in transcribing and entering these events, the researcher often gained an understanding of events that were totally overlooked before (Ely, 1991:79). Data collection for the research terminated at the end of December 1998.

4.7 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

As a qualitative researcher the researcher was interested in the facilitators' stories,

and used questioning, listening and observing tools to assist in this process (Ely, 1991:78). Methods of data collection therefore included observations in the classroom over a period of eleven months, five semi-structured interviews conducted with two ABE facilitators, a learner and a UNISYS spokesperson, as well as an extended survey of available literature and documents. A vast amount of data was therefore collected from a variety of sources over an eleven months period. The data collection formed the case study data base (Fourie, 1997:36).

4.7.1 Observations

All research depends on observation. Through the ears and eyes the material and social world are interpreted (Shipman, 1988:68). However, observation is not a matter simply of opening our eyes and ears to people in real-life situations. We have to *train* our eyes and ears and must learn to record our observations. What the inexperienced researcher was therefore about to learn was that an attitude of curiosity and a heightened attention as well as observational skills were required in order to attend to those very details that most of us filter out automatically in day-to-day life (Ely, 1991:42).

According to Guba and Lincoln (in Ely, 1991:51) qualitative researchers are to document what is really happening rather than what is being put on for their benefit. Participant observation therefore demands:

... sufficient involvement at the site to overcome the effects of misinformation, to uncover constructions, and to facilitate immersing oneself in and understanding the context's culture.

In order to meet the demands of participant observation the researcher also took heed of the limitations of observations. Shipman (1988:68) points out that what the researcher observes and the perceptions made by the researcher are not passive. Shipman stresses that impressions are first selected and then interpreted within the mind of the observer. Between the impression on the senses and the reported interpretation are the attitudes, values and prejudices, as well as the academic conceptual models, of the researcher. Perception is therefore the process of fitting what is seen or heard into these maps and frameworks in the mind. Researchers accordingly enter situations with maps into which they fit the evidence of their senses, already established in their minds. Shipman (1988:43) further elaborates on these limitations when he describes three aspects of what he refers to as the

“outsider’s (researcher’s) arrogance”.

- Firstly the data presented is suspect, full of interpretations by the researcher that can be challenged.
- Secondly the researcher inferences about the meanings attributed to events are presented as unproblematical.
- Thirdly the researcher’s interpretations often call on complex theories to explain events rather than offer simpler explanations connected with the everyday workings of classroom dynamics. Shipman therefore explains that although the observer is attempting to get into the mind of those observed to uncover how they are making sense of the situation, the common-sense frameworks for interpreting events may sometimes bear little relation to the theoretical frameworks brought to bear by the researcher.

By considering these limitations the focus in the observations was attempted to be on what the researcher saw, not on the lens through which the researcher was looking (Steinberg, 1997:6). Through prolonged engagement with the participants and persistent observations qualitative researchers can be more easily accepted and trusted in their roles, construct deeper understandings about what they are studying, and have some basis for deciding what is important and relevant and what is not. The researcher accordingly observed the classes for an eleven month period in order to attempt to wear off the novelty effect of her being there and to establish a rapport with the people (Bhola, 1990:231).

Over 32 hours of observation were conducted in the facilitator’s classroom (consisting of 8 classroom observations ranging in length from 2 to 2,5 hours). During these persistent observations the researcher took copious notes of what the facilitator and learners were saying and doing in relation to the programme used and how learners responded to the facilitator and related to group and computerized instruction. The researcher wrote down what the classroom looked like; how the class atmosphere was experienced; what assignments were given and how they were completed. The researcher was concerned to get as rich a description as possible. The researcher tried to be explicit and as self-aware as possible about personal assumptions, values and biases. Sometimes the researcher knew she was biased and had to learn how to observe, understand, and not make judgments. But observations can never be objective or judgement-free. This is so because observation comes from what the observer selects to see and chooses to note (Ely, 1991:53). Since researchers will never be entirely free of their own preferred ways of viewing situations and their

own biases; they can, however, be more self-aware. Ely (1991:54) therefore suggests that one's own introspection in a log can be of immense help. Therefore the researcher kept a personal diary where plans, questions, enthusiasms, doubts and ruminations were jotted down. The researcher attempted to separate what was observed from own thoughts.

As the research question centred around the role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process the researcher recorded all the different roles performed by the facilitator and furthermore hoped to capture all the significant details of the interactions between the learners and the facilitator and the context in which these interactions happened, whether expected or unexpected. Before or after sessions the researcher had informal discussions with the facilitator as well as the learners to try and comprehend their experience of the session. These discussions were then immediately written down (Steinberg, 1997:35). Checklists were also used by the researcher to record observations (Bhola, 1990:227) (see Appendix A).

4.7.2 Semi-structured interviews

An interview may be defined as a conversation between two people where questions are asked to get valid answers. It is a skilled and sensitive job requiring knowledge of the broader environment in which the interview is conducted and knowledge of the likely impact of the interviewer on subject(s). There is also the extra factor in the interview of the two personalities involved. Interaction is therefore not only structured by the questions, but by personal feelings (Shipman, 1988:78-79).

The fundamental principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework within which subjects can express their own understandings in their own terms (Patton, 1986:205).

In this study face-to-face interviews were conducted. Rosnov and Rosenthal (1996:112) mention three advantages of the face-to-face interview:

- it provides an opportunity to establish rapport with the subjects to stimulate trust and cooperation
- it provides an opportunity to help the subjects in their interpretation of the questions
- it allows flexibility in determining the wording and sequence of the questions by giving the interviewer greater control over the situation

However, interviews also pose some problems and challenges. According to Bhola (1990:225) the subject(s) must be motivated to give the interview and to invest the time required for completing the interview. The interviewer should also be able to establish trust and rapport without influencing the responses of the subject(s).

Interviews can range from highly structured and focused to open-ended, unstructured conversations (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991:133). In focused or structured interviews the interviewer follows a predetermined set of questions (Yin in Fourie, 1997:37). In open-ended, unstructured interviews there is no predetermined questions and the interview is purely exploratory (Patton, 1986:212). In this study semi-structured interviews (between structured and open-ended) which were guided by a list of issues to be explored were conducted with a learner and a facilitator so that certain topics were discussed during the interviews (see Appendix B) (Fourie, 1997:37).

Before embarking upon the interview the researcher adopted a combination of the interview guidelines proposed by Rosnov and Rosenthal (1996:112) and Mouton and Marais (1989:252). The researcher first *pilot-tested* the interview schedule by using the interview guideline (see Appendix B). The researcher structured the interview schedule, checking items for relevancy, establishing the best sequence for questioning and establishing the best wording of questions (Rosnov & Rosenthal, 1996:112). Considerable attention was also given to making the subjects feel comfortable and at ease by explaining the manner in which the interview would be conducted (Mouton & Marais, 1989:252) and describing the nature and goal of the interview. The subjects were further assured that they would remain anonymous in the study by the use of pseudonyms.

During the pilot-study phase the researcher listened analytically to the subject's responses without interrupting; got the main ideas, heard the facts, made valid inferences, heard details and demonstrated good listening skills (Weaver in Rosnov and Rosenthal, 1996:113). The pilot study was essential for ensuring that the responses offered as possible answers, actually explored all the possibilities. The trial run checked whether the questions were feasible for the sample. Without any pilot stage, the actual research was likely to address unsuitable questions to bewildered people. The following questions were used in the pilot-study to evaluate the interview:

- How long was the interview?
- How difficult were the questions?

- Could the questions be understood?
- Was prestige or emotion involved?
- Could the environment have influenced the answers since there might have been pressure to give answers within a particular context? (Shipman, 1988:82).

At first the researcher decided not to use an audiotape fearing it would add a level of discomfort, however, after conducting the pilot-study interview the researcher realised that by taking scrupulous notes not everything said by the facilitator could be noted so that other valuable information like body language and facial expressions were more difficult to observe. It was therefore decided by the researcher to use audiotapes. Shipman (1988:46), however, cautions that interpreting audio and video tapes poses many problems. It is the unspoken and not only the spoken words that provide the message - therefore the researcher took notes - writing down facial expressions, discomfort experienced by participants and other notable observations. The use of audiotapes allowed for analysis through repeated studying, as well as checking against log notes and transcripts about the same events. The researcher also found that after a short while the subject relaxed and seemed to be unaware of the tape recorder (Ely,1991:83).

After the pilot study phase two semi-structured interviews were conducted with the *facilitator* being studied by following the interview guideline. Both interviews were with the facilitator's permission recorded on tape. The researcher made a point of immediately preparing verbatim transcriptions of the recordings when the experience was still fresh in her mind. According to Ely (1991:83) tape recorded interviews, when fully transcribed, represents one of the most complete expanded accounts. It assists the researcher in recalling the experience and often provides a fresh perspective on the material. The facilitator was then provided with transcripts of her interviews and asked to review them, this further strengthened the reliability of the research.

The first semi-structured interview conducted was to obtain information on how the facilitator experienced her role as a facilitator in ABET and what her overall impressions, viewpoints and beliefs were on the problems she experienced in performing her roles. The second semi-structured interview (see Appendix B) was to obtain information on her experience as a facilitator when reflecting back on the year. The first interview took approximately two hours to complete while the second interview took approximately 60 minutes. Field notes were scanned for data which

reflected the facilitator's beliefs regarding the nature of her learners and her role as a facilitator.

Two semi-structured interviews were further conducted with a *learner* at the onset and at the end of observations. In the first semi-structured interview (which took approximately 40 minutes) the researcher wanted to find out more about the learner's background and expectations of the literacy classes while the second semi-structured interview (also approximately 40 minutes in length) was conducted to ascertain if the learner's expectations had been met. The researcher decided not to use tape-recordings in fear of causing unnecessary discomfort for the learner.

A further interview was conducted with a *UNISYS spokesperson* to get a glimpse of the broader spectrum of ABET.

In summary the interviews sought to probe into the facilitator's concept of how she experienced her roles, as well as what the learners expected of her and if those needs had been met, while the observations looked at the facilitator performing the actual roles and the corresponding behaviours of learners.

4.7.3 Documents

A variety of documents, such as policy documents, progress records of learners, organizational rules, memoranda and official and unofficial documents generated for the literacy programme were accessible during the study. These kinds of documents provided the researcher with information about many things that could not be observed because they had taken place prior to the research. These documents provided a basic source of information about the programme activities and processes which further gave the researcher ideas about important questions to pursue through more direct observation and interviewing (Patton, 1986:152).

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The final analysis and presentation phase (**phase four of the study**) consisted of three activities: data reduction, data display and data interpretation (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10). Data collection and data analysis occurred simultaneously as an interactive, continuous and on-going process (Cocklin, 1996:94) and was only separated for convenience.

4.8.1 Data reduction

Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified. To analyze is therefore to find some way or ways to tease out what is considered to be essential meaning in the raw data; to reduce and reorganize and combine so that the reader shares the researcher's findings in the most economical and interesting fashion. The product of analysis is therefore a creation that speaks to the heart of what was learned (Ely, 1991:140).

Even before the data was actually collected anticipatory data reduction was occurring as the researcher decided which conceptual framework, which cases, which research questions and which data collection processes to select (Miles & Huberman, 1994:11).

After eight class observations and five interviews the researcher was faced with 102 typed pages of transcripts and comments. The researcher could identify with Cocklin (1996:93) when confronted with the sheer depth and breadth of material gained through the extensive period of eleven months. It was in this period that the researcher experienced considerable anxiety wondering if there was enough data or if the data obtained was the right data. The researcher pondered on how to know when enough was indeed enough. Lincoln and Guba (in Ely, 1991:91) provided a reassuring answer:

when the data repeats(sic) itself, when the researcher has confidence that themes and examples are repeating instead of extending, it may be time to leave the field.

During this time the researcher had great difficulty in starting with the analysis, hesitating to select a focus and eagerly waiting for something suddenly to emerge and make sense (Ely, 1991:86-87).

The analysis of data, which provided both the insight being sought and aided in managing the extent of data being gathered, was difficult and time consuming whilst at the same time exciting and thrilling (Cocklin, 1996:93; Berg, 1995:180). Cocklin (1996:93) points out that:

... much of that reporting research gives the impression that concepts and theory simply 'emerge' from data in 'full blown' form with little

indication of the processes, let alone 'difficulties', involved in analysis.

And difficult it was. The mornings the researcher spent in the field - conducting interviews, observing and making field notes, while the afternoons involved the tiring, time consuming, laborious process of transcribing the information. All the data was gathered and organised chronologically to build the case data base (Fourie, 1997:38).

Because data is just raw data and not information raw data must be coded, weighed, collated, processed, analyzed and synthesized to produce information that can be used to make decisions (Anderson, 1992:233). This entailed that the data collected was not immediately accessible for analysis, but required some processing (Miles & Huberman, 1994:9). The data from the various sources was accordingly analysed using the *content analysis* procedure of *open coding* as described in Berg (1995:185).

Content analysis involves the interaction of two processes: basic content elements being examined and application of explicit rules for identifying and recording these characteristics (Berg, 1995:183). To develop themes, the researcher applied a combination of the processes proposed by Berg (1995:186-187), Miles and Huberman (1994:9), Ely (1991:87) and Cocklin (1996: 88-115) as guidelines since all qualitative data analysis is in a sense idiosyncratic. The following basic guidelines were adhered to during open coding:

- *Ask the data a specific and consistent set of questions*

Data was divided into semantic units, such as paragraphs, lines and phrases (Berg, 1995:178). Each unit was subjected to a specific, consistent pre-determined set of questions.

Each unit was read and initially these questions were asked: Is this relevant to the role of the facilitator; the relationship between facilitators and learners and the organization as a whole and how is it relevant? What is its impact? Does it comply with the original objective of the research study? This initial criterion was important for sifting the data.

The second question asked of each paragraph or unit was: what are the themes that are discussed here?

- *Analyze the data minutely*

The researcher studied and re-studied the raw data to develop detailed intimate knowledge thereof (Ely, 1991:150). The researcher started with descriptive themes which began with the smallest, most literal descriptions of the unfolding words and events (Ely, 1991:86-87) (see Appendix C). These many themes were written down and a list of 143 themes were recorded (see Appendix D). The themes which were identified were useful units to categorize (Berg, 1995:181).

- *Frequently interrupt the coding to write a theoretical note*

The researcher engaged in a continuous process of reflection and analysis which included writing initial impressions and reflections in the margins of the pages - free thinking ideas, remarking on lines of interest, jotting down questions about the text and insights gained so as to refine the themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994:9; Ely, 1991:87). In adopting these strategies the researcher acted upon the suggestion of Glaser and Strauss (in Cocklin, 1991:98) that if the researcher does not take respites for reflection and analysis, collecting a large mass of data of dubious theoretical relevance can not be avoided.

- *Sort and sift through this material*

Data was grouped under the still tentative themes and the themes were revised when needed (Ely, 1991:150). Verbatim narrative was selected so as to link the raw data to these themes (see Appendix E). Copies of these transcripts were made, one of which was bound into a chronological catalogue of the research data. Finally the researcher used a further copy of all the transcribed data for the on-going analysis to allow for a cut-and-paste and a grouping of the data. Although this hard copy approach allowed for a quicker overview of the data, at the halfway mark the researcher decided to continue the process on the computer. This was found to be a better alternative since the researcher could often change the positioning of already pasted paragraphs when the need arose. Transcription and organisation were undertaken during the evenings when the researcher could work undisturbed.

- *Isolate these patterns, processes, commonalities and differences*

Similar phrases, relationships between variables, commonalities and differences between subgroups and unique happenings were identified during this process (Miles & Huberman, 1994:9). As themes emerged they influenced further data collection by providing direction and focus. Although each emergent theme directed and focused further data collection the researcher maintained an openness to information to avoid either closing a theme prematurely or stopping data collection if information did not

readily fall within an existing theme (Cocklin, 1991:100; Miles & Huberman, 1994:9).

- *Never assume the analytic relevance of any traditional variable such as age, sex, social class, and so forth until the data shows it to be relevant.*

The researcher abided by these principles by adopting strategies practiced by Steinberg (1997:42) - commenting on own biases, respecting all the different voices, being open to change, writing in such a way as to let other voices be heard. The fact that the facilitators needed to approve what was written was probably the single most effective means for ensuring the validity of the work. It made the researcher write for them rather than about them. That in turn, made the researcher reject any initial, superficial criticisms and instead look at deeper levels of interpretation of behaviours. As Berg (1995:187) indicates, "even those mundane variables must earn their way into the grounded theory."

Due to the fact that the researcher used content analysis to analyze data the weakness in locating unobtrusive messages relevant to the particular research questions was minimal or non-existent (Berg, 1995:194). Perhaps the most important advantage to content analysis for this particular research was that it provided a means by which to study processes that occur over long periods of time that may reflect trends in a society (Berg, 1995:193).

- ***Data consolidation***

Establishing categories from qualitative data seemed rather like a simultaneous left-brain right-brain exercise. That is, one job was to distill categories and the other was to bear in mind the large picture so that the categories would be true to it. Making categories meant reading, thinking, trying out tentative categories, changing them when others did a better job, checking them until the very last piece of meaningful information was categorized and, even at that point, being open to revising the categories (Ely, 1991:145).

The units of data which were coded into themes were subsequently clustered to find the most relevant categories for interpretation (see Appendix F). The researcher developed categories by applying the following processes proposed by Ely (1991:150):

- A list was made of all the themes (labels). The ones that seemed to fit together

were then grouped together and the researcher then tried to find one label that would do for each entire group. The ones that did not fit were grouped together and stood separately. The researcher then searched for links between labels. At this stage the researcher compared, contrasted, moved labels around - basically playing a bit. The test for a useful label was that it described what the meaning unit was about, not that it had occurred many times. A label that occurred once only was also perceived as very important to the research.

- The next few log entries were analyzed by applying the labels that were decided upon. Labels that did not fit well indicated that other labels were needed. If the labels were replaced by other labels they were tried out on the pages that had already been coded once. This was done many times until the researcher felt that the categories suited the data. The categories were designed to reflect the purpose of the study and they were exhaustive in allowing all the data to be categorized. Assisting in the process the researcher also interpreted the categories from within the theoretical framework presented in the literature review. The facilitator, however, did not search for perfection, but for a sensible organizing scheme (Ely, 1991:88).

Some of the categories tended to overlap. Consideration of the overlaps and interrelationships between and within themes and categories provided the basis for the view that the role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process was multi-dimensional and derived from influences from the organization, the learners and factors in the community and wider society. Therefore, this part of the analysis produced the requirement that when accounting for the roles of learners and facilitators the researcher needed to illustrate and integrate these multivariate and interrelated dimensions. In seeking to elaborate, substantiate and interpret these aspects, the researcher then moved to the final stages of data analysis, namely data display and data interpretation (Cocklin, 1991:103).

4.8.2 Data display

According to Miles and Huberman (1994:11) “a display is an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action.” By using only extended text, a researcher may find it easy to jump to hasty, partial, unfounded conclusions. Miles and Huberman emphasize that humans are not very powerful as processors of large amounts of information.

Our cognitive tendency is to reduce complex information into

selective and simplified gestalts or easily understood configurations. Extended text can overload humans' information-processing capabilities and prey on their tendencies to find simplifying patterns.

The researcher therefore decided to assemble the organized information into an immediately accessible, compact form by using data descriptive display formats designed to answer the research questions. The formation of data displays was a process of systematically summarising the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994:120).

The SSDL model proved very helpful in designing the displays due to the fact that it provided an existing theoretical structure to illustrate the interactive and multi-dimensional aspects of the teaching styles of facilitators and learning styles of learners. The researcher therefore used the SSDL model as a guideline to include all the clustered themes and categories that emerged during the open coding process of data analysis. Examples of coded data were then organized onto the displays (see Appendix G) and from them, conclusions of a descriptive nature were drawn and verified (Miles & Huberman, 1994:307). Designing these displays had clear data reduction implications and thus formed part of the analysing process (Miles & Huberman, 1994:11).

As the coding of data (data reduction) lead to new ideas on what should go on to the data displays and as the displays subsequently filled, preliminary conclusions were drawn (Miles & Huberman, 1994:12).

4.8.3 Data interpretation

Basic tactics used for drawing conclusions from the displays were noting patterns, themes, making contrasts and comparisons (Miles & Huberman, 1994:243). But conclusions went beyond descriptive summation and reached to explanation. The conclusions were checked against the data whilst additionally clarifying the conceptual import of those conclusions and how they tied onto the theoretical framework derived from the literature survey (Miles and Huberman, 1994:11). This further ensured that all relevant data would be presented (Mouton & Marais, 1989:199). Adequate recommendations were finally made from the data interpretations (Fourie, 1997:40).

In the writing of semi-final texts explaining the conclusions, the researcher attempted to remain objective by reporting data thoroughly (Mouton & Marais, 1989:199). The

final report thus contained a mixture of narrative text with “thick” descriptions, displays (see Figures 5.1 and 5.13) and associated analytic text (Miles & Huberman, 1994:243). Specific exemplars presenting the subjects voices were used. In so doing the researcher attempted to avoid the temptation of sprinkling the text with vivid or interesting examples to spice up the narrative. Rather, the researcher looked for genuinely representative exemplars of the conclusions that were presented. If such exemplars could not be found it indicated that something was wrong with the conclusions and had to be revised (Miles & Huberman, 1994:243). However, the researcher maintained openness and skepticism (Miles and Huberman, 1994:11).

4.9 DATA VERIFICATION

“Getting it all right” may be an impossible ideal however researchers should attempt not to “get it all wrong” (Wolcotte in Miles & Huberman, 1994:277). Therefore, being trustworthy as a qualitative researcher meant in the least that the processes of the research were carried out fairly, that the products represented as closely as possible the experiences of the people who were studied. The entire endeavor was grounded in ethical principles about how data is collected and analyzed, how one’s own assumptions and conclusions are checked, how participants are involved, and how results are communicated (Miles & Huberman, 1994:277).

According to Ely (1991:93-94) trustworthiness is more than a set of procedures. It is a personal belief system that shapes the procedures in process. To speak of trustworthiness and its components of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278) remind researchers of the issues and processes that must weave their way through and beyond qualitative research to keep it and themselves honest and believable (Ely, 1991:93-94).

4.9.1 Credibility

Credibility is the bedrock of trustworthiness. A qualitative researcher pays continuous, recursive, attention to being trustworthy. This concern begins before the first word is written and does not end until the research is completed. The quest is to make the research project credible, produce results that can be trusted and establish findings that are worth paying attention to (Ely, 1991:156).

In working towards credibility the researcher honoured a combination of guidelines suggested by Ely (1991:95-96) and Miles and Huberman (1994:278). The researcher:

- used triangulation (by using multiple data sources)
- had prolonged engagement in the field by doing persistent observation to build a chain of evidence
- searched for negative cases
- did member checks (checked with people that were studied)

The concept of *triangulation* is based on the assumption that any bias inherent in particular data sources, investigator and method would be neutralized when used in conjunction with other data sources, investigators and methods. A combined method study is one in which the researcher uses multiple methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 1994:174). In practice this boils down to using different strategies in research so they may be cross-checked (Shipman, 1988:43). The researcher triangulated by means of **multiple data sources** of information: the recorded interviews, the lesson observation transcripts, literature and document overviews, and field notes. Checking data obtained by a variety of methods was therefore one way of contributing to the trustworthiness of this study (Ely, 1991:98).

Prolonged and persistent observation over a period of eleven months added value to the credibility of the study. Through the use of rich descriptions (Miles & Huberman, 1994:279) a **chain of evidence** was established which enabled the researcher to ask questions that followed on the decisions observed earlier. The researcher therefore asked herself if the findings of the study made sense, were just to the people under study and to the readers (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). Validation became the issue of choosing among competing and falsifiable explanations.

Data that did not fit into the emergent findings lead to a re-examination of the findings. This **negative case evidence** proved to be extremely helpful in guiding the qualitative researcher to “make data more credible” by reducing the number of exceptional cases (Miles & Huberman, 1994:279). As Lincoln and Guba (in Ely, 1991:98) suggest, it can help qualitative researchers shift their emerging understandings better to describe what they are studying and to be more certain that they have caught some of its essence. The researcher was further concerned to validate the accuracy of what was written and transcribed. Therefore **member checks** were made by asking the facilitator and learner if the data and interpretations were plausible (Miles & Huberman, 1994:275; Fourie, 1997:41). The researcher therefore sent the facilitator a full transcript of the class observations as well as the interviews asking for her comments. The researcher also read the first interview to the learner so that she could comment or add to it.

Both their responses confirmed the accuracy of the work. This added to the validity of the transcriptions. The researcher further gave the data and emerging themes and categories to two friends unacquainted with the field to evaluate critically and scrutinise the data and analysis procedures (Miles & Huberman, 1994:274).

4.9.2 Transferability

The second criterion of trustworthiness refers to the applicability of the research to other contexts and settings (Fourie, 1997:41). It was therefore important to determine what relevance the results had beyond the situation investigated so as to determine to what extent results could be generalized (Shipman, 1988:X). Therefore the characteristics of the original sample of persons and settings were fully described in order to permit adequate comparisons with other samples (Miles & Huberman, 1994:279). The participant facilitator in the study was representative of the population of facilitators in the Riversdale area and thus it may be assumed that the roles she performed in the teaching-learning process could be similar to that of other facilitators in rural areas. Another facilitator was included in the investigation which could have lessened the pitfall of using only one case as the basis for making generalizations. The facilitator, however, had to be absolved from the study due to internal matters (Miles and Huberman, 1994:263-280).

4.9.3 Dependability

The third criterion of trustworthiness considers the consistency of data (Fourie, 1997:42). According to Shipman (1988:46) researchers are guilty of unreliability until proven innocent. Reliability/dependability means that if the investigation is carried out again, by different researchers, using the same methods, the same results will be obtained. The underlying issue here was whether the process of the study was consistent, reasonably stable over time and across methods, i.e. have things been done with reasonable care (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278)? This would include not only the detailed descriptions of the general methods and procedures used in the study, (the actual sequence of how data was collected, transformed, displayed and how conclusions were explicitly linked with exhibits of displayed data), but also the dependability of the researcher and the responses of those studied (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 278; Shipman, 1988:1X). Subsequently, in qualitative research, issues of reliability and validity rely largely on the skills of the researcher. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:282) the first and basic audience for good documentation is the *self*. Each researcher is her own best data collection instrument,

as long as she is constantly self-conscious about her role, her interactions and the theoretical and empirical material as it accumulates. As long as qualitative researchers are reflexive, making all these processes explicit, then issues of reliability and validity are served (Steinberg, 1997:33).

Therefore it is essentially a *person* more or less fallible - that is observing, interviewing, and recording (Miles & Huberman, 1994:38). Consequently a fuller understanding had to be reached of the role of the researcher in relation to the problem of dependability (see 4.10). The researcher therefore needed to leave an **audit trial**, by logging and describing the procedures used clearly enough so that others could understand them, reconstruct them and subject them to scrutiny. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:282) such devices as the researcher's notebook, reflexivity journal or methodological diary strengthen the study as it proceeds. The researcher subsequently used a personal diary for reflexive purposes as well as a methodological note book making all the processes used during the duration of the study explicit (Steinberg, 1997:33).

4.9.4 Confirmability

The basic issue here can be framed as one of relative neutrality and reasonable freedom from unacknowledged researcher biases - at the minimum, explicitness about the inevitable biases that exist (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). If the credibility and dependability precautions are narrowly applied, then the requirements of the confirmability criterion are also met (Krefting in Fourie, 1997:42). The general methods and procedures of the study were thus described explicitly and in rich detail, providing the audit trail leading to the conclusions. The conclusions were explicitly linked with exhibits of condensed, displayed data. The researcher has been explicit and as self-aware as possible about personal assumptions, values and biases, affective states - and how they came into play during the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278).

4.10 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

While analyzing the observations it was as if the researcher was walking through a hall of mirrors, each just a reflection of the other, never really knowing where the true image was hiding *and suddenly realising that she was part of the image*.

According to Creswell (1994:147) qualitative research is interpretative research. As such, the biases and judgement of the researcher is explicitly stated in the research

report. Such openness is considered to be useful and positive. In qualitative research, particularly as the role of the researcher becomes less specialised, the identity of the researcher becomes diffused. According to Schratz and Walker (1995:5) once researchers admit that they hold values that affect the research that they do, they have to find ways to scrutinise their actions and their motives more closely. Who the researcher is can therefore no longer be left out of account without jeopardizing the validity of the enquiry. The effect the researcher has on the study has to do with the characteristics, attitudes, opinions, expectancies, values, and beliefs of the researcher. According to Mouton and Marais (1989:81) the affiliation of the researcher, the image the subjects have of the researcher and the distance between the researcher and the subjects all have an effect on the research.

The researcher, however, did not waste time trying to eliminate these effects, instead she concentrated on understanding them by considering the researcher's prominence as an observer and the facilitator and learners' perception of her as an evaluator (Steinberg, 1997:33).

The fact that the researcher was a Masters-degree student at Stellenbosch university could influence the facilitator as well as the learners' felt need to answer questions. Any idea of such possibilities was jotted down by the researcher, especially during class observations and interviews. The researcher was therefore sensitive towards the facilitator's need to perform in her presence and her need for confirmation about what she was doing. However, according to Mouton and Marais (1989:81) there is sometimes this tendency to think that subjects want to cooperate with the researcher. However, it was discovered that suspicion and avoidance were the rule rather than the exception. As Mouton and Marais (1989:81) state:

Rather than being the exception, I suspect such evasiveness is the common situation in field research: People rarely tell the whole truth as they see it about the most important things, but they are generally being evasive or misleading rather than lying. A field researcher must understand this and the reason for it: Primarily a fear of exposure, of being caught in a lie, and an unwillingness to appear less than absolutely 'moral' to an academic stranger.

There were also times during class observations that the researcher felt frustration building up for the sake of the learners when it was thought that their needs were not being met. However, to combat these assumptions, these entries were written down in

a personal diary in order to separate personal feelings from what was observed. It was never easy and the researcher would not claim that personal feelings could truly be separated from what was observed, but this was the best way to deal with the problem at the time.

Due to the fact that the facilitator told the learners about the work of the researcher, her family and reasons for coming, their curiosity was satisfied and they accepted her as just another person in the class. As observations were spread over several sessions and the facilitator and learners got to know the researcher, they also seemed more relaxed in her presence.

4.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following ethical considerations suggested by Tuckman (1978:16) and Miles and Huberman (1994:291-292) were taken into account in attempting not to invade the human rights of subjects. These considerations were:

- The right to privacy of the subjects, where the researcher avoided asking unnecessary questions and obtained direct consent for participation from adults.
- The right to remain anonymous. The researcher therefore identified subjects by providing pseudonyms.
- The right to confidentiality. The subjects had every right to insist that data collected from them be treated with confidentiality.
- The right to expect experimenter responsibility. Every participant in the study had the right to expect that the researcher be sensitive to human dignity and well-meaning in her intentions. The researcher accordingly reassured potential participants that they would not in any way be disadvantaged by their participation. Participants had the right to insist that the researcher explain the study to them after its completion, particularly to overcome any negative effects that might result from participation.
- Informed consent. The participants were informed what the study involved and gave their consent to participate freely.
- A relationship of trust and honesty existed between the researcher and participants.

4.12 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The **limitations** of the analysis arose from the depth and breadth of the literature

which was accessed; it was impossible to determine if valuable sources were overlooked. In addition, although the researcher attempted to remain objective, it was the researcher's interpretation of the literature which led to the identification, refinement and justification of the defining attributes, antecedents and consequences. Although the use of the SSDL model provided a structure for the analysis, it may have been unnecessarily restrictive.

Since the format of the study was a case study involving only one facilitator in a rural area, the results would not necessarily apply to facilitators in urban areas. The researcher could also not find any previous studies of a similar nature that had been undertaken within rural areas in South Africa. This restricted the opportunity of building upon previous research in this area.

The **strength** of the qualitative approach was the depth and richness of the data and that the insight gained in terms of the lived experience of the participants in performing their roles, generated both extensive content and a close involvement in the field.

One major feature was that the qualitative data which focused on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings, assisted in having a strong handle on what "real life" is like. The emphasis was on a specific case, a focused and bound phenomenon embedded in its context. The influences of the local context were not stripped away but were taken into account. The possibility for understanding latent, underlying or non-obvious issues, was strong (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10).

Another feature of the qualitative data in this study was its richness and holism, with strong potential for revealing complexity. The data provided "thick descriptions" that were vivid, nested in a real context and had a ring of truth that could have a strong impact on the reader. Furthermore, the fact that the data was collected over a sustained period, made it powerful for studying the role of the facilitator. The inherent flexibility of the qualitative study (the fact that data collection times and methods were varied as the study proceeded) gave further confidence that the researcher really understood what has been going on (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10).

The study was further strengthened by the steps taken to argue the findings systematically and to clearly illustrate the procedures of the data analysis, consolidation and interpretation. The next chapter provides the research findings and a description thereof.

CHAPTER 5: THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR: A RURAL SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the role of the facilitator in a rural area in South Africa by discussing the data and research findings. The categories which emerged from the final-analysis stage of the investigation reflect the purpose of the study and are interpreted from within the theoretical framework presented in the literature review.

The participants of the study, their workplace and the UNISYS computer-assisted learning programme are also introduced. To enable the voices of the facilitator and the learners to be heard in their own right, this chapter presents many verbatim extracts from interviews and classroom observations.

5.2 PARTICIPANTS, WORKPLACE AND PROGRAMME

5.2.1 The facilitator

Jean, a white woman in her forties, graduated at the University of Stellenbosch in 1975 in Library Science. In 1976 she obtained a Higher Teaching Diploma at the University of the Orange Free State and worked at the Provincial Educational Library for four years. In 1992 she started to teach literacy classes. She had no prior teaching experience. Forty of her learners have already completed the programme and 18 learners are currently attending her classes at different times during the week. According to Jean most of the learners are at ABET level 1 of the NQF.

5.2.2 The learners

Sam is a 56 year old coloured woman who was born in Riversdale. She had been a domestic worker since her teenage years and is currently a pensioner. Her schooling experience is very limited since she could only complete the first term of standard one due to illness. According to Sam she was never happy at school. After recovering from her illness she never went back to school and immediately started to work. However, she expressed regret at not returning to school, **“Today I regret not going back to school. When you leave school it’s due to feebleness.”** Her childhood years were happy although she mentions that her parents did have a drinking problem, **“My mother and them drank a bit of strong water, you know.”** She gave birth to

thirteen children. Five of her children died, two are married and the other six are still living with her. One of her children is still attending school. Her husband is a municipal worker. She is very involved in her church and attends conferences on a regular basis in Cape Town. Sam has been attending Jean's literacy classes since January 1998. Sam was functionally literate when she joined this group. She knew the alphabet and could read three letter words. This she could still remember from her earlier school experiences. She reads fast and fluently and loves to impress in class.

Kate is 49 years old and was a farm labourer all her life. She lived with her grandparents and although there was a farm school nearby she never attended school since her grandparents believed that children should not attend school, but help on the farm. As a young girl she also worked as a domestic worker. She has been attending literacy classes for four years now. After divorcing her husband she dropped out of class for a one year period. According to Jean, Kate is very intelligent and can read well, but as soon as she has to read in front of other people she tends to stumble.

Dorothy is 45 years old and was a farm labourer all her life. She never attended school. Her husband works at the post office. They have four children, one of them is still attending school. According to Jean she shows considerable progress in class and is a fast learner. She is unemployed. During 1997 she passed the IEB examinations (level 1) with "higher Credit" (obtaining between 70-79%).

Marius, a pensioner, is 71 years old. He was a farm labourer all his life and never attended school. He attends literacy classes regularly. He is very involved in church activities where he is an elder and leads prayer meetings. His wife died four years ago. He has four children. One still lives with him. Marius walks a great distance twice a week to attend class.

According to Jean **Martha**, who is 36 years old, is a learner with special educational needs. She was very neglected as a baby and at the age of three was placed in the care of a couple in Riversdale. She never attended school. After the death of both her guardian parents she was placed in the care of strangers. She is still very dependent and because people do not have much patience with her, she continues to move often. According to Jean this has a very negative effect on her progress in class.

Debbie is 57 years old and a pensioner. She was born on a farm and worked for many

years as a domestic worker. She has five children and has been married twice. She walks a great distance to attend class.

Jack, Debbie's husband, is 68 years old and is also a pensioner. He attended school up to grade four. He shows good progress in class and enjoys it very much. In 1997 he passed the IEB examinations with a "Merit" (obtaining 80% or above).

Hanna who is 52 years old was born on a farm. She never attended school due to lack of access. She has four children. She has attended literacy classes since 1996. Her husband is employed. She does needlecraft for additional funds. She is also very involved in church activities.

Jan is 59 years old and was a farm labourer as a child. He never attended school. He worked in the work shop at the hospital for many years. He is also a church pastor. When he first attended literacy classes in August 1992, he struggled with reading and could not write or spell. He attended literacy classes for one and a half years, but then had to stop due to illness. Since 1998 he has attended class regularly and according to the facilitator has improved remarkably. He always had to ask someone to read from the Bible - now he can do it on his own.

Maggie who is 57 years old is married to Jan. She attended a farm school for a short period. She passed the IEB examination (level 1) with "Merit" and has just completed a driver's licence course (a computer assisted course), got her licence and now drives her own car.

Rose who is 54 years old, could read and write a few words when she first attended class. She has a drinking problem. She has five children who get into trouble with the law regularly. She does not attend classes very regularly. According to Jean she is a real reformer. She campaigned for school uniforms, wanted the times of the classes to change and when it is expected of her to read, she prefers to write and when expected to write she prefers to read. She reads very well and is very intelligent.

Dorothy, Jack and Maggie, successfully completed the ABET level 1 of the IEB exams at the end of 1997 and have progressed beyond the very basics. They have been at ABET level 2 of the IEB since the onset of the class observations. Jean mentioned that both levels 1 and 2 learners are accommodated in the same class. When the need arises the level 2 learners are separated (especially during preparation for the IEB

exams). However, during the time of the observations they were instructed at level 1.

5.2.3 The workplace

The site is situated on the main road in Riversdale and according to Jean access is relatively easy. The site is perfectly situated between the learners' workplace and the town. They therefore have to pass the site when going to work or town.

It's easy to get here. The site is near to me. I attend class every week
(First interview learner Sam).

The class is well equipped. The class is decorated with posters. There are 10 computers in the class and a little table with six comfortable chairs in the centre. There is also a blackboard against the wall and a telephone on the counter. The lighting is very good and it is a pleasant, cosy and private room.

5.2.4 The UNISYS project and computer assisted literacy programme

UNISYS (earlier referred to as the ICON project) is a computer-assisted ABE programme and project in South Africa. Since 1992 UNISYS involving 75 community centres with 454 workstations has been used in a community literacy project in the Southern Cape. Suitable premises were found in schools, clinics, community centres, libraries, jails and factories. Schools were also chosen as suitable sites and an agreement negotiated which allowed schools to make use of the sites during school hours. The Southern Cape Regional Project was initiated by the Department of Health and Welfare which identified literacy as a key element in primary health care. Subsequently state involvement in the partnership has been taken over by the Department of Education. UNISYS developed the Afrikaans literacy component, which has been rewritten to be more responsive to the needs of the target population. Peet van Jaarsveld and his colleagues have also developed a writing skills workbook (Harley *et al.*, 1996:409-418).

The Southern Cape UNISYS computer-assisted literacy programme is a Canadian reading programme (adapted for South Africa) that was primarily developed for remedial purposes for children and is aimed at upgrading reading skills.

5.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.3.1 Introduction

A qualitative description of the research findings as determined by the final data-analysis stage will be presented and interpreted. The findings will be discussed and interpreted according to the following three categories that were identified in the study (see Figure 5.1):

- **The external (ecological) influences impacting on the role of the facilitator**

The category external influences refers to the influences derived from the context (living and non-living environment - outer world) in which the individual lives. These influences include societal, organizational and interpersonal conditions impacting on the role of the facilitator and the problems associated with them.

- **The internal (intrapsychic) influences impacting on the role of the facilitator**

The category internal influences refers to the individual and his inner world which includes the characteristics, skills, needs and beliefs of the learners and facilitator.

- **The classroom practice**

The category classroom practice refers to classroom dynamics (role performances between the learners and the facilitators and the facilitators and their trainers) and in addition includes the following:

The learning stage of the facilitator as learner

- ⇒ Here the focus is on the facilitator as learner's reactions towards the methods employed during training (i.e. *presentation methods* such as demonstrations, lectures; *participation methods* such as interactions between participants, groupwork and *discovery methods* where learners discover knowledge for themselves in groups or on their own) and delivery techniques employed such as questions, feedback and assistance provided
- ⇒ the balance between the facilitator as learner's responsibility and the trainer's/organizational power (control) during the teaching-learning process
- ⇒ the mismatches (pedagogical difficulties) that arise during the training process, where the trainer's teaching style mismatches with the facilitator as learner's stage of learning development
- ⇒ the facilitator as learner's progress toward greater self-directiveness

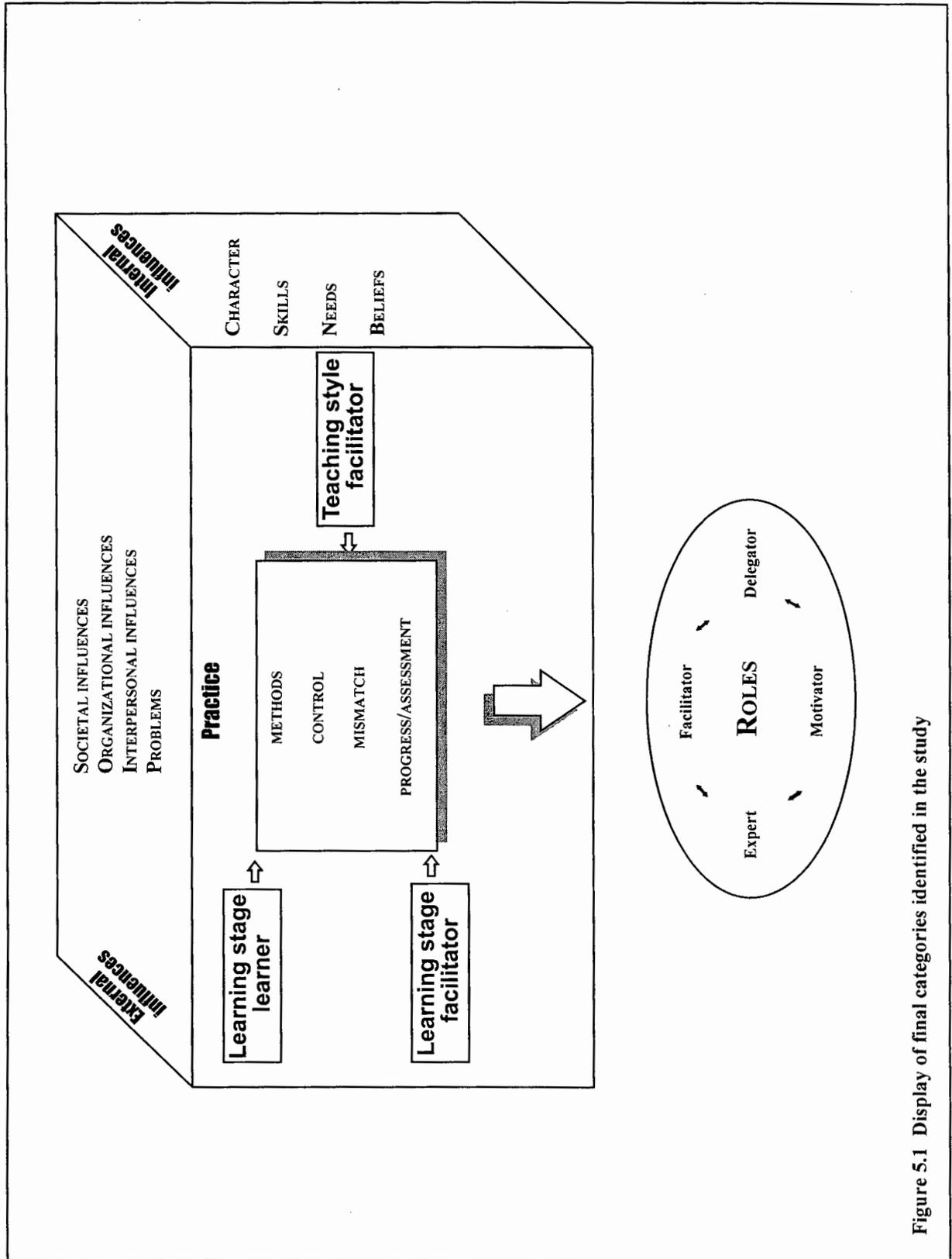


Figure 5.1 Display of final categories identified in the study

The learning stage of the learners

- ⇒ Here the focus is on the preferred learning styles of the learners and
- ⇒ the learners' reactions toward the methods (i.e. lectures, lessons, groupwork) and delivery techniques (i.e. questions, feedback, assistance) employed during classroom practice.

The teaching styles of the facilitator

- ⇒ Here the focus is on the methods (i.e. lectures, lessons, groupwork) and delivery techniques (i.e. questions, feedback, assistance) employed by the facilitator during classroom instruction
- ⇒ the balance between the facilitator's power (control) and the learners' responsibility in the teaching-learning process
- ⇒ the mismatches (pedagogical difficulties) that arise during the teaching-learning process where the facilitator's teaching style mismatches the learners' stage of learning development
- ⇒ the facilitator's assessment of learner progress towards greater self-direction

5.3.2. The external influences impacting on the role of the facilitator**5.3.2.1 Societal influences**

While reflecting on the discussion of the participants describing the sociocultural and contextual backgrounds of learners (see 5.2.2) the high illiteracy rate caused to some extent through educational restrictions in the past, poverty and the learners' exposure to **negative life experiences** become apparent.

Illiteracy effected their whole lives. They never went to school - they live in a bubble. It also influences their lives, especially in church (First class observation).

Due to the complex and interdependent nature of a multitude of factors influencing the learners' daily life experiences providing literacy skills alone (reading, writing and numeracy) is not enough to improve the life experiences of learners and therefore facilitators should not create **false expectations** within the learners.

Everything is linked. You can not separate literacy and say we're going to make these learners literate - the fact remains - they still don't have jobs; they still don't have houses. They don't have chances

in life. It doesn't help to be literate and you still don't have a chance in life. You must inform them that they will not necessarily earn a bigger salary or obtain a higher position because they can read and write - you realise they really have that expectancy (First interview facilitator).

Factors mentioned that influence **learner attendance** are lack of co-operation of some of the employers of learners, the underlying politics in ABET (referring here to the competition that exists between the council and night schools for learners) and the fact that many learners do not feel the need for literacy training.

Some of my learners quit classes because their employer wasn't positive about these classes and told them that it's a waste of time for they will not be able to learn to read and write at their age (First interview facilitator). Another problem is the underlying politics in ABET. Especially with the night schools taking our learners that do not like working with the computer ... Especially those with good jobs don't seem to feel the need. I even pick up my learners for class, but even then they have excuses not to come (Pilot study interview).

This lack of attendance places considerable pressure upon facilitators since their success is determined by the number of learners who attend their classes and complete and pass the exams (see 5.3.4.1).

5.3.2.2 Organizational influences

- **Training of facilitators**

According to the spokesperson UNISYS trains ten to sixteen facilitators at a time. Individual, personal training is also provided. The **duration of training** in the form of a so-called crashcourse lasts approximately three to four days. This is followed by a two-day practical follow-up session. The practical part of the group training consists of:

... moving out to the sites. The facilitator should recruit and work with these clients on the site. During the first two days the trainers should observe the facilitators at the site and provide a 24 hour

service to the facilitators whenever they need the support (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Jean disagrees and does not regard the two days observation as **practical training** and attributes many of the problems experienced by facilitators in performing their roles to lack of adequate training.

We also had no practical training. That's why many facilitators have to quit - not because they were bad facilitators but due to lack of adequate training. You really do not believe in yourself the whole time due to lack of adequate training ... Lack of knowledge and inadequate training is the big cause of the UNISYS problem (Second interview facilitator).

The idea exists that any literate person can, with minimum effort, develop the necessary skills to present a literacy programme. Facilitators with very **minimal competencies** are produced with just the ability to teach the basics according to a very particular course, using specific materials (like the computer and life skills work book) with which to attain results.

We only give them basic skills in order to cope with a variety of situations ... With these basic skills it is the facilitator who must attain the best results (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

The erroneous view that anyone who can teach children can teach adults was also highly criticised by Jean.

During our training they told us that if you can teach a child in Grade 1 you can teach this course. That's rubbish. It's more complex to teach someone to read and write (Second interview facilitator).

One key **training objective** is to stimulate internal change in the facilitators by changing their views.

The first day (of the training workshop) consists of orientation 'changing their mindsets' - how they think about the target group they have to work with, using the computer (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Another training objective is to cultivate the facilitators' desire to improve and as independent learners continue with self-training.

Eighty percent of the training is focused on personal motivation, time management, selling yourself and team building (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Considerable emphasis is placed upon a variety of **methods, techniques and criteria** with which facilitators should be familiar, but much less is placed upon teaching styles. The teaching component is therefore neglected.

The theoretical part of the course which takes approximately three to four days begins with orientation, criteria for facilitators and the function of the facilitator and consists of providing the facilitators with specific andragogical methodologies - how to work with adults, how they differ from children, how to communicate with adults. They will know how to be a successful facilitator (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

The organization focuses on outcomes and well defined content or skills to be learned by the learners (providing the learners with functional literacy - just the basic skills to read and write) which coincides with the outcomes-based approach to education adopted in South Africa - emphasizing the importance of a person's skills and understanding and linking it to employment opportunities. Learning is therefore measured in terms of specific competencies and the mastering of life skills. This narrow view leads to the adoption of an **instruction-based system of instruction**, focusing on various kinds of media resources, materials and aids that the facilitator should use. The facilitator is therefore viewed as the transmitter of knowledge and the computer and life skills workbook as the principle medium of instruction.

By using the life skills book and the computer programme the learners stand a good chance of passing the IEB exams (Interview UNISYS spokesperson). The organization wants the learners to be functionally literate - they should just be able to read and write - but I ask myself, where do you draw the line? (Second interview facilitator).

- **Training of trainers**

It is evident that the trainers of facilitators are often inadequately trained in adult education. A need is expressed for the **development of staff** at higher levels.

From UNISYS' side they should have had professionally trained people to manage the project (Second interview facilitator).

5.3.2.3 Interpersonal influences

The **relationships between facilitators** may occasionally be described as **strained** and characterized by mistrust.

How honest are all those people (facilitators)? Some facilitators fabricate people. They get caught out. There's a big problem with that. I'm not a racist but it was those that are more desperate for money. Integrity is very important (long silence) (Pilot study interview).

Sam experiences **support from significant others**. This can contribute considerably to her learning process and class attendance.

My husband is very happy that I am here. He's happy that I'm learning (First interview learner Sam).

5.3.2.4 Problems

In determining **selection criteria** for facilitators attention was initially focused upon establishing minimal requirements needed by facilitators to perform their jobs. This, however, lead to problems and selection criteria had to be reconsidered (focusing more on the personality profile of the facilitator).

We first looked at previous experience and qualifications. Those that have teaching experience or have been involved in training in community projects are given preference. The minimal requirements is that they have to have matric and be computer literate ... we felt that the person had to be involved in the community in one way or the other. In many cases it was affirmative action. These facilitators did not have the experience; they were unsure of their position and their

skills ... But we found within six months that most of the facilitators could not cope. Most of them quit out of their own free will. If they could not make the mindshift they quit. If they're only in ABET for the salary they also don't last long ... We had to consider our selection criteria again - focusing on the personality profile of the facilitator with much less attention given to minimal qualifications (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

To complicate matters the community council (responsible for the administrative and financial requirements of the project) did not want the staff of UNISYS to be involved with the selection of facilitators.

Even council members got involved with the selection of facilitators and they followed their own minds. That is how we again had problems with recruited facilitators. From a political viewpoint this was correct, but now we have the problem with uncommitted facilitators (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

The facilitators experience these circumstances as working for two bosses.

I feel that I'm working for two bosses which makes it impossible sometimes - for the SCSC and UNISYS (Pilot study interview).

Additional problems were experienced by the organization when ABET was viewed as a convenient place to **employ unemployed school teachers**. The organization later acknowledged the fact that school teachers often require urgent training.

It was especially those with teaching experience that found it difficult to adapt to adult education. They had a condescending attitude in their approach toward adults. In a way they looked down at them (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

A need for **standards and qualifications** in the selection of ABET facilitators was expressed as an urgent priority by both the spokesperson and the facilitators.

We still have problems with the certification of facilitators. SAQA is still a bit confused about standards for adult educators (Interview UNISYS spokesperson). Facilitators should be selected. You can not

give this job to anyone. It must be a responsible person ... You can stay at home the whole morning who's going to know? We don't have any supervision ... I think because this is a part-time job the danger exists that facilitators can underestimate its importance and can easily put other things before it (First interview facilitator). We should be better qualified. We started with standard eights. I feel I'm not qualified enough (Pilot study interview).

Facilitators also experience problems related to the **IEB**. Some of the problems mentioned were that learners (especially the pensioners) can not afford the entrance fees; that it takes a long time before the results are received and that the exams are usually laden with mistakes which confuse the learners.

I'm definitely not going to pay for their exams this year ... all of my learners usually want to write the IEB exams, but only a few would be able to afford it; most of them only live on their pension funds Although the SCSC has paid a big amount in advance for the learners to write the exams, they still have not received their results from the IEB. The exams also have many spelling mistakes which confuse the learners and sometimes very important words or letters are left out in sentences. This makes it very difficult for the learners (First class observation).

Some sites also **lack privacy** and make facilitators feel like intruders.

In the beginning the staff at the clinic saw me as an intruder. The classes were in the waiting room. People came and went all the time and it was embarrassing for my learners. Some people would say to them, 'What are you doing here? now I know you're stupid.' Now we've got our own small room - it's more private (Pilot study interview).

During 1998 some of the sites had to be **closed down**. Jean blames this situation on inadequate training and the poor overall knowledge regarding illiteracy in the community.

The day the coordinator told me that some of the sites were closing down I was very upset ... most of the sites do their work well. They've

shown progress during these past years ... a lack of training caused some not to succeed. If you don't know how to, you make mistakes and loose your learners Only three of the twelve facilitators will still be employed after December 1998 ... It's sad the programme is failing. I think there are still too few people with knowledge about literacy (Second interview facilitator).

According to the UNISYS spokesperson facilitators receive adequate support **from the organization**. However, this support is clearly reactive, lack follow up and evaluation.

We are available to facilitators 24 hours a day whenever they need assistance and support (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Jean however feels that the support provided by the organization is not enough and that they need more support and recognition to perform their jobs effectively.

We need a bigger and stronger structure and we need more support as facilitators. This is important work and it is underestimated at the moment. Much more attention should be given to facilitators. Sometimes the organization is more concerned with what they must pay facilitators than with us. And it shouldn't be this way. The role we play is not taken seriously enough. We don't even have the necessary aids and resources to do our jobs properly (First interview facilitator).

5.3.3 The internal influences impacting on the role of the facilitator

5.3.3.1 Characteristics

A critical element in performing a facilitative role is the personal relationship among the facilitator and the learners. The manner through which facilitators interact with learners is dependent on facilitators possessing certain **attitudinal qualities**.

It must be someone from the same community; someone with empathy, that knows how to work with people. His language proficiency is also very important. He must be interested in people, have a warm personality and have compassion for others (Interview UNISYS

spokesperson). *It should be a communicative person ... Communication is very important* (Pilot study interview).

Jean however cautions facilitators not to become too involved with their learners. She specifically refers to a scenario where learners have a tendency to borrow money from facilitators.

You can't have a bleeding heart. If you lend them money you're going to have problems in the future. If they can't pay you back they don't attend class anymore. You just can't afford to become too involved with your learners, because you'll have to get out of that relationship somehow and it really harms the chances you had with that learner (First interview facilitator).

Jean further recognises the need to become more **flexible, responsive and accept change** which is very important considering the rate of social and technological change with which people are confronted daily.

And you've got to be up to date - use your resources. You must be awake and accept change easily. You musn't be stubborn - set in your own ways (Pilot study interview).

Facilitators possessing these qualities would be more likely to establish a **class atmosphere/climate** conducive to learning with the learners.

All eight sessions were characterized by a relaxed, peaceful, warm and friendly atmosphere. Jean put in an effort to make the learners feel welcome and relaxed and not feel threatened (Journal entry).

Jean places a lot of emphasis on the importance of the class atmosphere to facilitate learning:

The fear of a child in school can not be compared to that of an adult. An adult must never ever fear school otherwise he won't be able to learn ... and that influences the learning process (First interview facilitator).

However, the more consistent directive authoritative teaching style adopted by Jean

does at times create a more **cool authoritarian climate**. The tendency to adopt an expert posture and stand in front of the class did at times produce in the learners passivity (holding the expression of their emotions in check), apathetic conformity and increasing dependence upon authority.

Jean explains the work on the blackboard to one learner ... she stands while explaining the work to Kate ... The class is very quiet (Second & third class observation).

Many of the **learners** are still carrying the scars of the apartheid legacy. They **lack self-confidence** and **perseverance** and **distrust** others.

Most of them lack self-confidence and are shy ... It's in their heads 'I am stupid' ... You are working with a person that feels inferior, who has a low self-image and because of his low self-image he feels shy and withdrawn and distrusts others. He distrusts anything that has to do with reading and writing. This he keeps hidden in his heart (First class observation - facilitator). I am behind when it comes to brains - I write very slowly. That's why it is good to go to school, because you can get your brains to move forward (Second class observation - learner Sam).

This lack of self-confidence may have a significant impact in the teaching-learning process.

It's clear that Sam does not want to intrude or be a nuisance ... Rose could not do the task assigned to her. She sat quietly for more than 15 minutes not asking for any help until Jean attended to her (Fourth class observation).

But it is not only the learners that suffer from a low-self-image. **Facilitators**, especially those from the same disadvantaged backgrounds as the learners, too, **lack self-confidence**.

Some of our facilitators come from the same disadvantaged backgrounds as the learners. They grew up together. That is why they also lack self-confidence when it comes to discipline, authority and

methodology. They have potential, but not self-confidence (UNISYS spokesperson).

Jean links a lack of self-confidence when it comes to authority and methodology to inadequate training.

You really doubt yourself the whole time due to lack of adequate training (Second interview facilitator).

5.3.3.2 Skills

The fact that facilitators **lack** considerable **marketing skills**, which is clearly indicated by the poor marketing strategies employed by some facilitators, could further contribute to the learners' disinterest to attend classes and even discourage interested learners.

Marketing is my biggest problem - I sometimes just want to give up. Marketing is driving me crazy ... I just go up to illiterates and show them a piece of paper and ask them, 'can you read?' and then ask them to read it to me (Pilot study interview).

The facilitator also stresses the importance of the first interview with the learners and feels that **interviewing skills** are very important.

I realize that the first interview with the learner is the most important part of ABET. You can't just take the person to the computer and start. And I think it's very important to hold the interview privately - not in front of all the learners. These are the problems that can be looked at (Pilot study interview).

Physical changes may occur in different ways with increasing age. Failing eyesight or hearing impediments may pose some hindrances in the teaching-learning process, but do not necessarily have to be related to educational activities.

Many illiterates are old, unemployed and have sight and hearing difficulties (First class observation - facilitator).

5.3.3.3 Needs

Adult learners attend literacy classes with set intentions. They bring certain expectations to the learning process and subsequently have a wide range of needs.

Some want to learn how to write on an envelope; others want to be able to write their own signature; while others want to learn about centimeters and meters (Second class observation facilitator).

For Sam learning literacy is also a matter of interest, a way of acquiring certain skills to improve her leisure time activities.

But I also want to do needlework and so on. I want to learn how to read a pattern. I want to understand a knitting and crochet and sewing book (First interview learner Sam).

Adults want to learn in the problem areas with which they are confronted daily and therefore have a problem-centred orientation as opposed to a more subject-centred orientation. Sam has a desire to solve clearly identifiable problems. This is necessary for the performance of her social roles and feels that many of her needs have still gone unmet.

We don't do numeracy. I really want to do numeracy if it's possible. We don't write English words in class. I suppose we're still going to do that. I want to do that very much if that's God's will ... I went to the bank the other day. There was a notice in English that I wanted to read so that I could find out more about how the bank system works. A lot of notices are in English. We will just have to learn English ... We also have not done any sums yet (Second interview learner Sam).

5.3.3.4 Beliefs and attitudes

Facilitators and learners have beliefs and attitudes about each other when cast in certain roles which can directly or indirectly affect their expectancies in classroom behaviour. Attitudes are thus of some importance - not only the facilitator's attitudes towards learners but their attitudes towards the whole teaching approach. The attitudes encountered in the data can be divided into:

- ⇒ the attitudes of the facilitator towards the teaching approach
- ⇒ the attitudes of the facilitator towards the learners
- ⇒ the learners' attitudes towards the teaching approach

The attitudes of the facilitator towards the teaching approach

The attitudes of the facilitator towards the teaching approach can be divided into:

- ⇒ The facilitator's views towards an authoritative teaching style (role)
- ⇒ The facilitator's views towards a motivational teaching style (role)
- ⇒ The facilitator's views towards a facilitative teaching style (role)

- **The facilitator's views towards an authoritative teaching style**

A perception of adult beginning readers as inherently different from literate adults where the "haves" (facilitators) are responsible for drawing the information out of the "have nots" (learners) may in effect lead to the facilitator adopting an authoritative style where literacy instruction is seen as a means for those who are endowed to transfer predetermined information and skills to those who are lacking them. The facilitator may as yet have internalized the oppressors' view of learners as people who must be supported, carried and guided by a facilitator who has the responsibility to draw out knowledge or wisdom from the learner. This places the control of the teaching-learning process in the hands of the facilitator and goes against the true nature of facilitation.

I think facilitation is just something that you have to bring out of someone. You are the one that has to bring that something out of the person - that something that he does not have (First interview facilitator).

Jean accordingly suggests a more authoritative approach to teaching (the teacher is expert) by **focusing** primarily on the specific identifiable **skills** to be acquired. Here the instruction is focused on the subject, not the learners. It is also clear that Jean feels safer being in charge of the whole teaching process and may be anxious about letting the learners learn by doing on their own - feeling that she's not fulfilling her learners' expectations of her.

You must perform the role of a real teacher. You must be able to do that, I think, because that is what they want and what they ask of you. Our role is to teach them literacy - O.K. and life skills in the line of

literacy (First interview facilitator).

This view correlates with that of the organization which also suggests a more authoritative approach to teaching by focusing primarily on the benefits the computer offers for **drill and practice** purposes. The focus is therefore more on computer assisted instruction than on the learners.

The computer offers many benefits for drill and practice. Learners that are not at the same intellectual level don't have to work together so that they can progress at their own speed and ability level independent of the rest of the class (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

The function of the facilitator is furthermore to be the **determiner and interpreter of content objectives**. It is therefore a teacher-based system of instruction where the burden of instruction and the determining of objectives rest with the facilitator and the learner is not involved in the mutual process of formulating learning objectives.

I write down my goals for each lesson and am well prepared for all my classes (Second class observation).

However, Jean does stress the importance of initially involving the learners in the determining of objectives.

At this stage I let the learners lead me (Second interview facilitator).

Jean also believes that it is her responsibility to motivate the learners to learn. One way of achieving this objective is to provide learners with **immediate feedback** (extrinsic motivation) about their progress. Rewards such as the facilitator's approval, would accordingly ensure that the learners learn.

You must give them recognition when they're succesful. They need that desperately. Even the smallest thing, because the recognition you give them motivates them (extrinsic motivation/praise) ... *Their progress can't just happen naturally as is the case with school children* (First interview facilitator).

A primary concern is therefore providing positive or negative feedback. The

facilitator accordingly **controls the learning process** and is regarded as the active participant in the teaching endeavor while the learners are merely passive participants.

It's the facilitator's responsibility to do what is needed to get the learners to succeed (Pilot study interview).

- **The facilitator's views towards a motivational teaching style (role)**

The facilitator should perform the role of a motivator by building the learners' confidence while building their skills.

My job is an uplifter - making, helping them on the road to bettering themselves. Making them more confident, self sufficient (Pilot study interview).

One way of strengthening learner motivation is by persuading the learners of the value of literacy classes

Show them that the skill to read and write is available to them. Stimulate their interest, their appetite. Get them interested - they've never thought of that (Pilot study interview).

Another way of strengthening motivation is by tying the subject to their interests. In order to accomplish this objective learners should be given the opportunity to say what their learning needs are.

You must know what their needs are, how they learn ... I listen to what they want to discuss in class and then notice what they want to learn ... you must just teach them things that they can use in their life (Second interview facilitator).

The facilitator should also bring **enthusiasm** into the class by being enthusiastic herself.

You have to be enthusiastic. You should not come to class unmotivated. You have to motivate your learners all the time so that they will continue learning (extrinsic motivation) (First interview facilitator).

However, the authoritative and motivational approaches are still very directive and are always dependent upon the facilitator. Learners are extrinsically motivated and rewards such as the facilitator's approval will ensure that the learners learn. The facilitator correspondingly provides the motivation rather than developing the learners' own motivation. Therefore, unless the facilitator can phase out extrinsic motivation with the aim of getting learners more intrinsically motivated there may exist a danger that learning will tend to cease when the class comes to an end (see 5.3.4.3). It is therefore important for the facilitator to use praise with the eye of phasing out praise (extrinsic) and phasing in **encouragement** (intrinsic).

You must tell him that he can do this and you're here to help him and don't be afraid and you believe in him and he relaxes (encouragement)
(First interview facilitator).

- **The facilitator's views towards a facilitative teaching style (role)**

Jean does emphasize the importance of developing **learner responsibility** and a sense of **self-initiative**. Here the facilitator believes that preparing learners to become more self-directed in the teaching-learning process by encouraging them to take responsibility for their own growth and development, is vital. Jean therefore places increasing value on learner control.

You must let them know literacy is not something you can just give to them. I tell them, 'I wish I could give it to you, but I can't put it in a gift box and wrap it with paper and tie it with a bow and say here it is. You have to work very hard and it is only something you can do for yourself' (First interview facilitator).

Jean believes that a facilitator should not only **talk** to the learners but **with them**. The facilitator should therefore relinquish her expert role and develop a learning community of equals. This view correlates with that of the organization.

You must be able to go down to their level, that you feel you're next to them, you're not standing here in front of them (contradiction to practice, see 5.3.4.3) or high and far from them, you're with them in this thing. They must know you're at their level and know that you

care. You are glad with them when something good happens and you also share their sorrow. I think the closer you get to them when they open up and feel at ease in your company the easier they will learn (First interview facilitator). The facilitator has many tasks to perform. He's a confessor, a confidant and must be able to create a relationship with the learners (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

This could further entail that facilitators should be able to share their experiences with learners.

You need self-confidence to expose yourself to learners. I tell them to tell the learners of their own fears and failures. If you are not prepared to give of yourself you will never be a good facilitator (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Learners could also be provided with the opportunity to **share in decision-making** while the facilitator avoids imposing her agendas values and expectations on the learners.

At first I made them come up with reasons for their wanting to learn. Here comes popular education. It musn't be me telling them. Later on I concentrated on what they wanted. They didn't want things pushed onto them (Pilot study interview).

Learners are occasionally provided with very limited decision-making opportunities. Even these limited decisions can provide an opportunity for developing learner self-confidence - especially if the learner is dependent and not yet ready to accept more responsibility in the teaching-learning process.

Learners can choose whether they want to write with a pencil or a pen (Third class observation).

Jean believes that one should **empower** learners by helping them to believe in themselves and from this base explore their potential. Jean accordingly believes that the goal of teaching should be the learners' own personal growth and empowerment.

I let them feel that they've achieved it themselves ... that they feel that

they've progressed to that point themselves (First interview facilitator).

Jean also proposes adopting a directive but highly **supportive** approach to reinforce learning.

If they can't do it on their own we do it together (First interview facilitator).

Measuring up to these standards is not always easy. Notwithstanding, the facilitator (pilot study) does express the **desire to improve** and as an independent learner, continue with self-training.

I don't think I'm a very good facilitator - but at least I'm trying and want to learn more (Pilot study interview).

The attitudes of the facilitator towards the learners

The following quotation describes the facilitator's (pilot study) opinions on teaching learners with **special educational needs**, her views on the difficulties experienced in assessing their progress and the concluding standpoint that her role does not include teaching LSEN.

You can't really evaluate a person ... When I notice a person is unteachable I tell them straight away. She's spent 11 years at a school for the mentally handicapped. She's unteachable to me. I can teach her to knit, but it's time consuming. Who do I think I am to teach her? This puts a facilitator off. I can help a remedial person but not a retarded person. It's not my job in any case. I was going to have difficulty in telling her not to come back. I can't do anything for her ... Some are unteachable. Their world is sort of closed (Pilot study interview).

These learners are therefore denied basic access to literacy classes. The facilitator asserts that due to their dependency learners view themselves as sub-ordinate while viewing the facilitator as dominant. According to the learners the teacher therefore knows everything and the learners know nothing. Authority therefore rests with the facilitator and it is assumed that the facilitator knows all the answers. This places a

great responsibility upon a facilitator adopting a teacher-centred approach. The responsibility felt by the facilitator could further strengthen the learners' dependency upon her. This does not necessarily have to be a defect, but it may, however, be a serious limitation especially if the learner is kept in such a dependent mode.

They believe everything a facilitator has to say. That is why it is such a big responsibility to be a facilitator ... The learners think we (facilitators) know everything about anything (first interview facilitator).

The learners' attitudes toward the teaching approach

Sam wants to be **informed by an expert**, she responds mainly to a facilitator who makes her learn. It is clear that Sam wants close supervision and needs the reassuring presence of a "strict" authority figure.

The teacher needs to be stricter with us so that we can pay attention to what we're doing. When I was at school the teacher hit us with a cane. I promise you we sat up straight in class (Second interview learner Sam).

Nevertheless, Sam also proves to be a very independent learner, accepting responsibility for her own learning *outside* of class.

What I learn here I'm going to use at home. I will keep on reading, buy myself some books or go to the library. I will keep on learning as long as God gives me the strength and the health to do so (Second interview learner Sam).

In contrast Sam's **motivation to learn** *within* the classroom appears to be **conditional** in the sense that the level of responsibility on her part is dependent upon the extent that the facilitator is prepared to forfeit of herself in the teaching-learning process.

*She tries to teach us - so I will go on (First interview learner Sam).
You must give your teacher all your attention because she makes so many sacrifices for us (Second interview learner Sam).*

5.3.4 The classroom dynamics (practice)

5.3.4.1 The learning stage of the facilitator as learner

Reactions of facilitator towards training methods and techniques

A non-directive experiential approach is adopted by the trainers where the facilitators are coached to take a measure of responsibility for their own learning. They are offered basic tools and methods, but the rest is left up to them.

The information comes out of the trainees. They are coached to discover the answers for themselves. To help them with their general meetings we'd say, 'List your problem - put it on the agenda. It's your problem now - how do you see the solution?' Sometimes we know what the solution is, but we don't give it to them. They must discover it for themselves. We only give them guidelines at the beginning of the meeting, 'Now it's your meeting. You will determine what you want to do; what resources you have in your community.' They are not spoonfed (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

A mismatch occurs when the facilitators feel frustrated and dissatisfied with the non-directive approach used in their training as it seems some of them still prefer a more structured approach and tightly packed programme presenting them with enough information. In terms of training method Jean expresses the need for explicit direction when teaching adults and wants to be 'taught how to teach' or at least how others think she should teach. Knowledge is also considered as something fixed which should be transferred to the learners

Our facilitators were very frustrated with their training (Interview UNISYS spokesperson). You can not give facilitators a book or a manual. You must tell them how to do it ... Facilitators should know what knowledge we need to teach them and how we should teach them that (Second interview facilitator).

Balance between facilitator responsibility and trainer/organization power (control)

During the initial training Jean experiences a need for structure and clear guidelines,

(dependent) but as she improves in experience and knowledge she stresses the need for more flexibility and independence (more self-directed). A mismatch occurs here: during the training a facilitative approach is used (Stage 3) whilst Jean expresses a need for more structure (dependent). On the other hand in the practice phase the organization, contradicting themselves, takes a more authoritative stance, providing the facilitators with clear-cut objectives and instructions and imposing their ways of doing on the facilitators where they choose the programme content and expect the facilitator to adapt to it, (Stage 1) while Jean expresses the need for more independence. Jean, capable of taking on more responsibility in her teaching endeavor, is delegated by her superiors to a more passive role, having to do blindly what she is told without understanding truly why. Control is therefore imposed at an organizational level.

The programme was just given to us and we were told that you first had to complete the visual blocks with the learners before doing the auditory blocks with them. I realised later that it can't work that way. I asked our boss and the other person that trained us and they gave me a long explanation why it must be done the way they want it (First interview facilitator). The bosses are so rigid, there was never time to do other things in class. We must send them statistics and the educational department is also just interested in seeing progress (Second interview facilitator).

The facilitator as learner's progress

The criteria for the facilitator's success is determined by the results obtained by the learners in the IEB exams. This could entail that the co-ordinating efforts imposed by the organization could be used as a means to control the facilitators and therefore discourage individual autonomy.

Although the IEB exams are voluntary, facilitators motivate the learners strongly since facilitators' success is determined by the number of learners who complete and pass the exams (First class observation).

The organization consequently makes use of a specific external assessment system (provided by the computer) in order to assess how the programme objectives are being met.

Facilitator's should complete attendance and result forms on a monthly basis. We then type it into our database. On this database we can pick up any trends. The performance of individual facilitators is also compared to the average performance of other facilitators (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Jean acknowledges her own progress from a more dependent facilitator to one guided by her own initiative. It is clear that a lack of experience, knowledge and skills at times decreased her self-confidence and assisted in keeping her in a dependency mode. She now evaluates herself as being more effective in her teaching endeavor and contributes most of this to her six years of experience in the field.

When I started I knew nothing ... and because it was a new job and I lacked considerable knowledge I was scared and believed that I had to do everything I was told by my superiors. But I realised later that either I had to leave everything or trust my own feelings ... I'm more comfortable with the learners now ... In the beginning I made many mistakes with the programme itself. Some of my learners even stopped coming to class then. I work differently now and I can see that it has a positive effect on the learners. It works. It's right. It feels right to me (First interview facilitator).

5.3.4.2 The learning stage of the learners

The learning stages of Sam, Maggie and Martha could be determined more accurately by observing them closely during the class sessions and by primarily relying on the remarks made by the facilitator and the learners themselves about their learning behaviour. It was more difficult to determine the learning stages of the other learners since some of the learners did not attend class that regularly and no explicit statements were made about their learning preferences. The researcher subsequently had to rely on classroom behaviour only.

Sam and **Maggie** appear to be **highly self-directed learners**. Sam (presently at ABET level 1 of the NQF) seems to be a more active learner. She develops individual initiative outside the classroom and creates lifelong learning situations for herself. She is also able to use what she has learnt in class in her daily life. She is experienced and motivated enough to continue on her own, but still needs a facilitator as a guide and can learn from any kind of facilitator.

I will go on with the classes no matter who the teacher is - even if I don't like her (First interview learner Sam). When I go to the shop I ask for my receipt. If you don't have that piece of paper they'll say you didn't buy that stuff there. It's these small things that help a lot for the bigger things in the future ... What I learn here I'm going to use at home (Second interview learner Sam).

She tends to get bored easily when doing one activity only and therefore likes to pass quickly from the one activity to the next. She is also very inquisitive about what the other learners are doing and often volunteers to take the lead in any activity.

It seems as if she's pressing the keys automatically and I can sense that she's bored ... Every learner works on his own. Sam quickly stands up to see what another learner is writing, but they do not speak to each other (Fourth class observation).

Maggie (presently at ABET level 2 of the NQF), seems to be a more reflective learner. She seems very quiet during classroom sessions and likes to watch what the others are doing. She does not like to answer questions in class, however, when she does answer it becomes apparent that she knows all the answers. She also makes significant use of the literacy classes to pursue her own goals. She completed a computerised driver's licence course during her literacy training and has subsequently empowered herself by obtaining her driver's licence and buying herself a car. It is interesting to note that the ABET level of competence does not necessarily coincide with the level of self-directedness of the learners.

Maggie quietly works on her own ... When she does answer she gets it right every time (Fifth class session).

Martha, (presently at ABET level 1 of the NQF) seems to be a more **dependent learner**. She prefers teacher-centred and content-orientated methods. She requires explicit direction and needs authority and external reinforcement and discipline and wants close supervision. She expects Jean to be both *an* authority (a specialist in the subject) and *in* authority (in command of their group). She is used to not having to make decisions and it does not seem to bother her at all. She needs frequent interaction with Jean. She seems to be a follower, just copying what the others are doing. It must be noted here that Martha is perceived by the facilitator to be a slow learner with special educational needs which have to be taken into account when

further referring to Martha.

This is a very friendly teacher. I think the teacher is sometimes too friendly with us (needs authority) (Fourth class observation). It is clear that Martha is not reading the words, but just following the others (Seventh class observation).

5.3.4.3 The teaching style of the facilitator (roles)

Methods and techniques used

The following teaching methods which reflect Jean's preference for particular teaching styles in the teaching-learning process, are used.

An **individualised teacher and subject-centred system of instruction** predominates most of the sessions. The burden of instruction rests on Jean and there is a considerable lack of groupwork. The computer is used to supplement or aid what she does.

Everyone works on his own. I have not as yet seen any groupwork ... While Jean is working with Martha the other learners just sit and watch (Fourth class observation).

During all of the sessions the learners are provided with **highly specific tasks and assignments** like filling in the register, reading words out aloud, reading the time, working on the computer and completing specific content questions assigned to them. The lessons are well planned and she knows what every learner has to do each day. However, learners are merely assigned tasks without a choice in the matter. It is also clear that many of the lessons bare little or no relation to the rural context.

Kate, today we're going to read this article 'Springtime in Namakwaland' (Seventh class observation).

Jean is primarily interested in teaching the learners reading and writing skills. She therefore chooses the programme **content** and makes most of the decisions *for* the learners: She is especially concerned with the content to be covered and acts as a source of knowledge disseminating information to the learners. This in turn affects the more directive methods she employs as opposed to more participatory learning

methods.

Today we're going to do the function of capital letters (First class observation) We're going to look at the past tense and abbreviations (Fifth class observation) Today we're going to learn about colours (Sixth class observation).

Commencing with the fifth session Jean alternates the class session between presentation methods (using a lecture discussion) and participatory methods (encouraging interaction between the learners themselves and the learners and the facilitator).

During the eight class sessions the following delivery techniques are used by Jean whilst performing her role as an instructor:

Jean does much of the talking (**teacher-led discussions**) and thinking for the learners, asking simple **straightforward content questions** and expecting learners to provide instant answers to all her queries. Her questions which focus more on facts than feelings may facilitate her own learning which can cause the learners to become more dependent upon her. She is mainly concerned with the **transfer of knowledge** and does not encourage the learners to analyse what is transferred, but merely to reproduce it. She is more concerned with the product (finding the correct answers) than the process of learning. Problem-solving is therefore not at the forefront of Jean's practice and learning is subsequently non-reflective.

Jean does most of the talking (Second class observation) Why do we start a sentence with a capital letter? (First class observation) How many years are there in a century? (Third class observation) What is at the end of a sentence? (Sixth class observation).

Jean adopts a structured rigorous, **repetitious (drill) approach** throughout the sessions and alternates her classes with highly interactive computerized drill sessions.

Fifteen phrases are repeated 50 times on the computer (First class observation) The learners have to practice to write the following letters a, b, c, then b,b,b,a,a,a ... (Fourth class observation) The class has to repeat the words in choir-like fashion (Fifth class observation).

Jean provides **immediate feedback and assistance** to the learners by providing them with the answers and correcting their errors.

She helps and corrects Marius immediately when he stumbles with his reading She does this with all of her learners (Third, fourth, sixth and seventh class observation).

Jean provides **external incentives (praise)** in order to motivate the learners to learn.

That's it ... That's right ... Nice work ... 100% correct ... You've learnt your alphabet well ... You read nicely today ... That's nice, you know the answers well (fourth, fifth and sixth class observation).

During the eight class sessions the following delivery techniques are used by Jean whilst performing her **role as a motivator**:

Jean uses **demonstration** (a presentation method) by giving the learners an interesting task to do and then involves the learners more actively in the classroom process by letting them do it themselves and practising the skills at home. The learners therefore interact directly with the material which further stimulates the learning process. Although this approach is still very directive Jean uses this technique to build learner confidence and cultivate personal awareness while simultaneously building their skills and preparing them for more responsibility in the teaching-learning process.

With this lesson I wanted to teach them to say how they feel ... and if you don't like something you can say so ... Everyone got a copy of the salad and had to try it at home. Some were so proud of themselves when they got it right. This really contributes to their lives, then they feel enriched (Second interview facilitator).

In the fifth session Jean starts to tie the subject to the **learners' interests and needs** by building on their experiences - therefore the process of learning builds on what is already there. This encourages learner willingness and enthusiasm is reinforced. The subject is no longer the focus, instead the learner reclaims that position. The learners are therefore encouraged to talk, frame questions and work through their problems (see learners' reactions - 5.3.4.4). The lesson develops spontaneously (learners react on the spur of the moment); this leads to enthusiasm and motivation. Jean alternates

the class session between presentation methods (using a lecture discussion) and participatory methods (using groupwork where she encourages interaction between the learners themselves and the learners and herself). Personal interaction takes place between Jean and the learners and the communication is two way in nature.

Let's use your questions in the class today ... Jean then discusses the dangers of the loan system and the interests they charge. Everybody seems to want to talk ... Even Marius has a lot to say (Fifth class observation).

Throughout the seventh and eighth session the atmosphere in the class is relaxed and the air is filled with enthusiasm, vibrance and energy.

During the eight class sessions the following delivery techniques are used by Jean whilst performing her role as a facilitator:

The facilitator is not the expert or the director that will solve the learners' problems but becomes a **resource** person who will help and support them in sorting things out for themselves (learner-centred). By providing some of the information or advice and leaving the responsibility with the learners to act on that advice the facilitator slowly weans the learners of being taught and taking greater control of their own learning. A balance is therefore maintained between supporting and directing the learners.

One learner enquired about a death certificate. I did not tell her I'll get it for her. I only told her where she could find the information herself. I then used the enquiry to teach her new words. Now she will be able to help herself and others. It's a skill that she didn't have before which she possesses now (First interview facilitator).

The **learners** are encouraged to **share** their **experiences**. The facilitator is accordingly willing to give up some control over the teaching-learning process by withdrawing and in so doing encourages the learners to work together and become their own resource persons.

Jean distances herself from the learners and lets them share their experiences (Fifth class observation).

The **facilitator** also **shares** her **experiences** with the learners. By working together with the learners and sharing knowledge and experience the facilitator becomes a

participant learner herself and the boundaries are not so formal anymore. Learners are not viewed as deprived, handicapped and hence inferior people but viewed as equals with whom knowledge and experience can be shared. Learning therefore becomes a shared co-operative enterprise.

Jean becomes a learner herself. She takes part in the lively discussion and often acknowledges her lack of knowledge, 'I didn't know that.'
(Fifth class observation).

5.3.4.4 The learners' reactions towards the teaching styles

Learners' reactions towards an instructive (authoritative) teaching style

All the learners seem very passive, dependent and affirming when the **straightforward questions** are put to them. Some merely echo the words of the facilitator without really experiencing the need to think or do not respond at all. They tend to observe and absorb and have a tendency to respond mainly to the facilitator who makes them learn (reactive).

Only one of the five learners answers the questions ... Marius reacts with 'hmn' (First class observation) Kate only answers when it is expected of her. She does not ask any questions ... Sophie does not react at all ... Marius only acknowledges the answers (Second class observation) Marius affirms everything Jean says - he echoes her words (Fifth class observation).

It is interesting to note that when Jean leaves the room the learners are absorbed in informal discussions, but as soon as she returns the class becomes quiet and passive again. It may be that the presence of an authoritative person perpetuates dependency and accordingly keeps the learners in a more passive role.

Five learners are grouped around the table now. They are having a lively discussion before the lesson starts ... when Jean enters the class, they are all quiet again (Third class observation).

Although the other learners seem more passive, Sam is motivated and rather actively involved in classroom activities, providing immediate answers to the questions and taking the lead.

Sam answers the most; the others just whisper the answers softly with her (Fifth class observation).

The learners also reveal black and white thinking (a right-wrong-answer mentality) which relates to the more close-ended nature of questions put to them as well as the product orientation of the facilitator (concentrating on the right answers). Because the opportunity is not provided and it is not expected of them they do not express their own opinions.

Learners always think there is a right and a wrong answer. They struggle to express their own opinion (Second interview facilitator).

Many of the learners seem to get bored and even frustrated by the **drill and repetitious approach** used in the CAL programme especially when they make slow progress. Even Jean acknowledges this fact.

You know they just sit and press the keys (Jean illustrates the monotonous movement with her fingers on the table) ... Sam has been doing the same exercise for more than 30 minutes now. She's not really concentrating and I can sense that she's bored. Sam does the same exercise over and over again but makes no progress (Fourth class observation). At the table I learn the most. It's not boring there (Second interview learner Sam).

It is not only the computer but also the more directive and individualistic approach used by Jean during classroom practice that may lead to lack of concentration, causing some learners to lose interest and become bored.

Jean asks for Marius' attention while she explains the past tense (Fifth class observation).

Throughout the eight sessions (with the exception of the fifth session) the classroom atmosphere in general seems relaxed but the learners seem passive, listless and indolent.

Today the class seems very quiet in general ... The learners seem very relaxed in Jean's presence although they don't speak much ... When Jean returns to the group the class is quiet again ... The class is quiet

... again the class is quiet (Third and sixth class observation).

Learners' reactions towards a motivational teaching style

The learners seem more interested, motivated and available to learn. The fact that the fifth and seventh sessions are linked to their interests, make them more **alert and attentive**.

... the class listens attentively (Fifth class observation) and the learners seem to enjoy the class thoroughly (Seventh class observation).

The learners are more **actively** engaged and taking an increasing role in the learning process, having informal conversations at the table as opposed to the silence that characterized the previous more authoritative sessions. Since the learning addresses their needs and interests the learners can relate the current experience (topic under discussion) to past experiences. The learning is therefore more self-initiated and personally involving and the learners seem to show more self-confidence (asking questions) and not feeling intimidated by a more authoritarian approach.

One learner asks about her TV licence. Everybody seems to want to talk - the whispers have even disappeared. Even Marius has alot to say ... The class suddenly spontaneously discusses payment of their TV and radio licences ... Suddenly everyone in the class is talking to one another ... The learners keep on asking questions (Fifth class observation).

It seems that Sam also prefers **groupwork** and the sharing of experiences as opposed to working on the computer.

At the table I learn the most. It's not boring there. We all enjoy talking to each other at the table. What we do on the computer we do at the table in any case (Second interview learner Sam).

Learners' reactions towards a facilitative teaching style

Providing the learners with the opportunity to initiate the discussions by posing their own real life problems, they assume more control of their learning by becoming

increasingly **active** participants in the learning process. As the learners **share information** by asking each other questions and providing the answers themselves, they let others into their experiences and start learning from each other - becoming participants in their own education. The responsibility for the success of the learning enterprise lies with each learner now and not with the facilitator.

Rose asks, 'What do you call the money you have to pay every month?' Sam answers, 'I think it's instalments' (Fifth class observation).

The sharing of information leads to the **sharing of life experiences** and provides the learners with more opportunities to express openly how they feel, to improve their interactions with each other and to work effectively together.

Marius tells about his son who borrowed money, spent it on alcohol, and now has to pay off his debt. All the learners begin to share their own life experiences (Fifth class observation).

The emotional **climate** is **warmer** and brimming with enthusiasm.

The class is enthusiastic. There is a pleasant humming in the class ... Everybody laughs (Fifth class observation).

5.3.4.5 Balance between facilitator power (control) and learner responsibility

The **first, second, third and fourth sessions** are predominantly characterized by an authoritative teaching style (see Figure 5.2).

The facilitator makes use of information lectures and intensive individual tutoring. By transmitting the knowledge and information to the learners, asking the questions, determining the objectives and giving the assignments the facilitator maintains a high degree of control over the learners in order to create the conditions for learning.

Jean controls the learning situation by telling the learners who should work at the table and fill in register forms and who should work on the computer (Third class observation).

Control over the content of reading material is also exercised by the facilitator

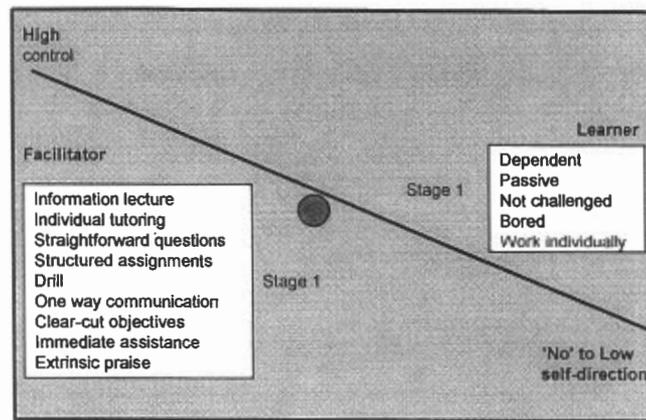


Figure 5.2 Balance between facilitator's control and learners' emerging self-direction during sessions 1, 2, 3 and 4

throughout most of the sessions. The learners do not seem to play a role in selecting the resources to be employed or in the assessment of their own learning. Most of the material used is neutral which suppresses relevant issues, withholding from learners information which could give them a clearer understanding of processes affecting their lives.

Jean is providing all the examples for the exercises out of her own experience. The learners are not asked to give some of their own examples when explaining the hyphen (Fifth class observation).

It is as if the facilitator acts *on* the learners instead of *with* the learners. Power is in the hands of the facilitator which reinforces the learners' dependency and discourages them from taking control of their own lives and attaining autonomy. They subsequently seem dependent upon the facilitator to tell them how they are doing and they do not seem to take any individual initiative for their own learning. This further leads to passivity, lack of interest and boredom. It appears that the more the facilitator exercises authority, the less the amount of freedom and responsibility for the learners is. The learners do not seem to mind a more directive approach. They just seem to passively slip through the system.

The teaching style seems to suit the learners. It doesn't seem to bother them at all (Fourth class observation - researcher comments).

- The **sixth and eighth sessions** are characterized by a combination of an authoritative and motivational teaching style (see Figure 5.3).

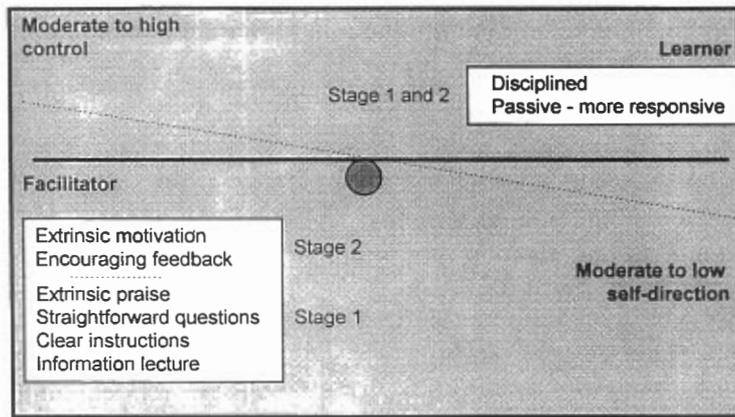


Figure 5.3 Balance between facilitator's control and learners' emerging self-direction during sessions 6 and 8

During the sixth session the facilitator prepares the learners for the IEB exams while the eighth session takes on the form of a farewell party. During the preparation for the IEB exams the facilitator again controls the learning situation by adopting an authoritative teaching style. The learners correspondingly show signs of passivity and have low to no control over the learning situation.

The class is very quiet ... The learners do precisely what they are told
(Sixth class observation).

In both the sessions the facilitator does provide some motivation in the form of extrinsic praise. She thereupon attempts to phase out the praise and phase in more learner autonomy in the form of encouraging feedback. Although the learners still seem disciplined and remain passive they do, however, begin to show signs of becoming more active and responsive by taking the initiative not only to answer the questions, but also to ask the questions. The learners seem to gain moderate control of the learning situation while the facilitator on the other hand gives up some of her control in the process.

There is a very relaxed atmosphere in the class and the learners do not seem to be afraid of asking Jean questions (Sixth class observation).

- The **fifth and seventh sessions** are characterized by a combination of an authoritative, motivational and facilitative teaching style (see Figure 5.4).

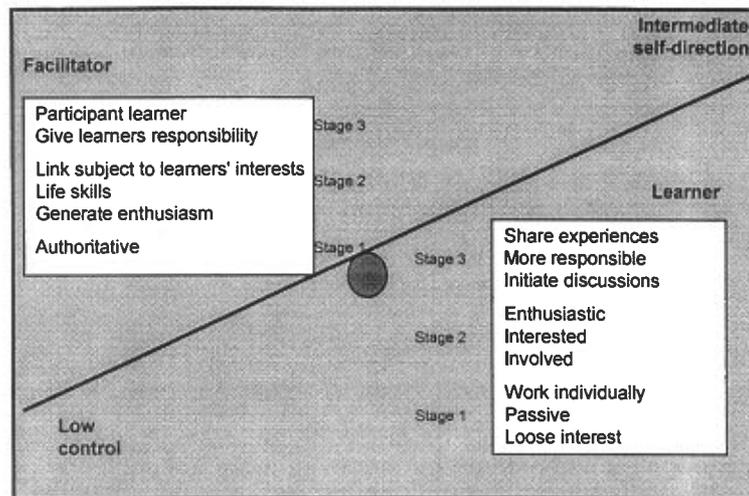


Figure 5.4 Balance between facilitator's control and learners' emerging self-direction during sessions 5 and 7

When an **authoritative teaching style** is used the learners are discouraged from taking more control of the teaching-learning process and subsequently of their own lives. The learners (as is the case with all the other sessions) seem to lose interest, become passive and tend to work individually.

Kate and Marius do not communicate with each other ... Every learner is now busy with his own activity (Fifth class observation).

When a **motivational style** is used by linking the subject to the learners' interests and incorporating life skills, the facilitator generates enthusiasm into the class. Because the material becomes more relevant to the learners' life conditions, it leads to a higher level of learner involvement, enthusiasm and motivation. The advantages of adopting such an approach is that it enhances the communication between learners, provides them with the opportunity to understand their own feelings and emotions and assists them in accepting more responsibility for the learning process itself and their own lives. However, it is apparent that the facilitator still remains on center stage by controlling the activities.

Everybody seems to want to talk (Fifth class observation).

When a **facilitative style** is used the facilitator does not control the learning outcomes, but surrenders some of the power to the learners by becoming a participant learner herself and disappears into the group. She gives the learners more responsibility in the teaching-learning process by providing them with a chance to learn from each other, share their information and unique experiences, initiate the

discussions and becoming actively involved rather than being mere passive participants of the learning endeavor. Although the facilitator does still provide some information and guidance the facilitator and learners seem to share control over the session and in so doing the learners are empowered to take on more control and responsibility for their own efforts and achievements. During this part of the session the facilitator starts at the learners level and encourages them to explore and learn from their own experiences and not accepting that of the facilitator as necessarily valid for their circumstances.

Let's use your question in class today (Fifth class observation).

The learners are not merely learners anymore but also become the teachers. The responsibility for learning is therefore placed in the hands of the learners and they are thus viewed as people who possess innate knowledge. The session thus becomes a collaborative and active process between the learners and the facilitator.

Learners are teaching each other. When Rose asks a question Sam provides her with the answer (Fifth class observation).

- **The active style**

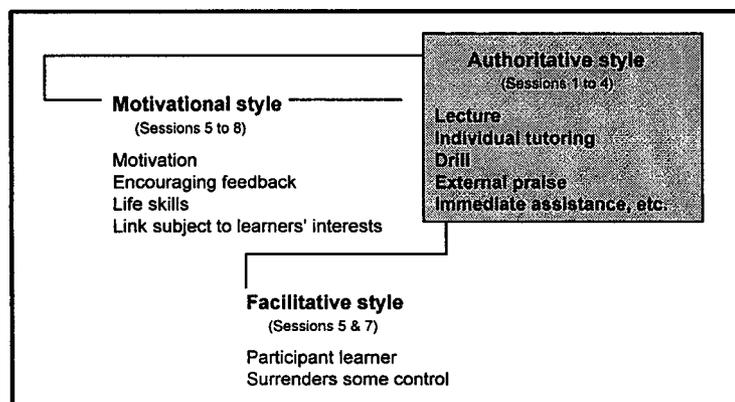


Figure 5.5 Loops around the active style

All the sessions are organized around an authoritative style (see Figure 5.5) which could reflect the facilitator's preference for using the teaching style which she has come to use effectively and seems the happiest with. Sessions 1 to 4 are characterized purely by an authoritative style, while sessions 6 and 8 also incorporate a motivational style and sessions 5 and 7 a facilitative style. One notices that from the fifth session the facilitator does progressively incorporate other styles which could gradually give the learners more control over the learning process (i.e. the motivational and

facilitative style). Nevertheless, the authoritative style still remains to be the more active style throughout all of the sessions.

Although the facilitator incorporates three styles in the fifth session the facilitator changes her styles *reactively* in response to the needs that the learners present. The fifth session starts off by using presentation methods (information lecture on the use of capital letters), participatory methods (where the learners talk to each other, and become active and more involved) and then abruptly changes again to individual instruction (where the learners become passive, silent and bored again). What was discussed between the learners during the participatory stages of the session is not incorporated in the final stages (presentation stages) of the session at all. The session thus progresses from a lectured discussion (where learners have no control) to participatory learning (where learners gain more control over the learning enterprise) back to individual instruction, programme instruction and a lecture (where the learners lose their autonomy and control again). It therefore appears that the facilitator does not change her styles *proactively* by consciously deciding to lead the learners to achieve a predetermined set of objectives that would enable them to be more self-directed but chooses her styles reactively in response to their needs at that particular time.

Initial stages: *Let's use your question in class today ...* Final stages: *Each learner is given his individual assignment - two have to work at the computer, Marius must complete the register, Hanna has to sound words* (Fifth class observation).

5.3.4.6 Mismatches

Two types of mismatches were encountered during the eight sessions. An effective mismatch and an ineffective mismatch.

- An **effective mismatch** refers to a situation where the teaching style of the facilitator creates an effective mismatch by *challenging* the learner with a *task within reach*, or a situation where the teaching style of the facilitator challenges the learner's learning style by decreasing learner dependency and increasing learner control.
- An **ineffective mismatch** refers to a situation where the teaching style of the facilitator creates an ineffective mismatch by *challenging* the learners with too difficult *tasks out of their reach*, or a situation where the *learner's learning style*

challenges the facilitator's teaching style (i.e. learners who need more independence are confronted by a more directive facilitator).

The most common **ineffective mismatch** that occurred during the observations was where the learning styles of the learners challenged the more directive teaching style of the facilitator (see Figures 5.6 to 5.8 and Figures 5.10 to 5.12). Throughout many of the authoritative sessions the learners seem to know the answers to all the questions put to them. None of the tasks presented to them by the authoritative facilitator seem to lie beyond their grasp. The straightforward questions therefore did not challenge the learners, but rather underestimated their potential.

She underestimates learners by keeping on asking the same questions even when the learners prove to her more than once that they know the answers (Second, third, fifth and sixth class observation)

The life experience and learning skills of the learners are not utilized during the authoritative sessions which could enable the learners to learn at level 3 (as disclosed in the fifth session). The learners' reactions toward this mismatch is therefore passivity, lack of interest, boredom, frustration and discouragement.

Although Sam is capable of more challenging tasks and individual involvement she is delegated passive roles by the directive facilitator and she accordingly refers to her need for more independence. A tension therefore exists when the facilitator wishes to be more authoritative while Sam seems to want to be challenged more. The facilitator does not, however, change her approach, but keeps on exercising control over the teaching-learning process by providing Sam with less challenging tasks.

I think I can go up a bit and if I don't know the answer I'll ask. Those that are stupid and slow, the teacher must look after them and also those that can only learn a little bit (First interview Sam).

It also becomes apparent that the facilitator does not exercise flexibility by differentiating between the learners when using a certain style while the learners are together as a group. Although Maggie, Dorothy and Jack are presently at ABET level 2 the facilitator uses an authoritative approach by asking them the same straightforward questions (Fifth session). The facilitator does, however, mention that these learners are provided with more difficult tasks during other sessions attended by ABET level 2 learners only.

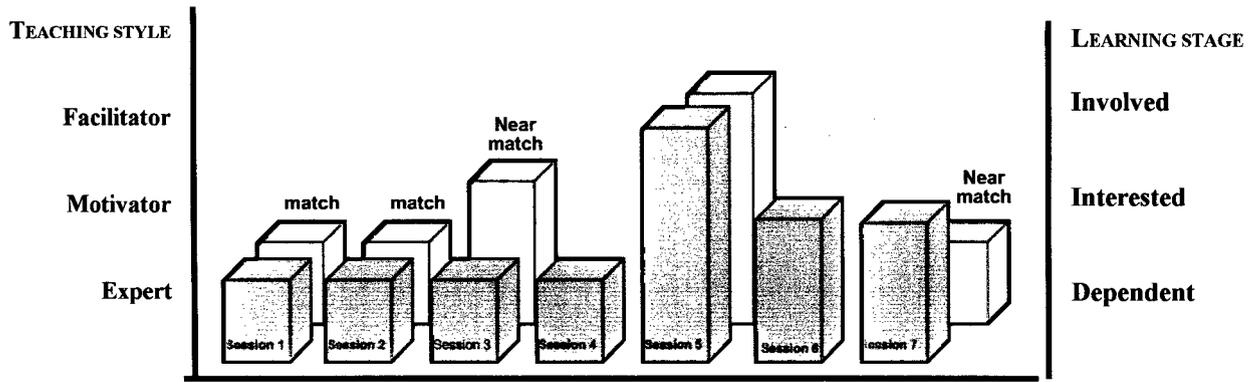


Figure 5.6 Display of match and mismatch between Marius' learning stage and the facilitator's teaching style

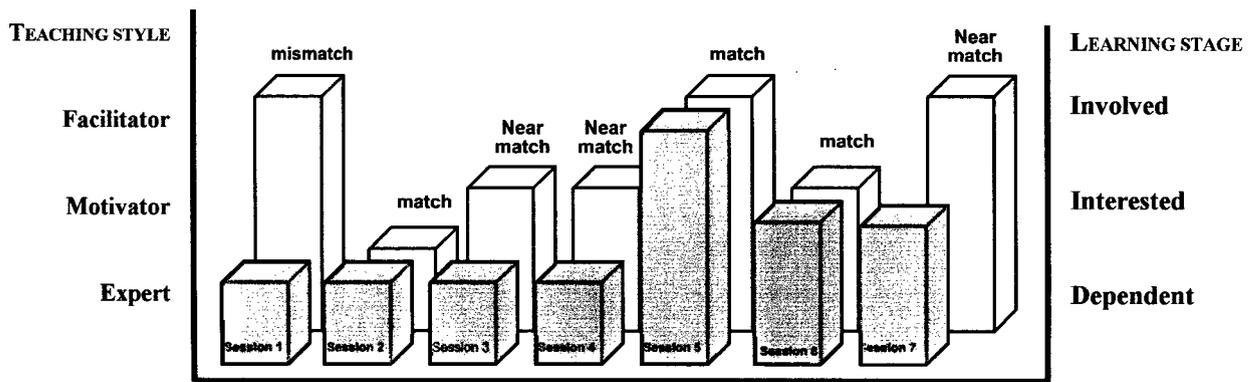


Figure 5.7 Display of match and mismatch between Sam's learning stage and the facilitator's teaching style

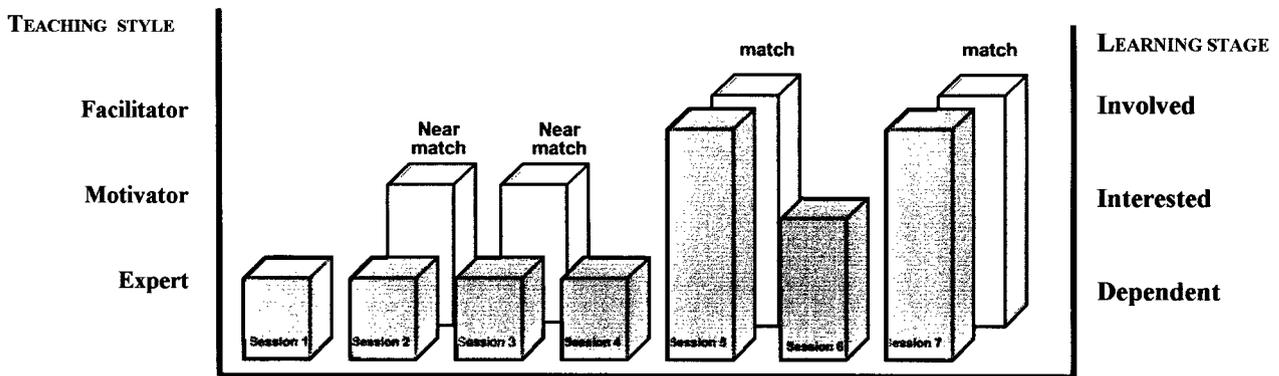


Figure 5.8 Display of match and mismatch between Kate's learning stage and the facilitator's teaching style

Note that the teaching styles of the facilitator are indicated in green

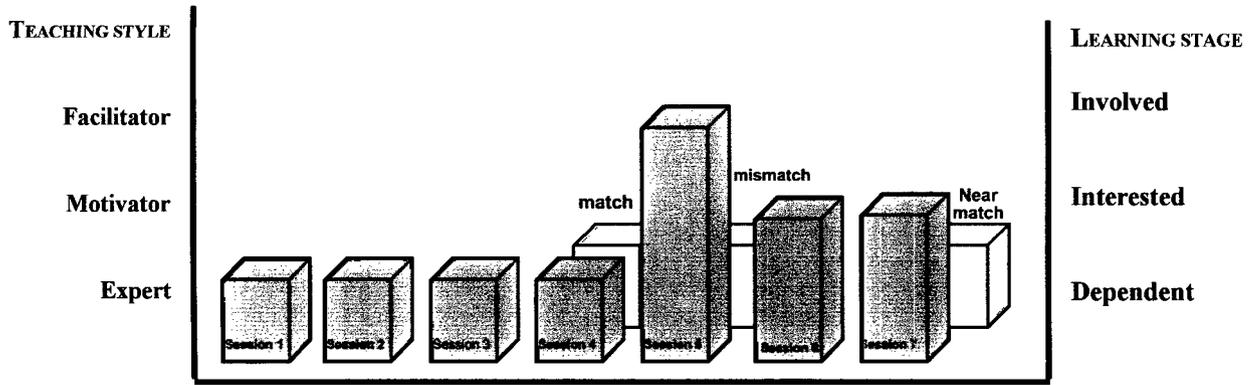


Figure 5.9 Display of match and mismatch between Martha's learning stage and facilitator's teaching style

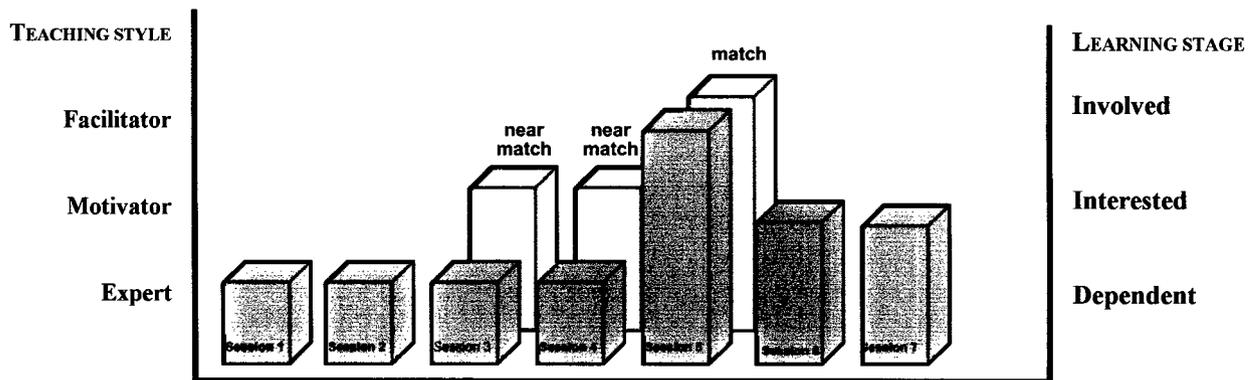


Figure 5.10 Display of match and mismatch between Rose's learning stage and the facilitator's teaching style

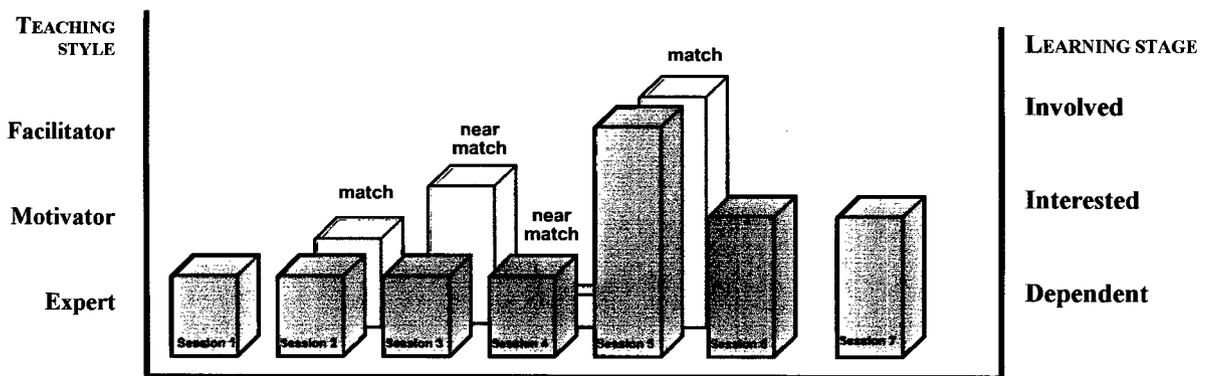


Figure 5.11 Display of match and mismatch between Debbie's learning stage and the facilitator's teaching

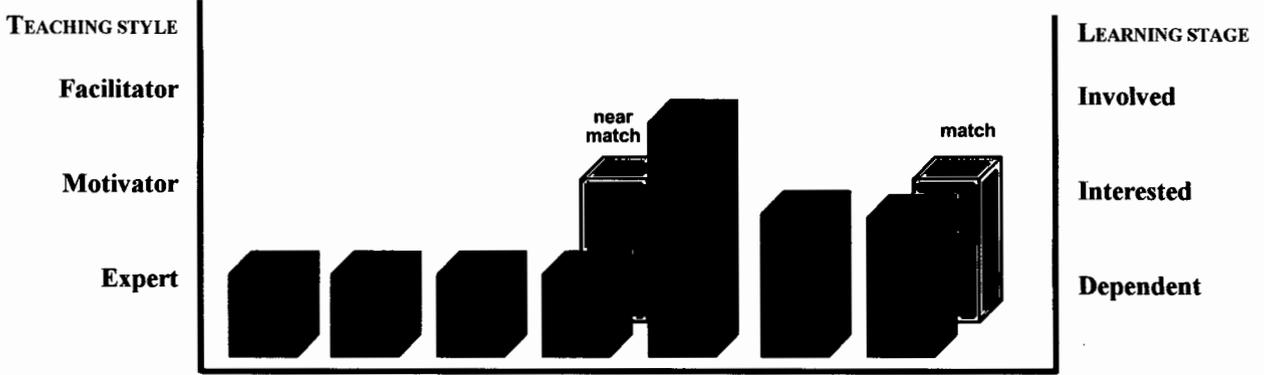


Figure 5.12 Display of match and mismatch between Dorothy's learning stage and the facilitator's teaching style

Another ineffective mismatch occurs in the fifth session when the facilitator overestimates Debbie's abilities by providing her with a task that lies beyond her reach (see Figure 5.11). Instead of providing Debbie with some support to achieve certain parts of the task by putting in a bit of effort, Debbie, due to lack of support does not perform the task at all and a good learning opportunity goes unutilized.

Miss, the exercise is too difficult (Fourth class observation).

In the fifth session an **effective mismatch** is created when the facilitator does step forward to decrease learner dependency and helps to redefine the relationship between herself and the learners by adopting a less directive approach (Style 3). Most of the learners (with the exception of Martha - see Figure 5.9) react to this effective mismatch by becoming more actively involved in the learning endeavor by sharing experiences, taking increasing responsibility for their own learning and becoming more enthusiastic. The learners seem to enjoy the opportunity to participate in groups and share their own experiences which could enhance self-esteem and make self-directed learning a future possibility.

5.3.4.7 Assessment of learner progress

The facilitator monitors the learners' progress. Quantifiable results are made possible by automatic and extensive record keeping on the computer.

The computer makes it possible to monitor each learner's progress
(Second class observation).

The CAL programme provides for carefully sequenced instruction where learning at one level serves as a prerequisite to success at the next higher level. Learners can thus move systematically to the next stage of the programme whenever they are ready to do so.

Learners must master certain criteria before proceeding to the next level on the computer. This ensures that we have daily control over the learners' progress (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Continuous diagnostic information which serves as a blueprint for the facilitator to provide additional remedial assistance when necessary, is subsequently provided. Remedial work can accordingly be individualized since there is great variability in

the learning rates of learners.

I know precisely where I am with each learner. This works especially well in remedial cases where individual intervention is needed. At the end of the term I look at the blocks that the learners have mastered on the computer ... This shows very specifically where the learner struggles (Second class observation).

One benefit mentioned in using individualized instructional techniques is that learners compete with themselves rather than competing destructively with others. This can boost their self-esteem. Learners do not have to feel pressurized by keeping up with peers, but are allowed to progress at their own pace.

Learners that are not at the same intellectual level don't have to work together so that they can progress at their own speed and ability level independent of the rest of the class (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

According to the UNISYS spokesperson the computer addresses the problem of inexperienced facilitators since learners do show progress working in front of the computer. Learner progress is therefore measured by the skills and competencies learners have achieved in order to pass the IEB examination.

There is a connection between a learner's progress and the time spent in front of the computer. The facilitator with more experience and methodology who takes the learners' progress more seriously, can spend less time in front of the computer, but the fact remains that the learner does show progress just working at the computer (Interview UNISYS spokesperson).

Although the computer provides many benefits most of the learners have not progressed very far despite having attended class fairly regularly, some even for years.

It takes one to four years before the learners are ready to complete the level 1 IEB exams - even if they do come twice a week which is not always possible (First class observation).

Learners also show a significant lack of transfer of learnt skills. By using the

authoritative style in a non-challenging way, the facilitator stifles learner initiative and consequently creates or maintains dependency and lack of confidence (even with the more self-directed learners). As a result the transfer of skills to real world usage may be very doubtful. The learners' progress seems dependent upon the facilitator's presence and participation and as soon as the learners leave the classes for a period of time learning tends to cease and the learners who have forgotten what they have learned have to start all over again.

Although the learners can write their names, they still say they can not write. They also bring forms that need to be filled in to me so that I must fill them in and then I have to convince them that they can fill them in themselves (First class observation). Kate had class for a year and a half, but after divorcing her husband only started again after a year's interruption. So she's basically starting again (Second class observation - facilitator).

The fact that learners have to write the IEB exams may also contribute to the slow progress since the facilitator tends to delay some learners from writing the exams for fear that learners will fail.

It is very discouraging for a learner to write the IEB exams and then fail, and I'm trying to prevent them from writing and then failing, seeing that so many of them already have very little self-confidence and a low self-esteem (First class observation).

Nevertheless, learners do differ and some show more notable progress than others. Sam who has shown significant progress since attending literacy classes acknowledges her own progress and seems very proud of her accomplishments.

There's a big difference between the way I was and the way I'm now. I can write my name and address now. When I go to the shop I notice the change in myself (Second interview learner Sam).

In addition, learners do show progress (although this takes time) in more unobtrusive ways as well, i.e. by taking on more responsibility for their learning, improving in self-confidence and changing their attitudes.

The frowns have changed to smiles. They were scared and unsure

when they first came here. And then suddenly they just changed and improved drastically. Then you notice how their confidence improves ... what I personally like to see is their frankness. In the beginning they don't ask questions (Fourth class observation).

5.4 DISCUSSION

It is evident that many factors influence the role performance of facilitators during classroom practice. When accounting for the roles facilitators need to perform in ABET the researcher will illustrate and integrate these multivariate and interrelated dimensions to prevent jumping to hasty, partial and unfounded conclusions. The information gathered from the findings is assembled into an immediate accessible, compact form that permits conclusion drawing and action (see Figure 5.13). The display illustrates the interactive and multi-dimensional aspects impacting on the role of the facilitator.

5.4.1 Influences from the broader context, community and organization

Learner attendance

To combat learner drop out which places considerable pressure on facilitators whose success is determined by the number of learners who attend their classes and complete the IEB exams the following factors need to be considered:

- Communities need to be educated regarding illiteracy.
- Cooperation needs to be established with the employers of learners.
- The underlying politics between organizations competing for learners should be addressed since it may cause facilitators unnecessary strain.
- The lack of support learners experience from significant others should be acknowledged as an important determinant of learner attendance.
- Facilitators should be provided with adequate sites. Sites that lack privacy can cause embarrassment for learners and may discourage them from attending classes.

Selection criteria for facilitators

- Minimal requirements for facilitators (std. 8) prove to be inadequate and should be reconsidered.

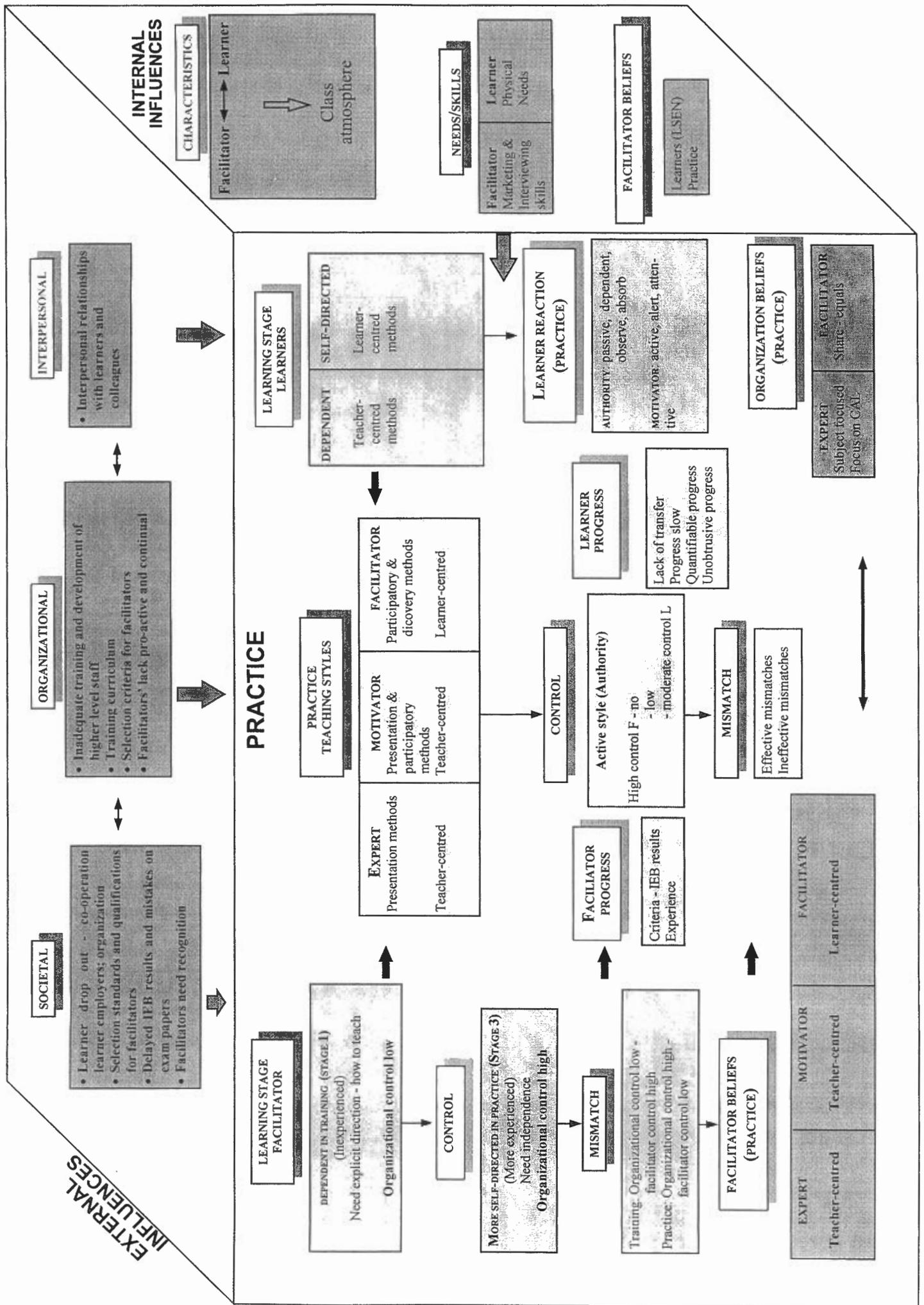


Figure 5.13 Factors impacting on the role of the facilitator in a rural area in the Southern Cape

- Focusing on the personality profile of the facilitator should become a priority since the person of the facilitator (which includes beliefs, own past experience and own empowerment) may have a significant effect on the teaching-learning process.
- Different role players responsible for the selection of facilitators should collaborate since a lack of collaboration could lead to additional problems in the recruiting of facilitators and produce uncommitted facilitators.
- Role players involved with the selection of facilitators should preferably be educated in adult education principles.

Facilitator needs

- Facilitators express the need for more support and recognition in order to perform their jobs effectively. Their role should subsequently be taken more seriously.
- Support provided to facilitators by the organization should be pro-active and include continual follow-up.

Learner needs

Facilitators should be cognizant of the fact that adults attend literacy classes with set intentions and have a wide range of needs which should be considered during classroom practice. Since adults want to learn in the problem areas with which they are confronted daily and therefore have a problem-centred orientation as opposed to a more subject-centred orientation, this needs to be considered during classroom practice.

5.4.2 Beliefs and attitudes

Facilitators and learners have beliefs and attitudes about each other when cast in certain roles which can directly or indirectly affect their expectations of classroom behaviour. Facilitators may also have attitudes towards their whole teaching approach which may further influence their role performance.

Attitudes towards learners

- Attitudes that facilitators have towards learners may contribute to their expectations of learners' behaviour in role relationships.

- Facilitators need to explore what learners' views on and expectations are of education.
- The views that learners may have of themselves as being sub-ordinate to the facilitator may be provoked by the teaching style the facilitator adopts during classroom practice and may become a serious limitation in the teaching-learning process.

Attitudes towards the teaching approach

- The attitudes that facilitators adopt towards their teaching approach may be directly influenced by the attitudes adopted by the organization prescribing certain roles to the facilitator.
- Facilitators should be trained not to view their roles as solely relying on subject expertise, but to focus more on the learners and their life experiences.

5.4.3 Classroom practice (role performance of facilitators and learners)

Personal relationships

- The personal relationship between facilitators themselves and facilitators and learners is a critical element in performing a facilitative role since it may cause mistrust and unnecessary strain for facilitators.
- Facilitators must get to know their learners personally and be sensitive towards their needs. In order to accomplish this facilitators should be sensitive and aware of learners' past life experiences and the effect of the broader South African context on their lives.
- Facilitators should, however, not become too personally involved with learners since it could harm any future relationships with that learner.

Class atmosphere

- The way the facilitator creates the learning environment influences the way the class situation is experienced by learners and the ensuing process of learning.
- The manner in which facilitators interact with learners may establish a class atmosphere conducive or detrimental to learning and is probably more important than the actual teaching methods employed.
- The *manner* in which facilitators perform their teaching roles and not the specific teaching style itself may have a significant effect on the way the learners

experience the class situation. The tendency to be authoritarian rather than authoritative may create a cool climate and may produce passivity, apathetic conformity and increasing dependency upon the facilitator. However, when the facilitator is enthusiastic herself the class may seem enthusiastic, vibrant and energized.

Characteristics

- In order to establish a positive class atmosphere facilitators should possess certain attitudinal qualities and be interested in people. They should have a warm personality, be communicative, show empathy, respect, accept learners, have a positive attitude, be patient and be responsible people.
- Facilitators also need to become more flexible, responsive and should accept change. This is important considering the rate of social and technological change with which they are confronted daily.

Teaching styles (roles) of facilitators

It must be noted that conditions in one style may also apply to other styles. Facilitator and learner relations should progress from making decisions *for* the learners (learners of no self-direction to low self-direction) to making decisions *with* the learners (learners of low or moderate self-direction) to delegating decisions *to* learners (learners of high self-direction).

Authoritative style

(A teacher-centred approach used with learners of no to low self-direction)

- The authoritative style could be used with dependent learners (of no to low self-direction) with the intention of gradually phasing out facilitator control and gradually phasing in learner control as this style may increase the learners' dependency upon the facilitator and subsequently lead to a lack of transfer of skills.
- The learners may be provided with specific tasks and assignments which should relate to the needs and interests of the learners and build on their experience.
- Questions should always challenge the learners. By not challenging the learners motivation and initiative is stifled.
- Questions should also focus more on feelings than facts. Learners should be provided with the opportunity to express their own opinions.

- When knowledge is transferred to learners they should be encouraged to analyse what is transferred rather than merely reproducing it since a display of knowledge can be intimidating to inexperienced learners.
- The process of learning (how did you get to the answer?) rather than the product (what is the answer?) should become the focus and learners should be encouraged to find the answers themselves.
- Progressing from making decisions for the learners (no self-direction) to providing them with less demanding decision-making opportunities (low self-direction) could enhance learner confidence and responsibility.
- When drill and practice methods are required it is important that learners show steady progress otherwise it could lead to learner discouragement. It is also important that drill and practice sessions be alternated with other methods since an overemphasis on drill and practice may lead to lack of concentration and boredom.
- Individual sessions could be used for remedial intervention and may be alternated with participatory methods (i.e. group work) to combat learner boredom and enhance communicative skills between learners.
- External incentives (praise) could be used with the intention to phasing out praise and phasing in encouragement especially in situations where learners are challenged with more demanding tasks.
- The communication may still predominantly be one-way (the facilitator *talks to the learners*).
- Presentation methods (i.e. lectured discussions) will be the primary methods used during the authoritative style.

Motivational style

(A teacher-centred approach used with learners of low to moderate self-direction)

- Both approaches (authoritative and motivational) are more directive and may be used to build learner confidence and cultivate personal awareness whilst gradually preparing learners for more responsibility in the teaching-learning process.
- Facilitators should build learner confidence while building skills, since a lack of learner self-confidence may inhibit the learning process.
- Facilitators should empower learners to believe in themselves which could enhance personal growth for the learners.
- Facilitators should bring enthusiasm into the class by being enthusiastic themselves.

- Learners should be given more choice and freedom to set their own goals as this could enhance learner motivation.
- Learners should be encouraged to become the creators rather than the consumers of knowledge.
- Life skills training can be incorporated during these sessions.
- Presentation methods (i.e. demonstration techniques) could be used by giving learners interesting tasks which they can encounter directly for themselves.
- The learners instead of the subject should become the focus.
- Learners should be encouraged to talk, frame questions and work through their problems. Communication thus becomes two-way.
- Sessions may be alternated between presentation methods and participatory methods (i.e. groupwork) where the facilitator and the learners can *talk to each other*.

Facilitative style

(A learner-centred approach used with learners of moderate to high self-direction)

- Facilitators should start where the learners are and encourage them to learn and explore their own experiences.
- Learners should be given the opportunity to say what their learning needs are and share in decision-making.
- Rather than providing the motivation for the learners, the facilitator should support learners in developing their own motivation.
- Facilitators and learners should not only *talk* to each other but *with each other*. Facilitators should be able to share their experiences with the learners by facilitating discussions as members of a learning team and becoming participant learners in the process.
- Learners should also be able to share their experiences with peers.
- During the initial stages the facilitator should become a resource person who supports learners in sorting out problems for themselves (moderate self-direction) and gradually phase in more responsibility for the learners by providing them with the opportunity to become their own resource persons (high self-direction). Learners are thus not merely learners, but become teachers as well.
- Increasing value should be placed on learner control so that learners will become more independent, better prepared for future difficulties and able to find the needed resources themselves.
- Sessions can be alternated between participatory methods and discovery methods (where learners have to find out for themselves).

- A balance between supporting and directing learners should always be maintained.

Learning stages of learners

- Learners at different learning stages are likely to prefer different ways of learning.
- In order to negotiate the roles during classroom practice facilitators need to be introduced to methods or ways to determine the different learning stages of learners.
- Facilitators should be able to assess whether the learning style of the learner is a personal trait/attribute or the result of the learner's reaction towards the teaching style adopted by the facilitator during classroom practice.
- When a facilitator adopts a style that leads to learner boredom, passivity, listlessness, indolence and a lack of interest it may either indicate that the teaching style adopted by the facilitator is inappropriate for the learners (i.e. it does not challenge them) at that particular time or that the manner in which the facilitator performs that role (for example being authoritarian instead of authoritative) does not fulfil the necessary requirements proposed for that role.

Tentative guidelines to determine learning stages

One way in which the different learning style of learners can be determined is through accurate classroom observations.

- **Dependent learners** (learners of **no to low self-direction**) want to be informed by an expert. These learners may require explicit direction, external reinforcement, close supervision and discipline and are not used to making decisions. They seem to be followers rather than leaders. These learners prefer teacher-centred approaches and content-orientated methods as opposed to learner-centred approaches.
- Learners of **low to moderate self-direction** tend to be more active and responsive by wanting to take on more initiative in the classroom. These learners could benefit from a motivational teaching style. It appears that motivated learners may however, respond positively to any style adopted.
- Learners of **moderate to high self-direction** differ from one another. These learners may be more active, competent at setting their own pace, strive for more autonomy and freedom, need more challenging assignments like moving from one activity to the next, tending to be inquisitive, persistent and confident and

often taking the lead during activities or pursuing their own goals; while others tend to be more reflective, passive, less responsive, but still highly self-directive. They do occasionally prefer authority and external motivation if the situation requires it. They prefer learner-centred approaches as opposed to teacher-centred approaches.

Control

- Organizations should take heed of imposing control over facilitators' classroom practices since this could strengthen facilitator dependency and passivity and enhance the chances of the facilitator adopting an authoritative approach during classroom practice even when such an approach appears to be inappropriate.
- When an **authoritative style** is used by the facilitator a high degree of control over learners who present no to low self-direction can initially be maintained with the intention to phase out facilitator control gradually and to encourage learners to accept more responsibility for the learning process and subsequently their own lives. In order to accomplish this the facilitator should begin to adopt a more motivational approach.
- When a **motivational style** is used with learners of low to moderate self-direction the facilitator should be prepared to give up *some* of the control over the learning situation while the learners gain moderate control over the learning situation.
- When a **facilitative style** is used with learners of moderate to high self-direction facilitators and learners should share control over the learning situation as the facilitators become participant learners themselves by disappearing into the group.
- When a **delegative style** is used with learners of high self-direction the facilitator may surrender total control to the learners by not being part of the group at all, but by just supporting when the learners recognise that need. (It must be noted that this style did not surface during the classroom observations).

Mismatches/ pedagogical difficulties

- Facilitators should exhibit **flexibility** when using different styles. They could either change their styles *reactively* (following the learners) in response to the needs of the learners present (suitable in situations where the facilitator discovers that the chosen teaching style poses an ineffective mismatch with the learners' learning stage), or *proactively* (leading the learners) by consciously deciding to lead the learners to greater self-direction (suitable when planning for lessons, a term or a course).

- Facilitators should create effective mismatches in class by *challenging* learners with tasks within their reach or advancing to a next teaching level (for example from a motivational style to a facilitative style) when a learner is ready by gradually decreasing learner dependency and increasing learner control.
- Facilitators should avoid creating ineffective mismatches by challenging learners with too demanding tasks out of their reach since this could discourage learners and harm their self-confidence.
- Facilitators should also avoid adopting a teaching approach that is sub-ordinate (for example an authoritative style) to the learners' learning stage (i.e. moderate to highly self-directed learners).

5.4.4 Assessing progress

Assessing facilitator progress

- Criteria for determining facilitator success needs to be reconsidered.
- If criteria for the facilitator's success is determined by the results obtained by the learners during the IEB exams, this could entail that the co-ordinating efforts imposed by the organization could be used as a means to control the facilitators and discourage individual autonomy.
- Facilitators should not be held responsible for the number of learners attending their classes.
- The learning needs of the learners rather than the facilitator's performance should become the focus.
- Facilitator progress and success are enhanced by years of experience in the field and should be considered during assessment.

Assessing learner progress

- Learner progress can be inhibited when an authoritative teaching style is used as the active style in a non-challenging way, without the inclination to phase out facilitator control and phase in more learner responsibility. As a result learner dependency is either created or maintained and the transfer of skills outside of the classroom is doubtful since the learners' progress seem dependent upon the facilitator's presence.
- Instead of providing positive feedback to all learners about their progress which can strengthen learner dependency, learners should gradually be provided with the skills and opportunities for self-assessment.

- Learners should be allowed to progress at their own pace while still being challenged by the facilitator.
- Learner progress should not only be measured in terms of skills and competencies (i.e. results in IEB exams), but also be assessed in terms of the learners' level of independence, self-initiative or improved self-confidence.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a clear description of the research findings portraying the factors impacting on the role performances of a facilitator in a rural area in the Southern Cape. The following factors emerged:

- The broader context, community and organization have a significant influence on the role performances of facilitators especially considering the underlying politics between organizations. A need for more collaboration between different role players in the selection of facilitators, the reconsideration of criteria to determine facilitator and learner progress, adequate training for facilitators and the need for continuing support and recognition of facilitators at grass roots level were expressed.
- The beliefs and attitudes that facilitators have of their learners have a significant effect on their role performances and the attitudes adopted by the organization can directly influence the teaching approach adopted by facilitators during classroom practice.
- The personal relationships between facilitators and their colleagues and facilitators and the learners as well as the characteristics possessed by facilitators emerged as a critical element in establishing a class atmosphere conducive to learning.
- It was further indicated that facilitators need to exhibit flexibility when using different teaching styles during classroom practice by changing their styles reactively or proactively in response to the needs of the learners present. It was also indicated how facilitators could create effective mismatches in class by challenging learners with tasks within their reach or advancing to a next teaching level. An authoritative teaching style could be used with learners of no to low self-direction where the facilitator maintains a high degree of control over the learners with the intention to phase out facilitator control gradually and encourage more learner responsibility; a motivational style could be used with learners of low to moderate self-direction where the facilitator should be prepared to give up some control over the learning situation and a facilitative style could be used with

learners of moderate to high self-direction where the facilitator and learner should share control of the learning situation.

CHAPTER 6: REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

On considering the many roles facilitators have to perform in the teaching-learning process in ABET in South Africa and the lack of research on this phenomenon, the purpose of this study was to make a contribution to understanding the challenging and significant role of facilitators, by describing the many roles they have to perform and the problems they encounter in performing these roles. A qualitative approach was chosen and an extensive literature survey was undertaken in this study since a holistic and integrated view was required to understand the role of the facilitator within the South African context.

- The literature study provided a description of the changing political situation in South Africa and how it inevitably impacts on our understanding of the purpose of adult literacy and how it should be taught. It further provided the theoretical basis for the research by exploring the different theoretical perspectives regarding the adult teaching-learning process and portrayed the ideal scenario in which facilitators should perform their multiple roles.
- The qualitative study provided a description of the roles facilitators are currently performing in a rural area in the Southern Cape. This was then compared to the ideal scenario portrayed in the literature survey.

6.2 RESEARCH SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provided a description of the South African society as a whole and ABET in particular in order to provide a holistic picture of the developments and changes that have taken place in South Africa and how they impact on the role of the facilitator. This chapter further illustrated the development and implementation, since 1994, of policy which led to a growing interest in ABET. The following factors emerged:

- ABET policy still reflects an inadequate conception of literacy - set for remedial second chance education
- The move towards outcomes-based approaches seems to be happening without adequate consideration of the necessary inputs that facilitators have to deliver.
- ABE, at ground level, still tends to be recognised within the narrow framework of

literacy skills: reading, writing and numeracy.

- Lack of government funds is one of the main barriers towards effective development of ABE facilitators in South Africa.
- Low take-up rates and high drop-out figures characterize many projects launched.
- The urban-rural divide is reflected in the quantity and quality of all aspects of ABE provision.
- The facilitator at grass roots level needs more comprehensive training and support.
- ABE is becoming a convenient dumping ground for unemployed teachers. This may pose problems.
- At present a lack of theoretical background which can be provided for training ABE facilitators exists.
- Although facilitators at grass roots level have a central role to play in the success of literacy programmes, their practices are lacking in a number of ways which may be attributed to the training and learning facilitators have been exposed to.

It is against this background that the aim and research question of this study was formulated:

The aim of this study is to understand the challenging and important role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process in ABET by describing the roles facilitators have to perform and the problems they encounter in performing these roles in order to make recommendations towards enhancing facilitator training.

The research question and sub-questions that derived from this aim, were formulated as follows:

- What is the role of the facilitator in implementing and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme in a rural area in the Southern Cape (the Riversdale area)?

This question was divided into the following sub-questions:

- What is meant by adult learning, adult teaching and facilitating adult learning?
- What roles do facilitators need to perform in order to facilitate learning in ABET?
- What roles are facilitators currently performing in a rural area in the Southern

Cape in order to facilitate learning in ABET?

- What are the implications for the training of facilitators in ABET in South Africa?

The research design and methods used in this study were discussed briefly and a conceptual analysis of terms used in the study were provided.

Chapter 2 explored different theoretical perspectives regarding learning, teaching and the facilitation of adult learning. The tendency in adult education to talk about facilitating adult learning rather than teaching, prescribes a more *active* role to the learner. It further became apparent that one of the most important principles regarding facilitating learning is the notion of *self-direction* in learning. This entails that control of the teaching-learning process is transferred from the facilitator to the learners as they take greater control of their own learning. The works of two humanist theorists' (Paulo Freire and Malcolm Knowles) who contributed significantly to the theoretical knowledge of adult learning and teaching, were therefore reviewed in depth since they not only analysed the human personality as well as society, but paid direct attention to the active involvement of the learner in the teaching-learning process and the need for self-development.

In order to understand the complexity of the role of facilitators in ABET in South Africa and their subsequent training needs, the researcher accordingly considered self-directed learning theory as an adequate approach to embark upon in this study for the following reasons:

- Due to the rapid rate of social and technological change with which people are confronted daily and specifically the rapid social changes that have taken place in South Africa since 1994, facilitators will need to become more flexible, responsive and relevant in their teaching endeavors.
- Learner control models democratic principles and behaviour. The use of self-directed and learner-controlled methods not only models changed power relationships, but equips learners with the skills and expectations to deal with potentially oppressive situations which is very significant for South Africa in this day and age.
- Learner-control further recognises the way adults actually learn.
- In South Africa the goal of the educational process is furthermore to produce independent empowered lifelong learners.
- Learner control furthermore reflects the primacy of learning over teaching and allows for different learning styles.

Chapter 3 draws many of the points regarding the facilitation of learning together by relating them to the specific roles of the facilitator. The following perspectives regarding the multiple roles equated to the facilitator emerged:

- **the conventional role of the facilitator as teacher**, including the facilitator as instructor (also referred to as expert, authority, transmitter of knowledge) and as motivator (also referred to as personal model, guide, entertainer, enthusiastic shaper, performer, exemplar),
- **the new role of the facilitator as facilitator of learning**, including the facilitator as facilitator (also referred to as local guide, supporter, resource, catalyst, negotiator) and as delegator (also referred to as consultant, mentor).

In order for facilitators to perform their roles adequately the following factors which can significantly impact on the role performance and subsequent training needs of facilitators in South Africa emerged from studying the international literature. The factors that emerged were:

- the facilitator as person (character)
- the attitude of the facilitator towards teaching and learners (including the learners' preferred learning styles)
- the facilitator's knowledge of the variety of approaches used on how adults learn
- the facilitator's own preferred teaching style
- the facilitator's skills and competencies
- the facilitator's control over own learning and development

It became clear that in the ideal scenario facilitators should be able to adopt a flexible approach towards teaching - moving from instructor to motivator to facilitator and delegator, depending on the needs and different learning stages of the learners. The SSDL-Model which best described the conversions from expert to facilitator of learning and what it implied in practical terms, was therefore discussed in depth.

Chapter 4 provided the theoretical basis for the qualitative, explorative, descriptive and explanatory nature of this study. The qualitative design was suitable for the research since it allowed rich descriptions of the role of the facilitator in the teaching-learning process in ABET and the problems that were recorded in a rural area in the Southern Cape as these unfolded over a period of eleven months.

Prior to the case study a review of suitable literature was undertaken to provide the

theoretical framework and clarity for the research question and the interpretation of the research findings. A qualitative single case study was used as the research format. In order to select the case, criterion-based sampling was used. Against the background of the conclusions reached in Chapters 2 and 3 as well as the practical considerations the following specific criteria regarding the choice of a facilitator were chosen:

- the facilitator was employed to teach adults
- she had six years experience in teaching literacy to adults at the site
- her learners were attending her classes regularly
- she was willing to be observed for a period of time
- she was considered a good facilitator by the majority of learners, colleagues and the administrators

The participant facilitator in this study was therefore representative of the population of facilitators in the Riversdale area and thus it could be assumed that the roles she performed in the teaching-learning process could be similar to that of other facilitators in rural areas.

The following methods of data collection were used:

- Observations in the classroom were made over a period of eleven months.
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two ABE facilitators, a learner and a UNISYS spokesperson. Interviews conducted with the facilitator were to obtain information on how she experienced her role as a facilitator in ABET and what her overall impressions and beliefs were on the problems she experienced in performing her roles. In the interviews conducted with the learner the researcher obtained information about the learner's background and expectations of the literacy classes. The interview with the UNISYS spokesperson provided the researcher with a glimpse of the broader spectrum (the organization) of ABET.
- More than 32 hours of observation consisting of eight classroom observations were conducted in the facilitator's classroom.
- Policy documents, progress records of learners, organizational rules and official and unofficial documents providing the researcher with information about the programme activities, were also accessed.

The *final analysis and presentation phase* of the study consisted of data reduction, data display and data interpretation. The data from the various sources was analysed,

using the content analysis procedure of open coding. To develop themes the researcher divided the data into semantic units which were subjected to a pre-determined set of questions. The researcher then began with descriptive themes and a list of 143 themes were recorded. Verbatim narrative was selected so as to link the raw data to these themes. The units of data which were coded into themes were clustered to find the most relevant categories for interpretation.

Since some of the categories that emerged seemed to overlap, consideration of the overlaps and interrelationships between and within themes and categories provided the basis for the view that the teaching styles (roles) adopted by facilitators during classroom practice are interrelated with influences from the wider society, the community, the organization, the learners (i.e. their preferred learning styles, characteristics, needs, skills, beliefs) and the facilitators themselves (including their own preferred learning and teaching styles). The final report contained a mixture of narrative text with 'thick' descriptions, displays and associated analytic text. This chapter further indicated how the research design was structured to verify reliability and maximise the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

Chapter 5 provided the research findings and the discussion thereof, by portraying the factors impacting on the role performances of a facilitator in a rural area in the Southern Cape. The following factors emerged:

- The broader context, community and organization have a significant influence on the role performances of facilitators especially when considering the underlying politics between organizations.
- The attitudes adopted by the organization may directly influence the teaching approach adopted by facilitators during classroom practice.
- The beliefs and attitudes that facilitators have of their learners have a significant effect on their role performances. The personal relationships between facilitators and their colleagues and facilitators and the learners as well as the characteristics possessed by facilitators, emerged as a critical element in establishing a class atmosphere conducive to learning.
- It was further indicated that facilitators need to exhibit flexibility when using different teaching styles during classroom practice by changing their styles reactively or proactively in response to the needs of the learners. It was also indicated how facilitators could create effective mismatches in class by challenging learners with tasks within their reach or advancing to a next teaching level.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

Several conclusions were drawn from the research findings in an attempt to answer the research questions and aims.

- The changing political situation in South Africa and the sudden energy around formulating ABET policy with the move towards outcomes-based approaches seem to occur without adequate consideration of the necessary inputs that facilitators at grass roots level have to deliver. Of utmost importance is the provision of comprehensive training and support for ABET facilitators at grass roots level.
- Since social, political and cultural forces undoubtedly exert influence in ABET classrooms, facilitators will need to become more flexible, responsive and relevant in their teaching endeavor. Since the goal of the educational process in South Africa is to produce independent empowered lifelong learners, the use of self-directed and learner-controlled methods, models changed power relationships between facilitators and learners, whilst equipping learners with the skills and expectations to deal with potentially oppressive situations which are very significant for South Africa in this day and age.
- It is apparent that the teaching styles (roles) adopted by facilitators during classroom practice are interrelated with influences from the wider society, the community, the organisation, the learners and the facilitators themselves. Consideration should therefore not only be given to what the facilitator knows and does (doing function), but also to who the facilitator is, (being function) since facilitators' own preferred learning and teaching styles will, to a large extent, determine how they will react during classroom practice.
- Facilitators should be able to adopt a flexible approach towards teaching - moving from instructor to motivator to facilitator and delegator depending on the needs and different learning stages of the learners. The role of the facilitator is thus complex, sometimes, depending on circumstances, it will be to teach at other times to facilitate at other times to lead at other times to follow, but always with the intention of empowering learners towards greater autonomy.

In order for facilitators to perform their multiple roles in ABET the preparation, training and continuing support of facilitators at grass roots level is crucial, if

ABET is to make a contribution to the adult literacy problems as experienced in South Africa and to prevent littering the South African landscape with the debris of failed projects.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.4.1 The training of facilitators

Lack of adequate training providing facilitators with minimal competencies contribute to the many problems experienced by facilitators.

- Standards and selection criteria for ABET facilitators need to be reconsidered.
- Training objectives should not only include methods, techniques and criteria that facilitators should be familiar with, but encompass the different teaching styles that can be used during classroom practice.
- Training courses must enable facilitators to reflect on their own preferred teaching style/s (active style/s) with which they feel most comfortable. They should learn to adapt these as the need arises.
- One training objective should be to stimulate internal change in the facilitators and cultivate their desire for self-development, growth and improvement.
- Trainers should further assess the learning stages of facilitators whilst providing facilitators with the opportunity to reflect on themselves as learners.
- Trainers should also be cautious of adopting a non-directive approach at the onset of training when facilitators may still experience a need for structure and guidelines since this can lead to discouragement and frustration. As facilitators progressively improve in confidence, knowledge and skills, they may be provided with more control and responsibility when they seem ready to accept it. The training course should therefore model a flexible approach which facilitators could incorporate during own classroom practice.
- Since some facilitators may tend to feel safer and less anxious or guilty when adopting a more authoritative approach as opposed to a facilitative approach they have to be prepared for this during training.
- Facilitators also need marketing and interviewing skills which can prevent them from employing poor strategies in the future.
- Facilitators further need support in teaching learners with special educational needs and skills to determine learner progress. This should be incorporated in the training curriculum.
- The duration of training courses needs to be reconsidered since the crash courses

tend to teach only the basics of a particular course. This may contribute to facilitators experiencing problems in performing their roles.

- There is a need for on-going development of facilitators in the form of in-service training.
- School teachers employed in ABET often require urgent training since they find it hard to adapt to adult education. The erroneous view that anyone who can teach children can teach adults should therefore be deeply questioned.
- Trainers of facilitators are also often inadequately trained in adult education and need urgent training themselves.

6.4.2 Classroom practice

- Organizations should be sensitive towards the roles they prescribe for facilitators since this may directly or indirectly affect facilitators' attitudes and expectations of learners' behaviour in role relationships.
- The personal relationships between facilitators, the organization, colleagues and learners need to be acknowledged as a critical element in performing a facilitative role.
- Facilitators should not only rely on subject expertise, but focus on the learners' needs and their life experiences during classroom practice so that content is always relevant to the learners' lives.
- In the course of their teaching, facilitators will need to adopt a flexible and adaptable approach in order to address the different learning stages of their learners. Facilitators should exhibit flexibility when using different teaching styles by always establishing a balance between supporting and directing learners.
- Facilitators' roles go far beyond the transfer of information to learners, but encompass empowering learners by developing their self-confidence.
- Facilitators should be able to adjust the rate of instruction to the learners' rate of progress.
- Organizing classroom sessions around a facilitative style as the active style and linking with other styles when they seem appropriate, is suggested.
- The manner in which facilitators perform their teaching roles and not the specific teaching style itself, may have a significant effect on the way the learners experience the class situation.
- Facilitators need to determine the different learning stages of learners.
- To match the styles of the learners a suggestion is that facilitators first work with a style comfortable for the learner, and then introduce an effective mismatch that promotes growth and a degree of challenge which can stimulate learning.

- Sessions may be alternated between presentation methods, participatory methods and discovery methods as the need arises.
- Facilitator and learner relations should progress from making decisions *for* the learners, to making decisions *with* the learners, to delegating decisions *to* the learners.
- Communication between facilitators and learners should progress from talking *to the learners*, to talking *to each other*, to talking *with each other*.
- Increasing value should be placed on learner control so that learners will become independent and better prepared for future difficulties.
- The process of learning rather than the product should become the focus.
- Learners should be provided with the skills and opportunities for self-assessment.

6.4.3 Educational reform

- School teachers as well as educators of adults at tertiary institutions need to make the paradigm shift from teaching to facilitating learning.
- School teachers as well as educators of adults should be trained to reflect on their own preferred teaching styles and determine the learning stages of their learners.
- The different learning styles of children (students) should be assessed and the teachers'/adult educators' teaching styles should be adapted accordingly. This could especially benefit teachers tutoring learners with special educational needs.
- The teacher/adult educator should consciously incorporate the different learning styles during lesson planning or even during the design of a course (i.e. one lesson or a course can therefore incorporate all four teaching styles and alternate between the different teaching methods).

6.4.4 Literacy programmes

- In rural areas ABET should be approached as a community project.
- Networking and collaboration opportunities should be established between different literacy projects launched in the same community.
- The content of training programmes should be relevant to the learners' lives.
- Reaping the benefits of computers and other literacy programmes require the provision of quality programming and software as well as high quality human input in order to avoid costly experiments with inappropriate technology or material and inadequately trained human resources.

6.4.5 Research

In researching the role of the facilitator of adult learning more questions than answers emerged. This may form the basis for future research.

- The development of training curriculums which incorporate flexibility and adaptability and address the needs of trainers and the trainees (facilitators).
- The development of quality in-service training programmes that provide continual support and training for facilitators at ground-level.
- The development of literacy programmes and material which incorporate the different learning needs of learners and teaching styles of facilitators.
- The determination of adequate selection criteria and standards for facilitators in ABET at grass roots level.
- The establishment of network opportunities between rural and urban areas where resources may be shared.
- The provision of guidelines for determining the preferred learning and teaching styles of facilitators and learning stages of learners and distinguishing between learnt and innate qualities.
- The determination of whether facilitators can assist learners that have outgrown a certain learning stage to progress toward a next level without advancing through that stage themselves.
- Research into which of the preferred learning styles of facilitators would yield the best person to teach adult learners.

6.5 A FINAL NOTE

The seemingly simple African tale *Cat in search of a friend* written by Meshack Asare (1996) not only provides wonderful insight into the different creatures that roam Africa, but conveys a deeper message about human behaviour as voiced by an animal. The seemingly dependent cat not only wants a friend, she also wants a protector, so she seeks out the strongest animals in the jungle; from a monkey to an elephant. Each animal the cat befriends is succeeded by a stronger animal, until the cat realises that man is even stronger than the elephant. So the cat befriends man and she makes man her master and does not leave his side. But when man arrives at his hut and his wife yells at him, the cat realises that woman is even stronger than the strongest man. But alas, a mouse runs across the room and the woman jumps up onto a chair and screams for help. The cat only makes a “pffff” sound and the mouse disappears.

'Look now,' said the cat with the yellow fur to herself. 'In the end there's really no-one stronger than I. I alone am my own master.'

Although the cat lived among the other animals and could even learn from them, she realised that nothing is infallible and that she alone is her own true master. The cat had truly learnt how to survive. This is the vision that true facilitators should have of adult learners: that they alone are their own true masters and can do it themselves.

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APPENDICES

A: OBSERVATIONAL CHECKLIST

B: RESEARCH SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW: OPEN QUESTIONS

C: DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORIES

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F: CATEGORIES OF CLUSTERED THEMES

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APPENDIX A**OBSERVATIONAL CHECKLIST**

Extra material
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life skills • Support structures
Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment of learners • Formal - informal classes • Facilitator's remarks to learners (encouraging? reinforcing...?) • Extent to which facilitator and learners understand each other
Class meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class climate • Do learners enjoy classes? • Discussion topics • Questions asked and answered • Facilitator attentiveness to the needs of learners • Help and support in learning activities • Efforts made by the facilitator to accommodate interests and feelings of learners • Extent to which facilitator evokes enthusiastic participation in learning activities • Activities used with learners • Encourages active learning • Democratic - shared responsibility and decision making • Integrates knowledge from different fields • Time management - group work and computerized instruction • Flexible instructional strategies • Roles • Focus on learners / subject matter
Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to deal with learner differences • Allows individual differences • Motivates • Climate of trust • Allows learners to evaluate own competence • Draws on past experiences of learners • Utilizes learner interests as learning priorities • Provides opportunities for critical reflection • Experiences of computer assisted learning • Active/passive involvement • Discussions between learners and learners and facilitator...

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS: OPEN QUESTIONS

FIRST INTERVIEW: FACILITATOR

1. Tell me about your experience as a facilitator in ABET?

- How would you describe (or do you see) your role in ABET?
- How would you describe your role in the classroom?
- What roles are you performing as a facilitator?
- Tell me about your experiences in performing some of these roles.
- What type of problems are you experiencing/support are you getting in performing these roles?

2. How would you describe the ideal facilitator in ABET ?

- What will he do differently?
- How will he do things differently?
- Why do you think will he do things differently?

3. What do you think your learners expect of you as a facilitator?

4. What do you think the ideal relationship between facilitators and learners should be?

SECOND INTERVIEW: FACILITATOR

1. What are your general perceptions when reflecting upon the year?

FIRST INTERVIEW: LEARNER

1. Tell me something about yourself.

- Did you go to school - tell me something about it?
- How does your family (husband, children) react to your attending these classes?

2 How do you experience the literacy classes and why do you say this?

- How did you experience your first day here?
- What do you want to learn?
- Why do you want to learn it?
- Is it easy for you to attend these classes?
- Do you answer questions in class?
- What do you like to do in class?
- What did you expect you would learn here?
- Do you use any of the skills you've learned outside of class?
- What are you going to do after you have completed this course?
- How would you evaluate your performance in the class?

3. What do you expect of a good facilitator/teacher?

SECOND INTERVIEW: LEARNER

1. How did you experience this year?

APPENDIX C

DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORIES

An excerpt of one paragraph of data from the first interview with the facilitator to illustrate the initial process of identifying tentative themes by providing the most literal descriptions of the data.

Afrikaans version

Ek dink hulle (die leerders) besef dit nie self nie, maar hulle verwag dat jy vir hulle met dignity moet hanteer. Want as dit nie gebeur nie, ek het al gehad wat na my toe gekom het en sê maar ons was daar en daar - daai juffrou sê dit en dit vir ons - so hulle besef dit nie - hulle gaan nie met daai verwagting dalk klas toe nie, maar as dit nie gebeur nie dat hulle voel maar hierso word ek soos 'n mens behandel, ek hoef nie skaam te wees nie, ek is nie dom nie, die juffrou het vertroue in my dan vorm dit iewers in hulle kop. Jy weet daai idee dat ek is iets, of iemand dink darem ek kan dit maak en glo in my. So jy moet regtig tot op hulle vlak kan daal met die oordra van die lees en skryf. Dat hulle voel jy's langs hulle, jy staan nie hier voor en hoog en ver nie - jy's saam met hulle in hierdie ding. Jy moet die rol van 'n rêrige juffrou, dink ek kan doen, want hulle wil dit hê.

English version

I don't think they (the learners) realise it themselves but they expect of you [facilitator's view of learners' expectations of her] that you should treat them with dignity [learners expect to be treated with dignity] Because if it does not happen, I had some that came to me and said we were there and there and that teacher says this to us [learners discussing previous classes & teachers with facilitator - not treated with dignity]- so they don't realise it - they may not attend class with that expectation [learners may not be aware of that need], but if it does not happen that they feel that here I am treated like a human being [learner needs: treated like human being] I don't have to be shy, [learner's self-image - shy] I'm not stupid [learner's self-image], the teacher trusts me [needs the teacher's trust] then it forms somewhere in their minds [self-image]. You know, that idea that I am something or someone thinks I can make it and believes in me [learners need recognition of and confidence in their abilities]. So you must really be able to step down to their level [facilitators must come down to learners' level in teaching-learning process] with the conveying of reading and writing. That they can feel you're next to them, you are not standing in front high and far from them - [equal partners - at the same level - not in front, high and far but next to them] that you are with them in this thing [partners]. You must perform the role of a real teacher [facilitator must perform role of teacher], I think, because they want that [facilitator's views on learners wanting facilitators to be teachers].

APPENDIX D**CODES AND THEMES**

List of the codes and themes that emerged during the data analysis

Phase 1: First class observation: themes

1. Classroom arrangement
2. Information lecture
3. Subject matter emphasis
4. Straightforward questions
5. Immediate and frequent feedback related to task (extrinsic motivation)
6. Immediate assistance
7. Learners' dependence
8. Learners' reactions to questions (passive/affirming)
9. Learners' reactions to feedback
10. Facilitator's encouragement / transfer
11. Slow learner progress
12. Life experience of learners
13. Self-confidence of learners (low self-image)
14. School-like class atmosphere
15. Learners view facilitator
16. Reactions to newcomers
17. Literacy skills
18. Learners' physical skills decline
19. Learners with special educational needs
20. Learner needs and interests not met
21. Learners' coping mechanisms
22. Learners' views on CAL
23. Structured drill, rigorous, repetitious approach to teaching
24. Boredom, lose interest (learners' reactions to drill)
25. Learners' reactions towards facilitator
26. Facilitator's lack of support
27. Facilitator's provision of own material
28. Facilitator's characteristics
29. Organizational problems - lack of funding
30. Facilitator and learner relationships
31. Focus on individual instruction
32. Highly specific assignments
33. Subject focused questions
34. Problems related to IEB
35. Learner attendance and access
36. Problems - lack of reading material

Phase 2: Pilot study: themes

37. ABET politics
38. Transfer (intrinsic motivation)
39. Learners more independent in their learning
40. Facilitator's views on training
41. Facilitator's views on CAL

42. Facilitator's views on LSEN
43. Facilitator's views on roles
44. Views on proficiency as a facilitator
45. Facilitator's relationship with colleagues
46. Learners' drinking problems
47. Influence of researcher
48. Facilitator qualifications
49. Progress of facilitator as learner
50. Teaching style (facilitator as expert/ authority)
51. Problems with employers of learners
52. Facilitator praise, motivation and encouragement learners (extrinsic motivation)
53. Teaching style (facilitator as motivator)
54. Building confidence while building skills
55. Igniting learner interest
56. Choices: sharing decision making
57. Choices: a lack of shared decision making
58. Limited choices
59. Problems at site (lack of privacy)

Phase 3: Meeting with facilitator's: themes

60. Facilitator's preset assumptions of learners
61. Facilitator's expectations of learners

Phase 3: Second class observation: themes

62. Life skills training
63. Peaceful and tranquil class atmosphere
64. Lack of groupwork
65. Lesson preparation
66. Lesson content
67. One way communication
68. Learners passivity
69. Mismatch: Facilitator underestimates learners
70. Mismatch: Learners are not challenged
71. Clear-cut objectives and instructions
72. Learner progress monitored by CAL

Phase 3: Third class observation: themes

73. Learners initiate informal class discussions
74. Learners are discouraged
75. Facilitator's self-confidence
76. Facilitator controls class

Phase 3: Interview with UNISYS spokesperson: themes

77. Selection criteria for facilitators
78. Mismatch: Facilitator frustrated with training
79. Problems (mismanagement of funds)
80. Problems with selection criteria for facilitators
81. Problems: Facilitators lack supervision

82. Organizational support for facilitators
83. Recruiting facilitators
84. Problems with certification of facilitators
85. Facilitators take on more responsibility
86. Facilitators share experiences with learners (equal partners)
87. Assessment of facilitator and learner performance

Phase 3: First interview with learner Sam: themes

88. Learner support from significant others
89. Praise (extrinsic)
90. Learner views classes
91. Learner develops/accepts more responsibility and self-initiative
92. Learners need authority
93. External motivation (conditional)
94. Learner is empowered
95. Learner is interested
96. Learner likes facilitator (extrinsic motivation)
97. Learner is motivated
98. Family restrictions disrupt learning

Phase 3: First interview with facilitator: themes

99. Views on facilitation
100. Authority of bosses
101. Facilitator empowers learners
102. Organizational demands on facilitator
103. Views on effect of illiteracy
104. Facilitator lacks knowledge of teaching adults
105. Problems with training (lack trained trainers)
106. Mismatch: Facilitator experiences frustration with learners
107. Facilitator as supporter
108. Facilitator's effect (positive or negative) on learners
109. Facilitator reflects on own past experiences
110. Facilitator's views on learning and ABET classes in general
111. Facilitator's views on the organization/UNISYS programme
112. Facilitator's views on problems experienced (co-ordination, malpractices and funding)
113. Facilitator brings enthusiasm into class
114. Encouragement phases out praise
115. Learners are active (responsive)

Phase 3: Fourth class observation: themes

116. Mismatch: learner challenged above ability
117. Lack of progress (frustration)
118. Learners require explicit direction
119. Unlearning skills

Phase 3: Fifth class observation: themes

120. Create positive/relaxed class atmosphere
121. Learners are sharing experiences

- 122. Facilitator determines learner progress
- 123. Learner is given more responsibility (phase out dependency)
- 124. Facilitator becomes participant learner
- 125. Learners are enthusiastic
- 126. Learners initiate formal class discussions
- 127. Learners work individually

Phase 3: Second interview with learner Sam: themes

- 128. Learner views self
- 129. Learners want individual attention
- 130. Learner compares self to others
- 131. Learner blames self
- 132. Learner enjoys demonstration
- 133. Learner prefers groupwork

Phase 3: Sixth class observation: themes

- 134. Preparation for IEB exams
- 135. Learners set high standards
- 136. Comprehension skills
- 137. Learner perserverance

Phase 3: Second interview with facilitator: themes

- 138. Facilitator wants authority
- 139. Flexible teaching styles
- 140. Teacher led discussions
- 141. Teaching style (facilitation)
- 142. Facilitator encourages personal awareness
- 143. Problems: sites closing down

Phase 3: Seventh class observation: no themes

Phase 3: Eighth class observation: no themes

APPENDIX E**EXAMPLES OF DATA ANALYSIS**

Verbatim narrative was selected from the multiple data sources: the researcher's personal journal, class observations and semi-structured interviews were presented to illustrate the content analysis procedure of open coding. Semantic units of data were coded according to their emergent themes.

Journal data

Example of raw data from the researcher's personal journal, dated 22 July, 1998.

SEMANTIC UNIT	CODE: THEME
I notice a tension - a sort of rivalry between the two facilitators (my sixth sense) but luckily I'll observe them at different sites on different days.	45. Facilitator's relationship with colleagues

Pilot study

Example of raw data from pilot study, dated 13 July, 1998.

SEMANTIC UNIT	CODE: THEME
A type of person that gets it either right or wrong.	43. Facilitator's views on roles

Second class observation

Example of raw data from second class observation, dated 18 July, 1998.

SEMANTIC UNIT	CODE: THEME
The atmosphere in the class is very calming.	63. Peaceful and tranquil class-atmosphere
Every learner works on his own.	64. Lack of groupwork

Interview with UNISYS spokesperson

Example of raw data from interview with UNISYS spokesperson, dated 18 August, 1998.

SEMANTIC UNIT	CODE: THEME
Our facilitators were very frustrated with their training.	78. Facilitator frustrated with training

APPENDIX F

CATEGORIES OF CLUSTERED THEMES AND FINAL CATEGORIES

Final category: Ecological (external) influences

CATEGORIES	CLUSTERED THEMES
<u>Phase 1: First class observation</u>	
Societal influences	12. Life experience of learners
	21. Learners' coping mechanisms
Interpersonal	16. Reactions to newcomers
	25. Learners' reactions towards facilitator
	30. Facilitator and learner relationships
Problems	26. Facilitator's lack of support
	29. Organizational problems - lack of funding
	34. Problems related to IEB
	35. Learner attendance and access
	36. Problems - lack of reading material
<u>Phase 2: Pilot study interview</u>	
Societal influences	37. ABET politics
Organizational influences	48. Facilitator qualifications
Interpersonal	45. Facilitator's relationship with colleagues
	47. Influence of the researcher
Problems	46. Learners' drinking problems
	51. Problems with employers of learners
	59. Problems at site (lack of privacy)
<u>Phase 3: Interview with UNISYS spokesperson</u>	
Organizational influences	77. Selection criteria for facilitators
	82. Recruiting facilitators
Problems:	79. Problems (mismanagement of funds)
	80. Problems with selection criteria for facilitators
	81. Problems: Facilitators lack supervision
	84. Problems with certification of facilitators
<u>Phase 3: First interview with learner Sam</u>	
Interpersonal	88. Learner support from significant others
	96. Learners like facilitator (extrinsic motivation)
Problems	89. Family restrictions disrupt learning
<u>Phase 3: First interview with facilitator</u>	
Societal influences	109. Reflects on own past experience
Organizational influences	102. Organizational demands on facilitator
Interpersonal	108. Effect (positive or negative) on learners
Problems	104. Facilitator lacks knowledge of teaching adults
	105. Problems with training (lack trained trainers)
	112. Views on problems experienced (co-ordination, malpractice and funding)
<u>Phase 3: Second interview with facilitator</u>	
Problems	143. Problems: sites closing down

Final category: Intrapsychic (internal) influences

CATEGORIES	CLUSTERED THEMES
<u>Phase 1: First class observation</u>	
Characteristics (self)	13. Self-confidence of learners (low self-image) 28. Facilitator's characteristics
Skills/competencies	17. Literacy skills 14. School-like atmosphere 18. Learners' physical skills decline
Needs	19. Learners with special educational needs 20. Learner needs and interests not met
Views/beliefs	15. Learners view facilitator 22. Learners' views on CAL
<u>Phase 2: Pilot study interview</u>	
Views/beliefs	40. Facilitator's views on training 41. Facilitator's views on CAL 42. Facilitator's views on LSEN 43. Facilitator's views on roles 44. Views on proficiency as a facilitator
<u>Phase 3: Meeting with facilitators</u>	
Views/beliefs	60. Facilitator's preset assumptions of learners 61. Facilitator's expectations of learners
<u>Phase 3: Second class observation</u>	
Characteristics (self)	63. Peaceful and tranquil class-atmosphere
<u>Phase 3: Third class observation</u>	
Characteristics (self)	75. Facilitator's self-confidence
<u>Phase 3: Interview with UNISYS spokesperson</u>	
Needs:	81. Organizational support for facilitators
<u>Phase 3: First interview with learner Sam</u>	
Views/beliefs	90. Views classes
<u>Phase 3: First interview with facilitator</u>	
Views/beliefs	99. Facilitator's views on facilitation 103. Facilitator's views on effect of illiteracy 110. Facilitator's views on learning and ABET classes in general 111. Facilitator's views on the organization/UNISYS programme
<u>Phase 3: Fourth class observation</u>	
Skills/competencies	119. Unlearning skills
<u>Phase 3: Fifth class observation</u>	
Skills/competencies	120. Create positive/relaxed class atmosphere
<u>Phase 3: Second interview with learner Sam</u>	
Characteristics (self)	130. Learner compares self to others 131. Blames self
Views/beliefs	128. Learner views self

Phase 3: Sixth class observation

Characteristic (self)

135. Learners set high standards

137. Learner perseverance

Final category: Learning stages of learners (roles)

CATEGORIES	CLUSTERED THEMES
Phase 1: First class observation	
Reaction to methods	8. Learners' reactions to questions (passive/affirming)
Control	9. Learners' reactions to feedback
Mismatch	7. Learners' dependence
Progress	24. Boredom, lose interest (learners' reactions to drill)
	11. Slow learner progress
Phase 1: Pilot study interview	
Control	39. Learners more independent in their learning
Phase 3: Second class observation	
Reaction to methods	68. Learners passivity
Mismatch	70. Learners are not challenged
Phase 3: Third class observation	
Control	73. Learners initiate informal class discussion
Mismatch	74. Learners are discouraged
Phase 3: First interview with learner Sam	
Reaction to methods	93. External motivation (conditional)
	95. Learner is interested
	97. Learner is motivated
Control	91. Learner develops/accepts more responsibility and self-initiative
	92. Learners need authority
	94. Learner is empowered
Phase 3: First interview with facilitator	
Reaction to methods	115. Learners are active (responsive)
Phase 3: Fourth class observation	
Control	118. Learners require explicit direction (dependent)
Mismatch	116. Learner challenged above ability
Progress	117. Lack of progress (frustration)
Phase 3: Fifth class observation	
Reaction to methods	121. Learners are sharing experiences
	125. Learners are enthusiastic
Control	126. Learners initiate formal class discussions
Phase 3: Second interview with learner Sam	
Reaction to methods	132. Learner enjoys demonstration
	129. Learners want individual attention

133. Learner prefers groupwork

Final category: Learning stages of facilitator

CATEGORIES	CLUSTERED THEMES
<u>Phase 2: Pilot study interview</u>	
Progress	49. Progress of facilitator as learner
<u>Phase 3: Interview with UNISYS spokesperson</u>	
Control	85. Facilitators take on more responsibility
Mismatch	78. Facilitator frustrated with training
Progress	87. Assessment of facilitator and learner performance
<u>Phase 3: First interview with facilitator</u>	
Control	100. Authority of bosses
<u>Phase 3: Fifth class observation</u>	
Control	124. Facilitator becomes participant learner
<u>Phase 3: Second interview with facilitator</u>	
Control	138. Facilitator wants authority

Final category: Teaching style of facilitator

CATEGORIES	CLUSTERED THEMES
<u>Phase 1: First class observation</u>	
Methods (practice)	1. Classroom arrangement
	2. Information lecture (authority)
	31. Focus on individual instruction (authority)
Delivery techniques	3. Subject matter emphasis (authority)
	4. Straightforward questions (authority)
	5. Immediate and frequent feedback related to task (extrinsic motivation)
	6. Immediate assistance (authority)
	10. Facilitator's encouragement / transfer (motivator)
(authority)	23. Structured drill, rigorous, repetitious approach to teaching
	27. Facilitator's provision of own material (self-initiative)
	32. Highly specific assignments (authority)
	33. Subject focused questions (authority)
<u>Phase 2: Pilot study interview</u>	
Teaching style	50. Teaching style (facilitator as expert/authority)
	53. Teaching style (facilitator as motivator)
Delivery techniques	52. Facilitator praise, motivation and encouragement of learners (extrinsic motivation)
	54. Building confidence while building skills (motivator)
	55. Igniting learner interest (motivator)
Approach (control)	38. Transfer (intrinsic motivation) (motivator)
	56. Choices: sharing decision-making (facilitator)
	57. Choices: a lack of shared decision making (authority)

	58. Limited choices (authority/motivator)
<u>Phase 3: Second class observation</u>	
Methods (practice)	64. Lack of groupwork
	65. Lesson preparation
	66. Lesson content
Delivery techniques	62. Life skills training
	67. One way communication
	71. Clear-cut objectives and instructions
Mismatch	69. Facilitator underestimates learners
Assessment	72. Learner progress monitored by CAL
<u>Phase 3: Third class observation</u>	
Approach (control)	76. Facilitator controls class
<u>Phase 3: Interview with UNISYS spokesperson</u>	
Methods (practice)	86. Facilitators share experiences with learners (equal partners)
<u>Phase 3: First interview with learner Sam</u>	
Methods (practice)	89. Praise (extrinsic)
<u>Phase 3: First interview with facilitator</u>	
Methods (practice)	107. Facilitator as supporter
	113. Facilitator brings enthusiasm into class (motivator)
	114. Encouragement phases out praise (motivator)
Approach (control)	101. Facilitator empowers learners
Mismatch	106. Facilitator experiences frustration with learners
<u>Phase 3: Fifth class observation</u>	
Methods (practice)	127. Learners work individually
Approach (control)	123. Learner is given more responsibility (phase out dependency)
Assessment	122. Facilitator determines learner progress
<u>Phase 3: Sixth class observation</u>	
Methods (practice)	134. Preparation for IEB exams
	136. Comprehension skills
<u>Phase 3: Second interview with facilitator</u>	
Teaching style	139. Flexible teaching styles
	141. Teaching style (facilitation)
Methods (practice)	140. Teacher led discussions (authority)
	142. Facilitator encourages personal awareness (facilitator)

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">External Influences</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Internal Influences</p>
<p>S3: Intermediate Involved</p>	<p>T 3: Facilitator Consults</p>
<p>S2: Moderate Interested</p>	<p>T2: Motivator guide Sells</p>
<p>S1: Low Dependent</p>	<p>T1: Expert authority Tells</p>
<p>INFORMAL CONVERSATION: At the table all the learners talk about glasses - how expensive they are.</p>	<p>PERSONAL INTERACTION: (life skills): Martha and Jean talk about the importance of fruit and vegetables in the diet...asks about her health and family.</p>
<p>FACILITATOR IS EXPERT: "Learners believe everything the facilitator tells them." REACTIONS TO DRILL/BOREDOM (CAL): "You know they just sit and press the keys." (Jean illustrates the monotonous movement with the fingers on the table). Learner Sam has been doing this exercise for more than 30 minutes. "She's not really concentrating. It seems as if she's pressing the keys automatically and I can sense that she's bored". LACK OF PROGRESS (frustration): Learner Sam does the same exercise over and over again but makes no progress. She's through the 5th sequence of 50 words and opens and closes her fingers. She seems very frustrated when she starts talking to herself. Her comments to the researcher, "I have been struggling since last week with the same exercise, but I just can't seem to complete it. It's very frustrating. I've been struggling since last week and can't seem to make any difference to these blocks." She then calls the facilitator, "Miss, I can't seem to complete my blocks. I want to complete this - I suppose I've answered too fast" (seems frustrated). MARTHA NEEDS AUTHORITY, "This is a very friendly teacher. I think that the teacher is sometimes too friendly with us...." MARTHA REQUIRES EXPLICIT DIRECTION, "Miss, how do you make a C?" LEARNER LOOSES INTEREST IN CLASS, "I will finish this at home and then I'll come show you (Jean) the work on Thursday." LACK GROUPWORK: Every learner works on his own. TRANSFER (Martha), "I could do all this stuff. I could write the '3', but now I can't write it anymore." LACK OF CHOICE (Martha), "Am I going to learn the time today?" PASSIVE LEARNERS: While Jean is working with Mana the other learners just sit and watch. LACK GROUP WORK: (Sam is inquisitive about other learners): Every learner works on his own. Sam quickly stands up to see what another learner is writing, but they do not speak</p>	<p>IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE: Rose reads out loud and Jean helps her when she struggles. (Researcher, "She's a very good reader - she reads better than std. 8 pupils I know.") CHALLENGED (above her ability?): Debbie could not do the task given to her, "Miss, the exercise is too difficult." LACK EMPATHY: According to Jean Sam's problem was that "she was not concentrating. She tends to look around in class which means she reacts slower on the computer and then faster." INDIVIDUAL TUTORING: Researcher, "Everyone works on his own. I have not as yet seen any groupwork." Jean responds, "You can't put them in groups and work together, because they are all at different levels." HIGHLY SPECIFIC TASKS: Martha has to read the time on the paper clock....Jan and Debbie have to read softly to themselves and mark what they can't understand...Jean sits with Jack in front of the computer. He reads the words out loudly to her. STRAIGHTFORWARD QUESTIONS, "What is this.... Look for the right answer... is this the answer or this?" DRILL/RIGOROUS REPETITIOUS APPROACH, "Practice to write the following letters: a,b,c,d now b b b, a a. While you write the letters whisper it to yourself." Jean types in words and the learner reads them out aloud. Some words are repeated 3 times during the exercise. LACK OF CHOICE: "Rose, today we're going to read this article." PRAISE (EXTRINSIC): "That's it....That's right.... Nice work....100% correct... You've learnt your alphabet well... You read nicely today... That's nice, you know the answers well."</p>