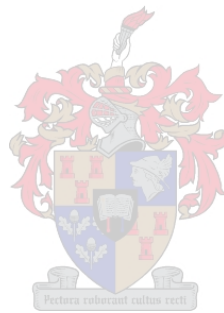# Eliciting pedagogical learning among teachers in a professional learning community

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Dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: March 2016

Abstract

This thesis is about teachers' learning in a professional learning community (PLC) and responds to the question:

> *How do the dialogical processes of a professional learning community capacitate teachers' pedagogical adaptation and change towards socially just pedagogical practices?*

My starting assumption is that teachers' pedagogical learning requires a supportive and deliberative set of conversations about the intellectual terms and pedagogical capacitation needed for change. I argue that PLCs are able to provide a reflexive dialogical space for engaging in such pedagogical learning.

This is a thesis presented in the form of three articles which is prefaced by an inter-leading piece that describes my positionality as a researcher and facilitator of the PLC process. The thesis contains three wraparound chapters, an introduction and conclusion. The introduction situates the context of this research study and PLC work and the conclusion draws together insights gained over the two-year PLC process and includes a summary of the intellectual contribution that this research work makes to the theorisation of teacher adaptation and change in consonance with a socially just teaching orientation.

Drawing on Bourdieu's thinking tools of practice, habitus, bodily hexis, field and doxa I provide a theorisation of teachers' pedagogical habitus as a way to conceptualise teacher adaptation and change. I offer the view of PLCs as a form of 'habitus engagement' to describe the ways in which the on-going dialogical and reflexive PLC process challenges the teachers' embodied pedagogical doxa to engender adaptation and change.

The first article focuses on the conceptual bases that informed the establishment and functioning of the PLC which is central to this thesis. This article develops an argument for the use of the Funds of Knowledge approach as a way of engaging students meaningfully in their learning. The second article discusses the difficulty that the PLC encountered as it engaged with the 'hardness' of pedagogical change

among the five teachers and discusses the twists and turns involved in the PLC's struggle to deliberate productively about pedagogical change. The third article narrates the journey of pedagogical adaptation and change of one teacher who collaborated in the PLC over a two-year period. This article discusses the *durability* and *malleability* of this teacher's pedagogical disposition by arguing for a conceptualisation of teacher change that moves beyond a cognitivist approach to one that engages the embodied practices of teachers. The thesis concludes by arguing that teacher adaptation and change, as capacitated through the on-going dialogical and reflexive PLC process, must engage with the teachers' embodied dispositions, their pedagogical practices inscribed in their being, in order to effect sustained change in their pedagogical habitus and subsequently in their pedagogical practices.

Acknowledgements

My Masters and Doctoral process can best be described as a thoroughly surprising and fascinating journey of knowledge and self-discovery. I did however, not journey alone and I wish to pay tribute to those who walked the journey with me.

To Prof Aslam Fataar my supervisor, thank you for your unique, insightful and intuitive guidance and support of my thesis work every step of the way. Thank you for always challenging me to dig deeper, think harder and move beyond the obvious and for motivating me to take the risk of positioning myself in my thesis. Thank you for believing in me more than I believed in myself.

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To the PLC participants, thank you for being willing to share the complexity of your teaching world with me. You restored my faith in what we can achieve with our students when we work together and place our students and their learning as central in our teaching practices. I learnt so much from you; thank you for committing to the complex journey of pedagogical adaptation and change.

And last, but not least, to those who have journeyed through my life at one stage or another and contributed to who I am today, you are all part of the puzzle pieces of my life journey that has culminated in this thesis. Inspired by my grandmother's creativity as an artist, this is my picture of words.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father (10.11.1931 - 01.05.2015) who believed I could change the world of schooling and never tired of asking me how I was going to accomplish it. I present this thesis in memory of his complete and unwavering faith in me at all times. He taught me humility and perseverance and I am deeply grateful for the many years we had together, and wish more than anything that he were still on earth to celebrate this special part of my journey with me.

To my heavenly Father who has watched over and directed my journey, I rest in Him knowing that he holds my future and that his plans for me are greater than my dreams.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rationale

This study is based on the premise that good teachers and their pedagogies make the greatest difference to students' learning in schools, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Winefield & York, 1966; Hayes, Mills, Christie & Lingard, 2006:1). The Coleman report on *Equality of Educational Opportunity* that investigated why public schools in America were not offering equal educational opportunity for all individuals, states that while context remains an overriding factor in determining schooling success, the extent to which students feel they have some form of control or agency over their learning makes more of a difference than all school factors put together (Coleman *et al.*, 1966). Thus, teachers and their pedagogies contribute the most to better learning outcomes for all students. This thesis focuses on teachers' pedagogy in relation to student learning and engagement, based on the belief that individual teachers and their pedagogy are able to make a difference to student engagement and consequently student learning.

Central to my thesis work is the positioning of teachers as professionals within the current school landscape. This positioning of teachers places them as agents of change within the regulative institutional contexts and scripted curriculum mandated by the South African Department of Education that frames their working contexts. Fataar (2012) argues that the focus on policy discourse that has dominated current educational developments both locally and internationally have eroded teacher autonomy. Consequently these restrictive curriculum policy orientations (Spreen & Vally, 2010) that currently frame teachers' pedagogy have struggled to leverage an engaging pedagogical platform in schools.

Working with teachers in South African schools that serve students from low-income areas, my research focuses on teachers' pedagogical learning within a professional learning community (PLC). I argue that the current scripted pedagogy and regulative teaching environment that has been produced by the implementation of Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS), positions teachers as technicians who

are required to implement a pre-packaged curriculum (Msibi & Mchunu, 2013). This orientation allows little opportunity for creating an innovative and participatory teaching and learning environment that recognises the students' cultural lives and knowledge from their homes and communities. Within this regulative teaching environment teachers are by and large unable to teach with creativity and innovation. Instead, they find it easier to follow the status quo than to teach against the grain of a system that holds them captive in a performative regime of testing with a results-driven focus. My thesis work is positioned within this restrictive teaching context. However, my research is premised on the belief that there exists a window of opportunity for those teachers who believe in the possibility of adopting pedagogies that are able to engage their students in a richer notion of learning premised on a socially just pedagogical orientation.

To this end, teachers from different schools, mostly serving students from low-income areas, were invited to participate in an on-going dialogical process of a PLC to interrogate their current teaching practices and find ways to shift, adapt or change their pedagogies in consonance with a socially just orientation. In the first year, five teachers from different school contexts committed to the PLC process and met bi-weekly. The focus of the PLC discussions was not aimed at working outside of, or undermining the CAPS framing, but rather finding ways within the current CAPS system to generate an enriched and socially just teaching environment. The PLC was based on a pedagogical perspective aimed at working against the deterministic orientation associated with a scripted curriculum. It aimed to provide a platform for the teachers to explore the spaces of intervention and possibilities of change to promote student educational engagement. At the end of the first year, two of the PLC teachers, building on their learning in the PLC conversations, chose to embark on their own Masters' Degree studies, focusing on aspects of student learning. The PLC continued into a second year and the original teachers were joined by a new group of teachers.

The data emanating from the two years of reflexive PLC discussions and practical design and implementation of a socially just pedagogical orientation, using the framing of the 'funds of knowledge' approach (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992), form the basis for the three thesis articles. The method and logic of the PLC process,

what I refer to in the thesis as a 'methodo-logic' of the unfolding process, is discussed in more detail below. My research study focuses on the teachers' pedagogical learning and adaptation towards a socially just orientation via the dialogic approach of the PLC. The first article discusses the conceptual parameters that informed the establishment and functioning of a PLC. The second article describes the 'hardness' of pedagogical change as a process of habitus engagement. The third article uses the narrative of one PLC teacher over a two-year period to discuss his process of dispositional and corporeal adaptations and changes facilitated by the PLC process in his embodied teaching practices. The third article documents both the possibilities and constraints of designing and implementing a pedagogically just orientation within the restrictive CAPS framing combined with the challenge of a diverse group of students within a working class school context. Although the two PLC groups form a small sample of teachers' pedagogical learning within a PLC, the data produced a rich understanding of both the constraints or 'hardness' of pedagogical learning and adaptation, and the possibilities that the dialogical approach of a PLC holds as a form of habitus engagement to change or shift teachers' pedagogical practices.

1.2 South African Schooling Post-Apartheid

Germane to the broader discourses that framed the manner in which the PLC operated, is an understanding of the South African schooling context post-apartheid. Following the end of the apartheid era, one of the most important tasks that faced the democratic government was to address the deep inequalities that forty years of apartheid and almost 300 years of colonialism had left in the education system. A series of educational policy changes to redress the educational injustices of the apartheid government was adopted. Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was launched in March 1997 and was driven by the principles of outcome-based education (OBE). In 2000, the minister of education, Kadar Asmal, appointed a task team to investigate the challenges experienced by schools and teachers across the country with the implementation of C2005. Based on the team's recommendations C2005 was revised, leading to the launch of the Revised National Curriculum (RNCS) in 2002. Dissatisfaction with the RNCS was raised causing it to be replaced in by the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in September 2010. This

document was further revised after problems were pointed out and the new CAPS 2 document was implemented from March 2011.

Educational reform is not an unusual phenomenon in schooling and plays an important role in educational change, however, it often fails to take into account the depth, range and complexity of what teachers do (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000:4; Christie, 2008). While policy is able to provide regulatory frameworks to govern educational change or guide teaching and learning, policy cannot command or order quality teaching in schools or force children to learn (Christie, 2008). Policy decision makers often view teachers as technicians of education whose job it is to implement relatively uniform teaching procedures, 'processing' students through the system to the desired outcomes. Such a view proceeds on the belief that teaching can be simplified to a set of procedures that can be defined, detailed and monitored and that teaching decisions can and should be prescribed through a set of policy mandates that create systems, school schedules and programmes, that when implemented, will bring about desired change and improvement within the educational system. However, it is individuals, not institutions, who implement core teaching and learning policies, and individuals are motivated by personal and professional beliefs (McLaughlin, 1987). Therefore, whatever the merits of new and innovative practices are, trying to bring them about by mandated and compulsory teacher practices has little effectiveness unless individual teachers 'buy in' to the change efforts. The way in which policy plays out, whether productively or not, is therefore dependent on the actions of teachers.

The current curriculum policy reform, i.e. CAPS, is based on a mode of teaching that includes strong classification and framing (Bernstein, 1975) that makes curricula knowledge visible and explicit to all students. The CAPS was implemented in response to an educational system that was described as exacerbating, rather than ameliorating, inequality in student educational outcomes, particularly in working class communities (Jansen & Christie, 1999; Christie, 2008; Fataar, 2010). In other words, it was based on the plausible argument that education was failing the students who needed it the most, i.e. students from disadvantaged homes and communities. Maringe and Moletsane (2015:348 citing Weeks, 2012) argue that not only is the educational system failing our students, three quarters of South Africa's schools can

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officially be described as dysfunctional, and are not serving the purposes for which they are meant. South African schooling remains precariously unsatisfactory for the majority of learners and the education system can be described as resembling a "two nation or two economies state" (Fleisch, 2008). On the one hand, schooling takes place in former white schools (Model C schools) that are well-resourced and provide a decent quality of education to white and black children of the middle classes, while a second system, which is for the most part poorly resourced with a poor infrastructure, caters for children (mostly black African and to some extent coloured) from poor working class townships, rural areas and informal settlements (see Maringe & Moletsane, 2015).

In response to the immense diversity found in the South African schooling system, the CAPS is aimed at shifting the curriculum policy focus to a controlled transfer of knowledge and learning with the aim of attempting to meet the basic educational needs of learners in impoverished circumstances. This approach, however, has resulted in a "preponderance of policy discursivity that has had pernicious consequences for teachers' relative autonomy" (Fataar, 2012:57). The CAPS has been described as a tightly scripted curriculum that can be considered teacher-proof in its implementation approach (Fataar, 2012). Ramatlapana and Makonye (2012) and Msibi and Mchunu (2013) criticise CAPS for being a pre-packaged curriculum that restricts teacher autonomy and professionalism. The emphasis on the use of workbooks, text books and a tightly scripted curriculum designed ostensibly to improve the educational quality of teaching in schools (Spreen & Vally, 2010), has produced an educational regime that demands uniformity in curriculum implementation across South African schools which is strictly monitored by governmental officials (Ramatlapana & Makonye, 2012).

CAPS is intended, therefore, to tightly regulate teaching in schools, providing for a scripted pedagogy that includes regulative routines for teachers as well as training of teachers in order that they comply with the curriculum requirements and implement the school code as it is laid out in the CAPS documents provided by the Department of Education (Fataar, 2012; 2013b). CAPS is further accompanied by a results-driven assessment regime (see Ramatlapana & Makonye, 2012) that requires Annual National Assessments (ANAs) to be written by all schools in Grades 3, 6, 9

as well as a National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination at the end of students' twelve years of formal schooling (Department of Basic Education, 2013). I concur with Fataar (2012) who states that CAPS is framed on a deficit assumption of South African teachers' pedagogical capacity within the teaching and learning environment of schools, and assumes that South African teachers are poorly prepared and thus require a strict regulatory regime that governs curriculum implementation. The CAPS therefore, as a policy orientation, leaves little pedagogical space for an enriched and critical perspective in education or an opportunity for socially engaging pedagogy to be established (Fataar, 2012). It is within this predominantly narrow focus on teaching and learning in schools as is currently packaged in South Africa's curriculum policy approach that the research for this thesis is situated.

My thesis research acknowledges the challenge of providing equitable schooling experiences for all students, but argues that deliberations about how we can improve schooling should be informed by an ethical response to schooling that is based on engaging students in active learning. This approach stands in opposition to a logic that sees teachers as technicians who deliver the curriculum and educational improvement driven by a national testing regime that measures and compares school and student achievement, and by implication, teacher performance. This form of national testing and benchmarking "assumes that the question of what ought to be done in schooling can be answered by accurately measuring what is currently being done" (Sellar, 2015:123).

This thesis seeks to investigate how teachers' pedagogical change, in consonance with a social justice approach to teaching and learning, can be mediated via the dialogical and on-going approach of a PLC. My argument rests on the concern that more than twenty years into South Africa's democracy, despite significant educational policy changes, there still exists a deep divide between the functioning of low-income schools and those that operate in the wealthier, leafy green suburbs. Schooling for the diverse student population remain a vastly uneven experience, and poverty, race, gender and religion in many instances continue to delimit the different educational experiences of most South African children (Christie, 2008:4). For many young people democracy has not brought about better prospects in education. Eradicating or reducing the inequalities of the past remains an elusive and on-going

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challenge for all involved in education. Structural changes that have high symbolic value are easy to make, however, actually changing the core of teaching and learning practices relies on teachers (Elmore, 1996). Changing what teachers do in classrooms involves teachers learning how to do things differently and must include providing support for teachers and holding them accountable (Christie, 2008:152).

It was within this current focus on a results-driven and regulative teaching orientation that the PLC was established. The focus of the PLC was to consider an approach to teaching and learning that engages teachers in a continuous process of personal and collaborative reflection that builds and enhances their professional pedagogic knowledge. The challenge and long-term vision of this form of pedagogical renewal is to leverage a pedagogically just platform which allows teachers to work across different knowledge forms to engage their students and provide them with the intellectual tools to critically interact with school knowledge (Fataar, 2012:57). This requires us to create teaching environments where teachers are positioned as professional agents of change and who are informed by an internal accountability system as opposed to the external monitoring and control systems that are presently found in the CAPS. Christie (2008:216) notes

> the challenge is not to view what exists as inevitable and unchanging – and not to underestimate the task of changing what exists. The task is to keep envisaging alternatives, to keep challenging with new ideas, and to keep pressing against the boundaries of common sense towards something better. The task is always to hold an ethical position on education, which entails a commitment to continuously thinking about how we may best live with others in the world we share. As educators our task is to enrich debates from within educational discourses.

My research thus investigated teachers' pedagogical learning within a PLC. The research study was centered on understanding the role that the dialogical and on-going conversations of a PLC can play in teachers' pedagogical learning as they change, adapt or shift the manner in which they develop and implement lesson units in consonance with a social justice orientation. This builds on Christie's (2008) invitation to envisage alternatives, challenge with new ideas and continually press

against the boundaries of the status quo towards something different, something better.

1.3 Teachers and Change

Change in education is highly complex. Professional development programmes are usually designed to initiate change due to a new curriculum or instructional innovation or to initiate change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs (Guskey, 2002:382). Fullan states that "[e]ducational change depends on what teachers do and think – it is as simple and complex as that" (2007:129). In order for sustained education change to occur, teachers need to be involved in processes of challenging and rethinking assumptions and theories on which their practice is based (Fullan, 2007). Unless this happens, any form of new curriculum change advocated will simply be filtered through the lens of teachers' already established beliefs and practices and will be colonised by the existing practice (Reid & Lucas, 2010).

Guskey (2002) proffers a sequence of events by which sustained pedagogical change takes place. He suggests that successful and sustained change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs takes place when professional development or new pedagogical knowledge is followed by the teachers' implementation of changed classroom practices and a concomitant change in student learning outcomes. According to his model, significant change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs occurs only after teachers gain evidence that the change initiatives they have implemented have resulted in improvements in student learning. The crucial point that he makes is that it is not the professional development that changes the teachers' attitudes and beliefs, but the experience of successful implementation linked to improved student learning and outcomes, i.e. "[t]hey believe it works because they have seen it work, and that experience shapes their attitudes and beliefs" (Guskey, 2002:383). Practices that are found to work will stand a better chance of being retained and repeated, and those that do not show any tangible evidence of success, will generally be abandoned (Guskey, 2002:384). The key factor for enduring change in classroom practices, therefore, hinges on evidence of successful student learning outcomes, not only cognitive and achievement outcomes, but also a wide range of student behaviour

and attitudes to learning such as student motivation for learning, improved student participation in lessons and classroom behaviour.

The establishment of a PLC during the first year of my thesis work was based on teachers investigating, adapting and changing their pedagogy in consonance with a socially just orientation. The PLC provided a space where teachers could dialogue together with a focus on their classroom pedagogical practices. The PLC was established involving myself, a university lecturer and practicing teachers who were studying towards a Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours degree at our university. The community of teachers emerged out of a module offered by the university called *Education and Society* that focused, among other things, on issues of social justice to inform the teacher's pedagogical engagement with their students and teaching contexts. At the completion of the university module we (myself and the lecturer of the course) in consultation with the students, conceptualised and set out to establish a professional learning community of teachers that focused on pedagogical adaptation and innovation in light of the demands and challenges of the newly implemented CAPS curriculum. The establishment of the PLC was motivated by a desire to develop a space for professional learning to expand the participating teachers' pedagogical repertoires. The teachers were invited to embark on a voluntary reflexive journey, primarily via discussion in the PLC that focused on their classroom pedagogies rather than the measurable outputs of their students. The focus of the PLC included an opportunity for the teachers to analyse their teaching practices and involve themselves in critical reflexivity about their pedagogies, deepen their own learning, adapt their pedagogies and shift their pedagogical identities, what I will later discuss as their 'pedagogical habitus', to include a socially just orientation in their teaching practices. In order to understand the role that the PLC played in the teachers' pedagogical learning, change and adaptation, I now turn to a discussion on teachers' learning within PLCs.

1.4 Professional Learning Communities

There is no universal definition of PLCs. As a broad definition, PLCs can be described as "a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an on-going, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-orientated, growth-

promoting way" (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006:223). Darling-Hammond & Richardson (2009:3) describe PLCs as a learning space in which "teachers work together and engage in continual dialogue to examine practice and student performance and to develop and implement more effective instruction practice … teachers learn about, try out and reflect on new practices in their specific context, sharing their individual knowledge and expertise". PLCs are fundamentally about professional and collective teacher learning with a specific focus on problematising the learning needs and outcomes of the students (Stoll *et al.*, 2006; Stoll & Louis 2007; Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008; Katz & Earl, 2010; Brodie, 2013).

Central to the learning process in a PLC are the on-going conversations that generate new knowledge and learning among the teachers. Senge (1994:254) makes a distinction between discussion and dialogue, stating that, while discussion is intended to provide a space for the voicing of viewpoints, dialogue goes beyond individual understanding and allows the participants to gain insights that they would not have been able to achieve individually. PLC work is enhanced not only by collaboration but by the combination of the PLC members who dialogue in collaboration around the PLC's central focus of inquiry. Although PLCs have common characteristics and adopt similar processes, each PLC should focus on the specific needs and conditions of the school community taking into account particular contexts and settings in which the PLC operates (Bolam, Mcmahon, Stoll, Thomas, Wallace, Greenwood, Hawkey, Ingram, Atkinson & Smith, 2005:i).

A crucial element within all PLCs is having a clear organisational purpose or focus that the community collectively inquires into (Brodie, 2013). In order for the inquiry to have the greatest effect on student learning the focus needs to be both concrete and useful (Timperely & Robinson, 2003); 'right' for the participating schools and teachers given their particular context, history and needs (Katz & Earl, 2010); related to the instructional core of teaching and learning and involves a focus on the needs of the students (Brodie, 2013); and be compelling and challenging (Bryk, Camburn & Louis, 1999). A challenging focus is therefore one that requires teachers to reconceptualise and rethink their existing practices, challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and make adaptations or changes in their practice based specifically on the needs of their particular students within the context of their school.

The intention of the PLC was to build a collaborative learning community that intentionally built webs of relationships around the collective work of the participants, regardless of grade, context or subject discipline. The collaborative relationships and supportive conditions were used to assist the teachers to shift from the traditional isolation which is often found in schools to that of a more community-based culture. The value of the PLC lies in its focus both on process (how we teach and students learn) and product (or the outcomes) of the learning process which could be adapted across various school or classroom contexts to suit each specific learning environment (Stoll & Louis, 2007). Research indicates that there is a measurable difference in student achievement in schools where teachers form PLCs and place student learning at the center of their focus and inquiry (Stoll & Louis 2007; Louis & Marks 1998; Bolam *et al.*, 2005) with an unrelenting attention to student learning success (Stoll & Louis 2007).

Creating and sustaining PLCs require an on-going commitment to the focus of the community's inquiry via the dialogic engagement of all members of the group. Teaching is inherently a complex activity and the challenges that teachers face are most productive when engaged within learning communities of practice via the iterative process of analysis, reflection and change (Stoll, *et al.*, 2006). As my thesis work shows, pedagogical change is a slow, non-linear, hard and at times a messy process. Working within the PLC dialogue, the process involved the teachers first experimenting with opening up their classroom teaching to allow for a more participatory approach to student learning before being able to delve more deeply into the design and implementation of lesson units that drew on the students' funds of knowledge (see Moll *et al.*, 1992) scaffolding their family and community knowledge into the school curriculum. This process was complex, uneven and continually bumped up against the complexities, demands, expectations and day-to-day world of school life.

The three articles presented in this thesis describe how the PLC was conceptualised, implemented and how it played out as a form of habitus engagement over a two-year period. The PLC became a space of possibility, outside of the teachers' school environments, where they could explore, problematise, dialogue about and then experiment with new ideas and richer notions of pedagogy. In order to understand

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the hardness of the teachers' pedagogical change and the process of learning that took place within the PLC, I now turn to a discussion on pedagogical habitus engagement as it was conceptualised to support teacher adaptation and change.

1.5 Pedagogical Habitus Engagement

The focus of this thesis, eliciting pedagogical change among teachers in a professional learning community (PLC), is described within the PLC process as a form of habitus engagement. In this section, I elaborate on habitus engagement which I conceptualise as a form of deep engagement with the teachers' embodied habitus. I describe the teachers' pedagogical dispositions which they have acquired over time as an addition or overlay on their existing habitus formation which I define as their pedagogical habitus and discuss in greater detail below. By overlay, I refer to a secondary layer or secondary habitus which Wacquant (2014:7) describes as "any system of transposable schemata that becomes grafted subsequently [onto the primary habitus], through specialized pedagogical labor". This takes place as one's primary habitus responds to different experiences and circumstances which are internalised and become another layer added to one's primary habitus from earlier childhood socialisations (Reay, 2004:434). Bourdieu states that the habitus is able to be transformed (or added to) by social action and experiences and continues "from restructuring to restructuring" (Bourdieu, 1977:87). I suggest, therefore, that a teachers' pedagogical habitus constitutes the teachers' dispositions, cognitive, attitudinal and corporeal, that they bring to their teaching contexts given the educational spaces that they have inhabited. Pedagogical change then, needs to contend with the teachers' pedagogical habitus that has been established over time.

When considering how pedagogical change may be mediated within a PLC, I draw on Bourdieu's conceptualising of the logic of practice using habitus and field and include his theorising of 'bodily hexis' and doxa to support my argument. In this section I first discuss the concepts of habitus and bodily hexis in relation to field to describe the manner in which the teachers' pedagogy is embodied and enacted through their pedagogical habitus in a given context. I then discuss the concomitant relationship between the teachers' habitus and the field of schooling and resultant pedagogical habitus of the teachers. An understanding of the relationship between

the teachers' embodied habitus, their current pedagogical practices and the contexts in which these practices occur, allows me to theorise the formation of the teachers' pedagogical habitus and the role this plays in their enacted teaching practices. I lastly discuss the role that the doxa of schooling plays in the constraints and possibilities of change and adaptation in the teachers' pedagogical practices within the PLC process.

1.5.1 Habitus

Bourdieu uses the concept of habitus to explain both the way in which an individual is in the social world, but also the ways in which the social world is in the individual (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus operates as a system of durable, transposable patterns of socio-cultural practices or dispositions gained from our cultural history which stay with us across various contexts. Conditioned primarily during early childhood, habitus operates largely below the level of consciousness and gives one a sense of what actions are possible (or impossible) and provides one with a sense of how to act and respond "without consciously obeying rules explicitly posed as such" (Bourdieu, 1990a:76).

Habitus describes our ways of acting, feeling, thinking and being and captures how we carry our history within us and how that history plays out in our present circumstances (Grenfell, 2008:52). Habitus as a complex amalgamation of past and present is "a socialized subjectivity" and "the social embodied" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:127-8). Bourdieu describes the habitus as "durably inculcated by the possibilities and impossibilities, freedoms and necessities, opportunities and prohibitions inscribed on the objective conditions" (Bourdieu, 1990b:54). In other words, habitus refers to how the personal, one's dispositions that have been internalised, underlie one's actions in the social world.

Habitus produces an individual's disposition which includes one's capacities, tendencies, propensities or inclinations (Mills, 2012). These dispositions which have formed over time, allow us to respond to cultural rules and contexts in different ways and provide a "strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations" (Bourdieu, 1977:72). Bourdieu views these

dispositions as offering both possibilities and limitations. Thus, Bourdieu offers the possibility that one's habitus is able to generate a repertoire of new transformative actions given new or different field conditions. While habitus predisposes individuals towards certain ways of behaving that are a reflection of the cultural and social positions in which it was constructed, it also contains a genesis of new and creative responses that are capable of transcending the structured social conditions in which it was produced (Reay, 2004). A crucial feature of habitus is that it is embodied and is not composed solely of mental attitudes and perceptions, it is a whole body experience (Reay, 2004; Shilling, 2004; Nolan, 2012). Habitus operates at various levels, in one's thoughts, use of language and physical actions and includes how one embodies a variety of experiences relative to different structures and relations (Nolan, 2012).

For Bourdieu it is through the habitus that social reproduction in schools takes place. Education as a field or social context, comprises of complex relations and structures that operate between teachers, students and the curriculum. These structures and relations are constantly shifting and changing, while at the same time being embodied and absorbed by both teachers and students as the values and relations of schooling (see Webb *et al.*, 2002:115-6). The habitus as a cultural agent, therefore, responds to the cultural practices that shape, determine and reproduce social relations and pedagogic action within schooling (Webb *et al.*, 2002:117, 125). Our responses, although they seem natural and unconscious, are always largely determined or regulated by our contexts or cultures which have informed the structuring of our habitus. Individuals are disposed to certain attitudes, values or ways of behaving due to the influences exerted by their cultural trajectories which have been internalised as rules or structures and that will then determine subsequent behaviour or responses. These structures or rules are inscribed on and in individuals as "human nature" or "civilised behaviour" (Webb *et al.*, 2002:39). Bourdieu refers to this as the partly unconscious 'taking in' of rules, values and dispositions which he defines as "the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, [which] produces practices" (Bourdieu, 1977:78).

While we may think of the body as something individual, subject to and characteristic of the self, Bourdieu points out that the notion of an individual's self-contained body

is a product of the habitus:

> This body which indisputably functions as the principle of individuation … [is] open to the world, and therefore exposed to the world, and so capable of being conditioned by the world, shaped by the material and cultural conditions of existence in which it is placed from the beginning, it is subject to a process of socialization of which individuation is itself the product, with the singularity of the 'self' being fashioned in and by social relations. (Bourdieu, 2000:133-4)

Therefore as individuals move through different fields, they tend to incorporate into their habitus the values and imperatives of those fields which in turn 'produces' an individual's body or bodily dispositions (Webb *et al.*, 2002:37).

1.5.2 Bodily hexis

The Latin word habitus refers to "a habitual or typical condition, state or appearance, particularly of the body" (Jenkins, 1992:45). For Bourdieu the habitus is fundamentally an embodied phenomenon that denotes not only how we think about the world but has included in it a bodily system of dispositions that are enacted in a field. Particular contexts (or fields) consequently 'produce' an individual's body and bodily dispositions (Webb *et al.,* 2002:37). These bodily functions include, "a way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and using implements, always associated with a tone of voice, a style of speech" (Bourdieu, 1977:87). Bourdieu describes these as 'bodily hexis'. Bodily hexis is structured by one's past and is inscribed onto one's body as a form of bodily disposition. Bourdieu states that these dispositions are "as durable as the indelible inscriptions of tattooing" (Bourdieu, 2000:141). Bodily hexis incorporates a relationship between social structures (or social fields) and one's habitus and "is a political mythology realized, *em-bodied*, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking." (Bourdieu, 1990b:70; italics in original)

Bourdieu states that our corporeal movements, our bodily dispositions, are a mediating link between our subjective and personal worlds and our cultural and social worlds into which we were born, and which we share with others (Jenkins,

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1992:46). While we may think of the body as subjective, something individual or belonging to the self (Webb *et al*., 2002:37), our body is an incorporation of our history, a repository of ingrained and durable dispositions that structure at a corporeal level the way we generate meaningful social activity (Wainright, 2006; Winchester, 2008). One's habitus, through these individualised patterns of bodily behaviour, reflects shared cultural contexts as cultural commonalities of class that are inscribed on an individual's body and reproduced in personal deportment and bodily movements within a particular field (Adams, 2006). Thus, for Bourdieu, "the body is a mnemonic device upon and in which the very basics of culture, the practical taximonies of the habitus, are imprinted and encoded in a socialising or learning process which commences during early childhood" (Jenkins, 1992:46).

Bourdieu's concept of 'bodily hexis' assists us to understand the durability of the teachers' enacted pedagogy and the complexity involved in engendering changes in their pedagogy. The teachers' embodied pedagogy structures not only their mental attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about teaching, but also their corporeal teaching dispositions. By corporeal dispositions in teaching I refer to their speaking and use of language, posture, the way they present their lessons, interactions with students, use of resources, movements in and around the classroom and so forth.

I draw on the concept of embodied pedagogical habitus in the third article to explain the 'hardness' of pedagogical change that was undergone by one teacher in his struggle to adapt his classroom pedagogy towards a more socially just teaching orientation. Based on the example of this teacher, I argue that pedagogical adaptation and change requires teachers to reflexively engage with their embodied pedagogical habitus, which includes their bodily hexis and teaching corporeality, in order to facilitate and sustain change in their pedagogical habitus, and accordingly, in their teaching practices.

1.5.3 Field

Drawing on the concept of bodily hexis as an embodied form of habitus allows for an understanding of how an individual's practices (both mental and physical) are produced and reproduced in relation to each other through social practice within a given context. Bourdieu refers to one's 'fields of play' as a structured social space or

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force field within which interactions, transactions and events occur at a specific time and location (Thomson, 2008). A field is not a static entity but fluid and dynamic and particular practices within a field should not be seen only as a product of habitus, but rather as "the product of the *relation between* the habitus, on the one hand, and the specific social contexts or 'fields' within which individuals act, on the other" (Thompson, 1991:14; italics in original).

These contexts or 'fields of play' include institutional (field) discourses, values, rules and regulations (Webb *et al.,* 2002:21) that produce or adapt one's habitus in a particular way. This does not, however, dictate a sense of preordained behaviour as to the way in which individuals behave within a particular field. Cultural fields have both the ability to produce and transform the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. Reay asserts that "when habitus encounters a field with which it is not familiar, the resulting disjunctures can generate change and transformation" (2004:436). For Bourdieu it is the interaction between habitus and field that generates the logic of practice as it is the concept of field that gives habitus its dynamic quality (Bourdieu, 1990b).

Bourdieu posits the existence of different fields and states that each field contains "historically constituted areas of activity with their specific institutions and their own laws of functioning" (Bourdieu, 1990a:87). A cultural field, such as the field of education or schooling, can produce and authorise certain discourses and activities (Webb *et al.*, 2002:22). Each field has its own logic and taken-for-granted structure "which is both the product and producer of the habitus which is specific and appropriate to the field" (Jenkins, 1992:52). According to Bourdieu everyday decisions are made within a network of structures and relations within a social field. These fields or areas of activity are each "quite peculiar social worlds where the universal is engendered" (Bourdieu, 1998:71) and include institutional (field) discourses, values, rules and regulations (Webb *et al.*, 2002:21) that produce or adapt one's habitus in a particular way. The field can be considered a mediating context where external factors such as changing circumstances are brought to bear on an individual's practice.

People can occupy more than one social field. For example, the teachers involved in

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the PLC operated within their school field (which is part of the larger field of education), the university field and the PLC. Fields are not fixed but may change over time, such as the field of schooling. Cultural fields have the ability to produce and transform the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. This does not, however, dictate a sense of preordained behaviour as to the way in which individuals behave within a particular field. For Bourdieu it is the interaction between habitus and field that generates the logic of practice as it is the concept of field that gives habitus a dynamic quality (Bourdieu, 1990b).

1.5.4 The relationship between habitus and field

The relationship between field and habitus is central to understanding social practices. Habitus and field are mutually constitutive of each other and are produced and reproduced in a dialectical relation to each other, i.e. each one shapes the other (Grenfell, 2008; Nolan, 2012). Bourdieu argues that habitus "realizes itself, becomes active only *in the relation* to a field, and the same habitus can lead to very different practices and stances depending on the state of the field" (1990a:116). Our responses are therefore largely determined by our context and those directly involved with us within our context.

Bourdieu uses the analogy of a game to discuss the role that habitus and field play in the logic of practice as it plays out within the social world. Within this game what determines the extent to which an individual is able to master the regularities of a particular field is their habitus:

> Habitus as the feel for the game is the social game embodied and turned into a second nature. Nothing is simultaneously freer and more constrained than the action of the good player (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:63).

A good player is therefore someone who has a feel for the game and who understands the unwritten rules by which the game is played. In other words, an individual operating in a social field and who understands the structures and rules implicit in that field will be able to engage within that social field in a way which seems natural and unquestionable. Bourdieu notes that "when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the produce, it is like a 'fish in water': it does not feel the

weight of the water, and it takes the world about itself for granted" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:127). Here, one's habitus matches the logic of the field and one feels at ease and is able to determine the limits of what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour, the unwritten rules of the game.

For teachers these 'rules of the game', the underlying practices within the field of schooling, are implicitly structured within their habitus from their own schooling experiences and reinforced through their training and subsequent teaching experiences. Over time they have come to 'play the game of schooling' in a particular manner based on their past educational experiences which they unwittingly perpetuate and reproduce within their classroom practices. Bourdieu describes a field-habitus match as having a 'feel for the game', in that one's habitus matches the logic of the field and thus one is attuned to the unwritten 'rules of the game'. It is important to note that while a teacher may play a role in the game of schooling that can be seen as complicit and reproductive, this role often operates to some extent below the level of conscious awareness which Bourdieu describes as doxa. Doxa, which I elaborate on further below, refers to the practice of accepting specific sets of beliefs or practices as inherently true and necessary without realising that there are alternatives to the status quo (Webb *et al.*, 2002).

Teachers, therefore, will adapt to, or incorporate into their pedagogical habitus the values and imperatives of the educational fields that they have moved through. An understanding of the iterative relationship between the teachers' habitus and the various educational fields that have structured their pedagogical habitus allows us to recognise how the teachers respond to and structure their educational decisions, their doxa of schooling, and the enactment of their pedagogy in a particular way. It further allows us to understand the role that the reflexive PLC conversations can play in disrupting the teachers' habitus-field congruence to generate the possibility of pedagogical change and transformation.

1.5.5 Doxa

Bourdieu describes doxa as a form of discourse and practice or certain beliefs and assumptions that circulate powerfully in everyday life settings and constitute an underlying logic that seems more-or-less unquestionable. Different teachers are

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positioned within particular societal structural formations and the logic of these particular social-structural positions acquire a taken-for-grantedness or common sense that is perceived as natural for all. An understanding of doxa is found in the fact that "[m]ost people, most of the time, take themselves and their social world somewhat for granted: they do not think about it because they do not have to" (Jenkins, 1992:70). Doxa, as a set of core values and discourses of social practice in schooling, situates certain educational practices as "natural, normal, and inherently necessary, thus working to ensure that the arbitrary and contingent nature of these discourses are not questioned nor even recognized" (Nolan, 2012:349). The teachers' doxa, or uncontested pedagogical beliefs "that escapes questioning" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:98) can therefore be seen in the 'hardness' of change in their actual classroom teaching practices.

The doxa of schooling, or teaching practices enacted within schools, is discussed in more detail in the second and third article. The second article describes the role that the on-going dialogical PLC process played in interrupting the doxa of schooling and certain teaching practices, to challenge the teachers towards a more participatory form of pedagogy. The article discusses the PLC conversations that challenged the doxa of the teachers' pedagogy and linked these with new innovative imaginings of how they could enact their pedagogy differently. These innovative possibilities or changes in pedagogy, as capacitated by the PLC process, allowed the teachers to disrupt and shift their pedagogical habitus to include a more socially just teaching orientation. The second article shows how the PLC's relentless focus on a socially just orientation, the persistence of the teachers in engaging with their own pedagogical doxa, the dialogic and reflexive process of the PLC and the practical experimentation in the teachers' classroom pedagogy allowed the changes and shifts in their pedagogical practices to inch slowly forward. The third article captures the embodiment of a teachers' doxa of schooling as it is found in the corporeality of his teaching practices. This article illuminates one teachers' adaptations which struggled to move beyond not only taken-for-granted *thinking* (doxa) about schooling practices, but considers the manner in which he was challenged to change the corporeality of his enacted teaching practices in order to shift to a more socially just teaching orientation. I describe these embodied forms of the teachers' pedagogical practices as their pedagogical habitus.

1.5.6 Pedagogical habitus

As discussed in this thesis, a teachers' pedagogical habitus includes their embodied, mental and corporeal pedagogical practices that have formed over time. One's pedagogical habitus can thus be seen as a secondary layer of habitus formation which has become grafted over time onto their primary habitus. As one's habitus is not a pre-programmed automated response to situations, but rather an internalised unconscious relationship between one's embodied dispositions and a social field (Maton, 2008:51), I suggest that a teachers' pedagogical habitus has been informed and structured by the socio-cultural practices within the various educational fields they have encountered. These educational fields include their own schooling experiences, their training as teachers and their teaching experience in schools. Bourdieu further describes one's habitus as "a system of cognitive and motivating structures" or "dispositions" that function "as principles that generate and organise practices" (Bourdieu, 1990b:53). This suggests that teachers' pedagogical habitus organises and positions them as certain types of teachers, which in turn structures their teaching practices in certain ways. Consequently, any substantial or effective change in the teachers' practices has to contend with the durability of the teachers' pedagogical habitus formation over time and the teachers' relationship with the various social and/or educational 'fields' in which they are engaged.

In order to understand the durability of the PLC teachers' pedagogical habitus within my thesis work, it was necessary to come to an understanding of the teachers' biographies as these situate them within the broader context of their career and personal life histories. In the second article I use the five teachers' biographical data to assist me in understanding the hardness of the teachers' pedagogical change through the dialogical PLC environment. Understanding how the five teachers' pedagogical habitus were formed allowed me to work more productively with their established pedagogical 'doxa' towards a more socially just orientation. The third article, as a narrative-based account, uses the biography of one teacher to illuminate the on-going process of embodied mental and corporeal adaptations of this teacher's pedagogical practices as facilitated by the PLC dialogue. In both articles I draw on Bourdieu to understand how the doxa of a particular field positions the teachers and, unless explicitly challenged, works against pedagogical change and adaptation.

1.6 Methodo-logic of the Professional Learning Community

I now turn to a discussion on the methodo-logic of the PLC process. In establishing the logic on which the PLC process unfolded, I draw on Hattam, Brennan, Zipin and Comber's (2009) framing approach which they call the methodo-logic of the research process. This method does not refer to research methods or methodology but rather provides the logic of an approach that includes the guiding principles that underpin the decisions and activities of the project. For the PLC process, this methodo-logic was founded on an ethical commitment to finding ways in which the teachers could adapt or change their current pedagogies in consonance with a more socially just teaching orientation. The manner in which this process was conceptualised and established within the PLC is described in the first article. This article describes the conceptual bases that informed the establishment and functioning of the PLC and provides a discussion on the intellectual process on which the PLC was founded.

The starting assumption of the PLC methodo-logic is that teachers' pedagogical adaptations are exceptionally difficult to shift. The PLC was therefore conceptualised as a vehicle for exploring teachers' pedagogical orientations and practices with a view to understanding how pedagogical adaptation and change may be mediated within their pedagogical habitus. Using the lens of Bourdieu, the PLC process was conceptualised as a form of 'habitus engagement' that actively engaged with the teachers' firmly established teacher identities, educational and classroom practices that have developed over time.

The PLC process offered the teachers the opportunity to engage in supportive and deliberative conversations about the intellectual terms and pedagogical capacitation needed in order for pedagogical adaptation or change to occur. The focus of these conversations involved a consideration of ways in which the teachers might engender pedagogies that would induct students into engaging with school subject knowledge by working with the students' lifeworld contexts and knowledges. This process involved the use of the 'funds of knowledge' (Moll *et al.*, 1992) framework as a way of engaging students meaningfully in their learning. Thus, the PLC was conceptualised as a safe dialogical space where the participating teachers were able

to develop the conceptual capacity and intellectual skills to develop a social justice approach to their classroom pedagogy.

My point of departure in the PLC process was the view that what is required to enhance the professional agency of teachers, within the current regulative teaching environment which is framed by the CAPS, is a far richer notion of pedagogical practice aimed at engaging all students in their learning. I suggest this type of approach is required in a context, such as South Africa, where the space for professional dialogue about ways to enrich the teaching and learning at schools has been eroded by the scripted pedagogical approach of the CAPS, which requires very little dialogue among teachers in schools about their actual pedagogies. The socially just PLC focus was therefore motivated by the view that schools should be spaces where "knowledge and talk about pedagogy [are] … at the core of the professional culture of schools" as it is a focus on pedagogies that engage all students in their learning that "can make a difference to students' academic and social outcomes from schooling" (Lingard, Hayes & Mills, 2003:399).

1.7 Theoretical considerations of student learning

The starting point for the PLC emerged out of a university Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours module called *Education and Society* that focused, among others, on the conceptual parameters of pedagogical learning in complex educational contexts. Part of this module was premised on a Bourdieusian insight that states that students enter schooling from different structural positions due to early-life immersion in the family and communities that embody distinctive qualities of dispositions or 'habitus'. Bourdieu (1984) describes the 'primary habitus' as repetitive patterns of practice and interaction from early childhood that have been internalised within our family. These social habits are based on ways of knowing from our family positions, economic class and other structural power relations that emerge in different contexts. In schools, students begin acquiring overlays of a 'secondary habitus' as they assimilate the new conditions and new information and scaffold it onto the existing primary habitus. The degree of this secondary assimilation will depend on whether the codes of pedagogic interaction as well as other features in the school site are familiar to the primary habitus. The dispositions of the students' lifeworld-based

habitus therefore acquire greater or lesser 'capital' value depending whether these cultural codes align with the dominant mainstream curriculum. Bourdieu states that educational systems and especially schools, reproduce social stratification by maintaining

> the pre-existing order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital … by a series of selection operations, the system separates the holders on inherited cultural capital from those who lack it. Differences in aptitude being inseparable from social differences according to inherited capital, the system thus tends to maintain pre-existing social differences (1998:20).

Students whose embodied cultural capital or habitus aligns with the school system allows those children access to the codes of schooling while denying others the opportunity to achieve success at school or feel that school is in their best interests. These students find that the curriculum makes no connection to the learning from their community contexts or life world knowledges and therefore they see no intrinsic value in engaging with the educational experience.

Building on finding ways to re-engage students in their learning, Delpit (1995) argues for the knowledge codes to be explicitly taught in order for students to see schooling as for them rather than internalising a sense that they are a failure within the educational context. Schools need to encode the 'culture of power' which reproduces a social structure of unequal power relations within the school (Delpit, 1995). Therefore, to consider pedagogic justice within our classrooms it is necessary for schools to make these power codes, which are often implicit within the school system, explicit in order to redistribute them among all students. Delpit states that "if you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules … makes acquiring power easier" (Delpit, 1995:25).

Delpit emphasises the responsibility of teachers to design a pedagogic approach that is both inclusive and redistributive, that valorises the life world codes and enables the learning of the elite codes. Building on this, Hattam *et al* (2009:304) state that "any project that hopes to address the problem of cultural capital must focus on pedagogies that start to connect school-based learning with students' own lifeworlds

in their communities". Fataar argues for "pedagogical recontextualisation as a way of responding to the pedagogical injustice implicit in the lack of interaction between the cultural capital arising from the lifeworld contexts of the disadvantaged students and their schools' educational engagements" (2012:154). Pedagogical justice, Fataar contends, is best accomplished via explicit pedagogy that is based on a "social relations of pedagogy" (2012:157) approach to teaching and learning. He explains that while explicit pedagogy attends to the 'what' of pedagogies, social relations pedagogies refers to the 'how' of re-engaging students via a relational dimension of pedagogies with the school knowledge code.

Thus, school engagement depends on the students seeing themselves as playing an essential role in their learning which takes place through a combination of active participation in classroom learning and a pedagogical focus that connects with and engages "the cultural and linguistic materials of these students, their socio-historical backgrounds", their lifeworld knowledges (Fataar, 2012:159). Connecting the subjective or relational aspects of disadvantaged students' lives to school learning holds the potential for providing a platform for socially just pedagogies within the South African context (Fataar, 2012).

Building on Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital misalignment and Delpit's call for explicit pedagogies that give disadvantaged students access to the 'culture of power' within the school knowledge code, Fataar (2012) advocates for the scaffolding of students' lifeworld knowledge via explicit teaching into the school knowledge code. Zipin (2005) describes chasing a socially justice orientation as an exquisite tension or drawing on Derrida an "aporetic rather than a dialectical understanding and political-ethical commitment: a leap into madness in pursuing a socially just both/and that is impossible and yet must necessarily be pursued" (Zipin, 2005:3). Working to counter dominant and taken-for-granted ways of teaching, the teachers in the PLC portrayed a strong sense of advocacy for the students they taught and came to realise that in pursuing a social justice agenda they were working against the grain of the doxa of schooling. Despite the constant challenges that this approach encountered, the teachers remained committed to finding ways in which they could take creative, intellectual and deliberate action to counteract the perpetuation of the dominant hegemony within their specific school contexts.

1.8 A social justice approach to student learning

In support of a richer notion of classroom teaching and learning, the PLC discussions were founded on an approach that builds on Fraser's (2009) conceptualisation of social justice. This approach emphasises the need to consider the tension between the redistribution of the school knowledge code currently encoded in CAPS, recognition of student social-cultural constructions of identity and a representation within school knowledge of the lifeworld knowledges that the students bring with them to school. Engaging with the students' lifeworld knowledges is founded on the view that making curricular connections with, and actively engaging the students' home socialisations, interests and knowledge, is one key way of securing students' intellectual interest in their schooling (see Fataar, 2012). The conceptual underpinning and methodo-logic of the PLC was therefore an attempt to bring all three dimensions of a social justice approach into a productive relationship with each other so as to inform the teaching practices of the PLC teachers. This was aimed at providing them with a productive set of conceptual resources that informed their teaching in terms of which they are able to intellectually engage their students in their schooling.

In conceptualising a more socially just approach to teaching and learning that improved the learning outcomes for students who have dis-engaged from their learning, Hattam and Prosser (2008) challenge us to move beyond mere compensatory programmes which are mostly based on a view that the problem lies in student and community deficits. This view challenges a deficit theorising approach that blames the underachievement of minority and low-income students as "a plethora of inadequacies, such as inadequate home literacy practices, inadequate English language, inadequate motivation, inadequate parental support and inadequate self-concept." (Hogg, 2011:666) This deficit theorising leads to acceptance of students' low academic achievement and expectations by teachers. While many teachers would dispute holding such views, these views may lurk below consciousness as attitudes or beliefs and provide an obstacle in teachers realising the potential of all their students.

In contrast, a social justice orientation to teaching and learning allows teachers to engage with students as individuals, rather than based on assumptions and stereotypes. This allows teachers to move away from "the intense brutality of a system that does not really seem to 'see' children" (Spindler & Spindler, 1983:75) to one that engages educators in a deep understanding of the students that they teach. This approach values the recognition and representation aspects of a socially just orientation and challenges meritocracy that privileges conformity and standardisation. Conceptualising a more pedagogically just stance allows teachers to confront the hegemonic forces that continue to shape curriculum and schooling on a middle-class value system, and find ways to work effectively with the diversity of students to support and value their cultural identities and lifeworld knowledge in order to afford them success within mainstream school learning.

1.9 Funds of knowledge framework

In response to the complexity of the challenge to engage all students in their learning, the PLC drew on the theoretical framework of the 'funds of knowledge' (FoK) approach (Moll *et al.*, 1992). This approach "is based on a simple premise … that people are competent and have knowledge, and their life experiences have given them that knowledge" (Gonzalez & Moll, 2002:625). This framing acknowledges that students' funds of knowledge are grounded in their involvement and experiences in the worlds they inhabit beyond the school and values the students' and their families "historically accumulated bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household functioning and well-being" (Gonzalez, Andrade, Civil & Moll, 2001:116). This approach affords teachers a more accurate understanding of the students' cultural FoK and identity, drawing this into school learning and in so doing validates the students' lifeworld knowledge and life values. Thus, the classroom space becomes a hybrid space where the school knowledge and the students' lifeworld knowledge from their homes and communities intersect. This hybrid school learning becomes a 'navigating space' where students gain competency and expertise, via their lifeworld knowledge and cultural interests that allows them to begin to achieve success in the standardised school knowledge requirements. This supports Delpit's (1995) call to encode the 'culture of power' via a pedagogic

approach that is both inclusive of the student's life world codes and redistributive of the elite school codes.

For the purposes of this study I incorporated a broader conceptualising of student FoK sources and areas of knowledge which is found in Esteban-Guitart & Moll (2014a; 2014b) and Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti's (2005) later work where they expand the FoK view by developing a way in which students' independent activities in other settings can be incorporated in lesson units. Gonzalez *et al* (2005:39) state that popular culture, peers and other systems and networks also form part of "everyday lived experiences" of students. Popular culture and other FoK can be argued as influencing and supporting students' personal goals and priorities such as communication strategies and identity development (Hogg, 2010:671). Gonzalez *et al* (2005) argue that although these goals and priorities differ from the marginalized Latino families and communities where the FoK were first observed and recorded, considering students' more transnational lifestyles and use of advanced communication technologies it seems that we can construct a valid argument for including these sources into a FoK approach today. This is supported by Andrews and Yee (2006), Moje, Ciechanow, Kramer, Ellis, Carrillo and Collazo (2004) and Barton and Tan (2009) who found that their students' FoK came from homes, peer groups as well as other systems, networks and popular culture. This broadening of the approach allows for additional FoK that arise from students' talents and interests or any resources, observations or experiences beyond school to be considered as valid knowledge that can be incorporated into school learning and provides for the dynamic nature of personal interests to be contextualised in specific school contexts.

Utilising the FoK framework enabled the PLC teachers to draw on the cultural capital of their students and recontextualise their lifeworld knowledge and interests into relevant and meaningful lesson units that created cultural congruence in school learning for their students. Attending to the needs of the students in the various school contexts, we also drew on literature from place-based education (Gruenewald, 2003) and popular culture (Dimitriadis & Weis, 2001; Duncan-Andrade, 2004). In order to consider ways to practically design and implement lesson units we drew on literature from the Redesigning Pedagogies in The North (RPiN) project (Prosser, Lucas & Reid, 2010), that offered an example of place-based and lifeworld

lesson units, as well as literature from the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study's Productive Pedagogies (Hayes, Mills, Christie & Lingard, 2006). This literature supported the teachers in their shift towards the practical designing and implementing of lessons with a more participatory and socially just orientation in their teaching and learning, given their specific school contexts and the diverse students they teach.

The Productive Pedagogies (Hayes *et al.*, 2006) framing provided the teachers with four main premises that challenge teachers to design lesson units that pose high intellectual challenge, connectedness to the students' world beyond the classroom, provide a socially supportive classroom environment and work with and value difference among the diverse student groups. This approach that is based on findings by the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study (QSRLS) describes these classroom practices and organisation processes as making a difference and improving the academic and social learning and outcomes of students who traditionally underachieve and under-participate in school learning (Hayes *et al.,* 2006). These four main focus areas underpinned the conceptual process in the planning of the lesson units.

The RPiN project (Prosser *et al.*, 2010) provided further practical examples of an approach to teaching and learning that involves a negotiation of curriculum projects with students. This project encourages students to function as ethnographers of their own lifeworlds, and allows teachers an opportunity to engage with the students' learning and interests beyond the classroom in order to scaffold this lifeworld knowledge into school curriculum units that engage the students in the school standardised curriculum work. Students are "thereby treated as experts in-and-on their own worlds" (Hattam *et al.*, 2009). By researching and bringing their lifeworld knowledge and interests into classroom learning, their lifeworlds become validated within the school curriculum work. The lessons designed and implemented by the teachers working within this project provided the PLC teachers with a mapping for the practical design and implementation of lesson units that demonstrate ways to 'do school' differently.

1.10 Methodological Framework

Research methodology can be conceptualised as "the science of finding out" (Babbie, 2014:6) and refers to the general logic and theoretical perspective for a research investigation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007:35). The methodology of a project encompasses the decisions and considerations regarding the design and implementation of the research study, while the research methods refer to the specific research techniques, such as interviews, observations and surveys, that are used to obtain the data (Seale, 2012).

In order to investigate the teachers' pedagogical learning in a professional learning community, which is the focus of this thesis, I employed a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research is descriptive in nature and encompasses a wide range of inquiry methods aimed at investigating a topic in all its complexity within the context of where it occurs. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than the outcome of products, and therefore, carefully consider how people negotiate meaning or how particular notions come to be taken-for-granted or common sense. The qualitative researcher, therefore, needs to approach the collection of data from a standpoint that takes nothing for granted and examines the participants in their contexts in order to come to a comprehensive understanding of the manner in which individuals organise their daily activities (see Bagdan & Biklen, 2007:5-6). For the purposes of this study, the focus was on understanding the teachers' pedagogical learning within a PLC. The PLC transcripts and observational school visits provided the necessary 'insider' and first-hand familiarity in context-specific settings of the participants being researched (Golafshani, 2003:601), that is required in qualitative research work.

Qualitative research does not attempt to search for data or evidence that proves or disproves a particular hypotheses, rather qualitative researchers believe that the study itself structures the research, not preconceived ideas or a precise research design. Thus, qualitative work is inductive and the data are analysed inductively to abstractions or themes from the data collected (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). In this manner the data analysis process pieces together the disparate evidence and

analyses the data to produce common interconnected themes which form the basis of the research outcomes.

1.11 Data production

In order to answer my main and sub-research questions, my research drew on the unfolding PLC process over a two-year period and included transcripts of the PLC meetings, field notes from my regular observations at the school sites, which at times included videos of the classes and multiple individual in-depth semi-structured interviews with the PLC participants. The PLC meetings were each audio-taped and immediately transcribed which provided me access to the actual dialogue of the teachers' weekly discussions from the PLC process. In conjunction with these transcripts I recorded my own PLC reflections from each meeting as 'thick descriptions' of the PLC process (Geertz, 1988). By 'thick descriptions' I refer to the nuances of the way the teachers interacted within the meeting, the manner they described their pedagogical adaptations, as well as my own thoughts, emotions and understanding of what transpired each week.

As part of my research I spent time at the school sites and in the teachers' classrooms observing lessons where they had adapted their pedagogy to include the FoK framework. During the second year of the PLC process and in preparation for the third article, I conducted weekly visits to one of the teacher's classrooms as I recorded his adaptations and change in his pedagogy over a six-month period. These school site visits provided me with rich data which, used in combination with the videos taken at the school, PLC transcripts and multiple individual interviews with the teacher, produced a narrative account of the adaptations and changes in his pedagogy over a two-year period and forms the basis of the third article. Using the PLC transcripts, observational school visits and biographical in-depth interviews further provided a triangulation of data to ensure that it was the participant's voice that was foregrounded in the article, and not that of the researcher (see Goldbart & Hustler 2005:17).

1.11.1 Sampling

The parameters for the sampling of the PLC teachers were different during the first and second year. During the first year of its operation, the PLC participants were teachers studying towards their BEd Honours degree in a course module titled *Education and Society* which was offered at the university. The students from the BEd Honours course module, in which I was involved as their class tutor, were invited at the end of the module to commit to a PLC process in order to find ways to practically design and implement lesson units based on the theoretical discussion from the course module. A group of five Honours students volunteered and committed to the PLC process for a one-year period. These students, as well as myself and the lecturer of the module, formed the PLC during the first year.

At the end of the first year, two of the teachers chose to continue in the PLC and were joined by a second group of teachers, who were invited to participate in the on-going PLC process. At the start of the second year the PLC consisted of approximately 10-12 teachers from different schools in the area. As not all teachers were able to attend the PLC meeting every week due to other school commitments, the PLC consisted of approximately 6-8 teachers weekly.

1.12 Ethical Considerations

Research is generally considered to be trustworthy and credible if threats to validity are carefully and rigorously considered, and as far as possible avoided (Golafshani, 2003). With this in mind, I took the necessary precautionary steps to ensure that both the research process and ethical considerations of the process were conducted in a manner which was fair and which most fairly represented the teachers' pedagogical learning within the unfolding PLC process.

At the start of my study I completed the ethical clearance for Stellenbosch University's Human Ethics Research Committee. Thereafter I applied to the Western Cape Education Department to conduct research in the schools of the PLC participants. Upon receiving permission from the WCED, I applied for permission from the principals of each of the schools where the PLC participants were teaching. During my first school visit, which was shortly after the start of my research, I met

with each school principal and briefly outlined the scope of my research and the teachers' involvement in the PLC process.

The major ethical considerations associated with this study related to the confidentiality of the material and the anonymity of the PLC participants in the research process. Pseudonyms were used for participants and all school names were changed. In terms of interacting ethically with the PLC participants, they were asked to give their written informed consent and were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage with no repercussions. They were also informed that all PLC conversations would be recorded, as well as any individual interviews or informal discussions that were relevant to the research process. The PLC conversations and individual interviews were transcribed and the audio and typed transcripts stored securely for the duration of the research study in order to protect their anonymity. The research process took place over a two-year period. Involvement in the PLC was at all times voluntary and not all participants were involved in the study for the entire period. All PLC participants were given access to the transcribed transcripts of the PLC dialogue and were invited to view the articles in this thesis before they were sent to journals for publication.

1.13 Concluding Comments to the Introduction

This introductory chapter has introduced my research question:

> *How do the dialogical processes of a professional learning community capacitate teachers' pedagogical adaptation and change towards socially just pedagogical practices?*

Furthermore, this chapter has explained and contextualised the PLC process and introduced the three thesis articles. Preceding the three articles, I have included in the thesis what I call an inter-leading section. This section provides a narrative account that includes key aspects of my biography and educational experiences in order to reflexively position myself in the thesis work as the researcher and interlocutor of the PLC process. In order to narrate my experiences and examine myself within the broader pre- and post-apartheid educational environment, I employ

aspects of autoethnography. This allowed me to subjectively position myself within the thesis study and research in relation to the teachers and PLC process.

The inter-leading narrative is followed by the three articles. The first article, published in the *South African Journal of Higher Education* (Feldman & Fataar, 2014), "*Conceptualising the setting up of a professional learning community for teachers' pedagogical learning",* positions the professional learning community (PLC), which is the focus of this thesis, by conceptualising the establishment and functioning of the PLC for the teachers' pedagogical learning. The article describes the intellectual approaches on which a social justice orientation of the PLC was established. By offering the view of PLCs as a form of 'habitus engagement', this article argues that the reflexive dialogical space provided by PLCs holds the potential for actively engaging with firmly established teacher identities to effect pedagogical adaptation and change.

The second article, "*Dialogical habitus engagement: The twists and turns of teachers' pedagogical learning within a professional learning community"* (Feldman & Fataar, forthcoming)*,* narrates the pedagogical learning of five teachers in a professional learning community (PLC) which was established as a means of generating pedagogical learning and change in consonance with a socially just educational orientation. This will be published as a book chapter in a book edited by Karin Brodie titled, *Professional Learning Communities in South Africa,* which will published by the HSRC Press in 2016. The chapter discusses the difficulty that the PLC encountered as it engaged with the 'hardness' of pedagogical change among the teachers and describes the dialogical approach of the PLC as a form of 'habitus engagement'. It draws on empirical data from the PLC conversations, individual interviews with the teachers and observational school visits to narrate the role that the PLC played in dialogically and reflexively shifting the teachers' pedagogical habitus to begin considering new possibilities in their pedagogy.

The third article *"Embodying habitus change: a narrative-based account of a teachers' pedagogical change within a professional learning community",* narrates the journey of one teachers' pedagogical adaptation and change within the context of his participation within a professional learning community. This article has been

submitted to the journal *Education as Change* for consideration of publication. This article focuses on the durability and malleability of teacher's pedagogical dispositions by arguing for a conceptualisation of teacher change that moves beyond a cognitivist approach, to one that engages with the embodied practices of teachers in order to capacitate adaptation and change. Drawing on Bourdieu's thinking tools of habitus, bodily hexis, field and doxa, this article argues that teacher pedagogical change requires a form of habitus engagement that takes into account the teachers' embodied cognitive and corporeal habitus. This process, the article suggests, is best facilitated by teachers collaborating within a reflexive and dialogical professional learning community.

The thesis presents a concluding chapter which draws together the findings from the articles and includes insights from the teachers' reflections and PLC process and makes suggestions for further PLC work that focuses on a socially just orientation to teaching and learning.

1.14 In Conclusion

My thesis is situated within the pursuit of two imperatives. Firstly, my research aims to capture the pedagogical learning of teachers pursuing the possibility of a social justice approach that engages all students in their learning. This is situated within the redistributive and recognition tension, and the belief that despite the regulative forces that hold teachers captive, there lies a contingency of possibilities for those who choose to not surrender to the constraints and doxa of institutionalised practice. Secondly, I pursue an exigent understanding that teachers' pedagogical subjectivities are contingent on the way they have been positioned within the regulative CAPS framing and the school contexts in which they teach. This argument juxtaposes a deficit perspective of teachers that positions them as technicians of a scripted curriculum, with a view that situates them as professional teachers and agents of change. The teachers described in my thesis heed the call of an ethical responsibility to negotiate the "mad breach of social-educational justice" (Zipin, 2005) and work to change or shift their own pedagogical habitus within the doxa of the institutionalised schooling system in which their pedagogy is enacted. Zipin (2005) describes this impulse as a "disturbed peace" for teachers who realise that for their

students and for themselves, the rewards of chasing a socially just aporia, which may be far from just or fair, will make schooling for the students in their classes "better than otherwise" (Zipin, 2005).

This thesis work is based on the ideological belief that teachers can become professional agents of educational change and that this process is best facilitated as a form of habitus engagement within a collaborative and dialogical PLC environment. Bourdieu warns of the durability of one's habitus, or as I refer to it, the 'hardness' of habitus, but offers a window of hope stating that the structures of habitus are not set, but can evolve, "they are durable and transposable but not immutable" (Maton, 2008:53). At each twist and turn that the PLC dialogic process took, it faced this hardness of pedagogical change. However, within this hardness, there also existed possibilities that the PLC conversations constantly provoked via its collaborative and on-going dialogical process. It was these possibilities that provided the momentum to keep moving forward, even as structural and operational school issues pushed and pulled the teachers in different ways.

As argued by Fataar (2012), pedagogical recontextualisation within the South African context needs to be understood as a long-term project that moves beyond the external regulation of teachers' work. My thesis work is premised on the belief that external regulation, as is found in a performative and results-driven approach, instantiates a deficit approach to teachers as professional educators. I argue instead for an enabling environment that eschews the view of teachers as technicians of the curriculum and places teachers as professionals who are best positioned to understand and know their students and engage them in intellectually rigorous work.

In understanding the ethical impulse that drove the dialogical engagements in the PLC as the teachers operated within the limits that their school contexts and curriculum structures imposed on them, I take cognisance of the tension that a socially just orientation effects. Zipin (2005), drawing on philosophers Immanuel Levinas and Derrida, calls the tension between the redistribution and recognition logic an aporia, which involves a "transaction between two contradictory and equally justified imperatives", each of which are impossible, but yet must be pursued. The teachers described in this thesis worked counter to the dominant and taken-for-

granted ways of teaching, placing central to their discussions the possibility of responding to the ethical responsibility and conviction that pursues a social justice agenda.

Chapter 2: Playing the game of education: A personal narrative of the unfolding research process

Each of us not only 'has', but lives a biography reflexively organized in terms of flows of social and psychological information about possible ways of life. Modernity is a post-traditional order, in which the question 'How shall I live?' has to be answered in day-to-day decisions. (Giddens, 1991:14)

This section of the thesis is my lived biography in relation to the logic of the unfolding professional learning community (PLC) process. It involves a reflexive consideration of my subjective positioning within the process and responds to the question "Why did I as a PhD researcher, 'live' this research process in this particular way?"

As a researcher, it is impossible to enter the research process without a certain amount of bias that is shaped by prior experiences. By bias, I refer to one's predisposition that is structured out of cultural social contexts through one's life experiences. These structured and structuring predispositions provide a form of pre-reflexive intuitive knowledge that one unconsciously inherits through early family circumstances and subsequent life experiences. They provide a 'mapping' or propensity to act in a particular way. Bourdieu describes this as one's habitus.

Our social activity, which is linked to our subjective dispositions within our habitus, includes the everyday decisions we make within a network of field structures and relations. Although our habitus is thoroughly individualised, it reflects our shared cultural contexts and commonalities of different social groupings, which creates a constitutive response to already existing social conditions. Our cultural history is reflected in our body, in that "the body is a mnemonic device upon and in which the very basics of culture, the practical taximonies of the habitus, are imprinted and encoded in a socialising or learning process which commences during early childhood" (Jenkins, 1992:46). In other words, our habitus incorporates individualised patterns of feelings and bodily behaviour but also reflects our shared cultural contexts as cultural commonalities of class inscribed on our bodies which are then reproduced, for example, in personal deportment and bodily movements or speech patterns.

This inter-leading piece reflexively accounts for my involvement in the unfolding PLC process and the predispositions that I bring with me into this process by providing an understanding of how key aspects my biography and educational experiences have positioned me in a particular way in the research process. To account for how I am positioned and my own subjectivity, I describe my early life family context, my educational trajectory, my enacted teaching as a school teacher and principal and my subsequent return to my studies. I include descriptions of the various school contexts that I worked in and events leading up to a crisis point in my educational career that culminated in me returning to post graduate studying and my doctoral research. My story positions in me in a particular way, with a predisposition to react or respond to circumstances in a certain manner. This positionality and structured predisposition is also an integral part of the impetus that drove my research and the unfolding PLC process over a two-year period.

My narrative takes a reflexive stance and here I draw on Archer's (2007) concept of reflexivity. Archer defines reflexivity as "the regular exercise of the mental ability shared by all normal people to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa" (2007:4). Human reflexivity, Archer contends, is a form of internal conversation that uses not only language, but also emotions and visceral sensations, visual and auditory images and mental pictures. These internal conversations mediate between our concerns and the social contexts we confront and guide a person in their stance towards constraints and enablements in their social contexts. She states that these deliberations are a necessary part of human nature as they provide the basis on which people are able to determine their future courses of action – "always fallibly and always under their own descriptions" (Archer, 2007).

Reflexivity is the way we make our way through the world and applies particularly to the social world which Archer (2007) states "can no longer be approached through embodied knowledge, tacit routines, or traditional custom and practice alone" (5). Reflexivity allows one to become an 'active agent', who is able to exercise governance in one's life, as opposed to a 'passive agent' to whom things simply happen (Archer, 2007). As I am positioned at the centre of the PLC and research process, how the PLC process unfolded is directly related to who I am and how life

circumstances have positioned or predisposed me to respond in different contexts in particular ways.

In order to bring my own voice to the narrative and describe the course of action upon which I embarked in my research process, I employ aspects of autoethnography. Autoethnography is a first-person's self-reflective account of one's experiences and story. As a writing and research genre, autoethnography displays multiple layers of consciousness and fuses social science and literature to connect "the practices of social science with the living of life" (Ellis 1999:669; Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Autoethnography therefore can be described as a form of self-narrative that involves the rewriting of the self in relation to the social (Reed-Danahay, 1997).

My narrative is situated within personal, societal and educational changes. These changes impact and affect my life in various ways and culminate in my doctoral research process. In this section I use a form of reflexive ethnography which allows me to use my own cultural experiences as a way of reflexively bending back on myself in order to "look more deeply at self-other interactions" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000:740). This process involves a back-and-forth movement between my experiences and examining myself in the broader social context to provide a sociological understanding of what transpired through a series of life events (see Ellis, 2007).

The use of autoethnography allows me to incorporate my personal experiences as part of the research process and study myself in relation to the relationships and situations encountered during the process. My narrative, as Ellis and Bochner suggest, responds to the questions: "What are the consequences my story produces? What kind of person does it shape me into? What new possibilities does it introduce for living my life?" (2000:746) Thus, my story also becomes part of the research text (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). I do not include the PLC teachers' biographies in this section as these stories are captured in the three articles following this section. This section describes my biography in relation to the PLC focus and unfolding process.

2.1 Bourdieu's tools for analysis

In my narrative I apply Bourdieu's conceptualising of habitus, field, bodily hexis, doxa and hysteresis. These tools allow me to discuss my biography and subsequent positioning as a researcher in relation to the teachers' learning process within the PLC.

For Bourdieu habitus is "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them." (Bourdieu, 1990b:53) This section provides a biographical analysis of the structures that structured my own habitus in relation to my later research focus. It is the 'structure' of my habitus, that acts as an organising action and "designates a *way of being, a habitual state* (especially of the body) and, in particular, a *predisposition, tendency, propensity or inclination*" (Bourdieu, 1977:214; italics in original), which in this thesis is central to understanding the way in which I facilitated the PLC process and interacted with the teachers as part of the research process.

Bourdieu explains that habitus involves the notion of an individual, self-contained body which is structured by one's past and is inscribed onto one's body as a form of embodied dispositions such as one's posture, gait, gestures and so forth. Bourdieu describes this as 'bodily hexis'. By one's past, Bourdieu refers to the fact that although one's body functions as the principle of individualism, it is open (biologically) or exposed to the world and therefore is "capable of being conditioned by the world, shaped by the material and cultural conditions of existence in which it is placed from the beginning, it is subject to a process of socialization of which individuation is itself the product, with the singularity of the 'self' being fashioned in and by social relations." (Bourdieu, 2000:133-4) Bourdieu argues that one's very culture is encoded in or on the body over time, and refers to habitus and bodily hexis as forms of this embodiment. Bodily hexis allows us to understand the manner in which our habitus is deeply embodied as well as physically enacted in our bodily or corporeal dispositions and actions.

Habitus, however, does not act alone, but functions within and through the physical and social spaces where interactions, transactions and events occur. Bourdieu defines these social spaces as a field. The everyday practice of people, what they do and why they do it, in relation to objective social structures such as institutions, discourses and fields (Webb *et al*, 2002:1) can be understood via the iterative relationship between habitus and field. An understanding of the structures or social fields that shape one's habitus provides a consideration of how social structures and individual agency can be reconciled, "how the 'outer' social, and 'inner', self help to shape each other" (Maton, 2008:50). This section, therefore, includes a consideration of the relationship between my habitus and social fields I have encountered and analyses how my dispositions and attitudes (the 'inner') have been developed in relation to various social fields and how this impacts on the way in which I engaged in social practices (the 'outer') during my research, the PLC process and the teachers involved in the PLC.

Bourdieu describes a field - habitus match as having a 'feel for the game', in that one's habitus matches the logic of the field and thus one is attuned to the unwritten 'rules of the game', or the doxa. Doxa refers to the practice of accepting specific sets of beliefs or practices as inherently true and necessary without realising that there are alternatives to the status quo (Webb *et al*., 2002). I show how my own doxa of schooling is challenged during this research process. Practices that I took for granted in the 'game of schooling', were investigated and challenged throughout the course of my research and through the PLC process.

Conversely, a mismatch between field and habitus results in hysteresis. In times of personal or social stability, change takes place along gradual or anticipated routes as one's habitus changes in response to new experiences or different fields it encounters. Bourdieu uses hysteresis to explain what occurs when a stable field and habitus are abruptly disrupted causing them to move out of synch with each other. Hysteresis, therefore, describes a transitory or even alienating time during which one's habitus evolves and new and stable field conditions are yet to emerge. Transitory or alienating change effects can be seen, for example, in generational change which is impacted by technological development; dislocation change where one moves or changes to a new field or location; and social change and field

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restructuring, such as was experienced in South African education post 1994 with the demise of apartheid, the desegregation of schools and the implementation of a new curriculum.

The concept of hysteresis is thus integral in assisting me to analyse and understand a form of social change and field restructuring that occurred in my own life when the school field in which I was involved and my embodied habitus moved out of synch with each other, leaving me with an inability to employ the rules and regulations (my educational doxa) which had allowed me, up until that point, to move fairly seamlessly through educational institutions.

Hysteresis or a change period includes a 'time lag' as well as a gap of new possibilities during which habitus and field are repositioned in relation to one another. I discuss my habitus-field disruption and the effects of hysteresis which included a gap of new possibilities as well as risk associated with an unknown future during a time of change. Risk, as it was elucidated within my own life, was an unexpected disruption in my life's trajectory. I transitioned out of the world of teaching and into the world of university study and the consequence of change that included an unpredictable and indeterminate future combined with novel opportunities which culminated in my doctoral research.

Reflexive autoethnography and Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' are an integral part of this section and assist me to narrate my story in relation to the unfolding PLC research process. My positionality is intricately entangled within, and has emerged through, the history of my social fields, my habitus and my bodily hexis. These tell a story of the 'outer' world's involvement on my 'inner' subjectivity of self, in relation to my research. This section reflexively allows me to unpack and analyse my taken-for-grantedness of educational practices, in other words, my doxa of what constitutes the norm of schooling, and how this has been disrupted by changes in the South African educational landscape and my own educational experiences. The unfolding PLC process is founded on and driven by my "disturbed peace" (see Zipin, 2005) that developed over time as I traversed the changing South African educational landscape.

2.2 Positioning my narrative

In telling my narrative, I consider the interplay between my past and the present in order to position and account for myself as a researcher and interlocutor of the PLC process. According to Bourdieu, our habitus is a product of our early childhood experiences and, in particular, our socialisation within our family and community contexts. These early life experiences operate as an unconscious structuring mechanism that responds to future conditions and to relations in social interactions. Choice or individual agency found in one's habitus both allows for a wide repertoire of actions or decisions, while simultaneously being constrained by an individual's predisposition towards a certain way of behaving. One's practices, Bourdieu states, which involve a choice to do something in a particular way, are not dictated by specific rules or principles but by dispositions that are inscribed in the habitus. Reay (2004:435) describes this aptly:

> I envisage habitus as a deep, interior, epicentre containing many matrices. These matrices demarcate the extent of choices available to any one individual. Choices are bounded by the framework of opportunities and constraints the person finds himself/herself in, her external circumstances … he/she is also circumscribed by an internalized framework that makes some possibilities inconceivable, others probable and a limited range acceptable.

Deconstructing subjective dispositions within my habitus found in my individual life experiences and social position, while unique to my particular story, are also shared with others in my social field contexts in terms of "historically coded cultural markers of class, gender, race-ethnicity, region and other relational positions." (Zipin & Brennan, 2006:335) Bourdieu states that while one's habitus can be considered subjective, it is not an individual system in that our habitus has internalised structures such as "schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class" (Bourdieu, 1977:87). This is to say that as individuals our early historical and cultural markers will position us within common-class groupings which will give rise to practices in a particular way. These include not only mental attitudes and perceptions found in the habitus given the social fields inhabited, but also an embodied corporeality from one's dominant cultural and social

environments that are inscribed on and within one's bodily movements, practices and responses.

My narrative includes cultural markers of race, gender, class, region and the socio-historical context in which I grew up. These 'markers' are embodied in my formative habitus acquired during my early life immersion in my family, schooling and social class environments, and play a significant role in influencing my subsequent pedagogical actions and beliefs. In order to understand my future choices and the way in which these decisions position me in particular contexts, it is necessary to narrate key aspects of my biography, the manner in which I journeyed through life in a particular way, in a particular location and within a particular cultural context. This section considers an analysis of my family background, my career trajectory and includes a discussion on how I came to make choices and decisions that have positioned me in my doctoral research process.

The process of unpacking aspects of my life history in 'public' has been a slow and difficult process. I consider my life biography personal and private and it has been particularly difficult to re-visit, bring to light and analyse certain events. It has felt like a physical, and at times very uncomfortable, scratching through and unearthing of thoughts, memories and responses that I would have rather left alone.

While I may not have always been able to control certain life contexts, such as the historical era in which I was born and educated, or my family and early life circumstances, an analysis of this time period has enabled me to come to an understanding of my own positionality in the research process. Situating my childhood in the 1970s positioned my family in a particular way. During that time in history, given our race, class and social relations, my family had a secret, or maybe it was just my perceived secret. By today's standards it would not be considered a very interesting secret, but in my childhood it was a secret that shaped a large portion of my life and remnants of it can be seen sneaking through my subsequent life journey and choices.

2.3 My early life socialisation

My father never completed his education, having left school at the end of Grade 9. He was never a good scholar and always regaled me with tales, especially once I became a teacher, of being put on the 'stupid' side of the class or being made to sit in the corner as a 'dunce'. He left school at the end of Grade 9 and followed his father's footsteps into an engineering apprenticeship, which was considered a very good option in the late 1940s. My father was very ashamed of not completing school or obtaining a university degree. Although he had a successful career as an engineer, he always positioned himself as inferior to other professionals with whom he interacted daily and insisted that completing a degree was essential to having a successful career.

My mother was orphaned at the age of 7 and raised by family members. Her mother was one of twelve children and the rest of the family members looked after her during holiday periods while she completed her schooling in boarding school. Her mother's family were Afrikaans farmers and she spent her holidays moving between various family farms. After high school she attended a nursing training college, not because she wanted to nurse, but because her family insisted on it as it allowed her to stay in a hostel while studying. She completed her nursing diploma but only practiced as a nurse for three years before meeting my father, marrying and becoming a full time stay at home mother. My mother hated nursing and repeatedly told me that she had wanted to become a teacher. Despite my mother being Afrikaans, we spoke English in our home as my father, although born and raised in South Africa, had British parents and his side of the family only spoke English.

My parents had four children. I am the second eldest, with a brother 5 years older and a brother 6 years younger than me. I also have a sister 18 months younger than me. It is my sister who framed my childhood and became our family secret. Born with a heart defect which was not diagnosed initially, she suffered brain damage and was declared intellectually disabled. In today's world this would not be shameful or something to hide from the world, however in the 1960s and 1970s, children with impaired intellectual functioning were mostly institutionalised, allowed to pass away peacefully or kept 'hidden' in the home.

My sister had her first open heart surgery six weeks after her birth. She remained extremely ill for most of her childhood. Her illness and intellectual disability, both of which were fairly severe when she was younger, positioned our family in a particular way. Being a child of only two years of age, it positioned me in a particular way as well. Besides my sister spending long periods of time in hospital, her illness meant that my mother was mostly absent or uninvolved in my early years. She was either spending time in the hospital or attending to my sister's needs. Refusing to have my sister institutionalised, which was recommended, she made it her life focus to fight for my sister's health, education and to make her a functional member of society.

How did this frame my life? My sister was difficult, not only due to her poor health, but socially her behaviour was erratic. While the authorities insisted that the best way to deal with the situation was utilising a specialised institution, my mother refused. She lived in constant fear that she would be forced to place my sister in an institution if she couldn't assist her to become more independent, both socially and functionally. This resulted in my mother becoming fairly insular and we rarely went anywhere in public as a family, spending our holidays with family members only. As a child, I hated not having a 'normal' family.

As a middle female child, I became in essence 'invisible'. My brothers were embedded into my father's world and my mother's energy, time and emotional resources went to fighting for my sister. I was left to fend for myself. Socially I enjoyed the level of independence that our unusual family circumstances afforded me. I had two friends who lived close by. I was a voracious reader and was happy spending time on my own. The whites-only suburb we lived in offered a safe environment and I was allowed to move freely around on my own. I attended the local co-educational white English primary and high school and walked or rode my bicycle to school.

The community in which we lived was a middle class white suburb - enclave would be a better word to describe it. Unlike other areas, this particular suburb had been built in a manner that physically bordered it from any other areas and it contained only three entrance or exit points. This physical boundary insulated us during apartheid in a comfortable white suburb, 'safe' as it were from the neighbouring black

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areas. Our suburb provided for all our needs; a shopping centre, cinema, social club and both primary and high schools were all easily accessible to all residents. I very rarely left the confines of the area during my school years. My family never engaged in political discussions, and this, in combination with our enclosed community, meant that I was unaware and unconcerned about the desperately unfair irregularities taking place within the broader South African context. My family was fighting for their own form of survival; my mother for my sister's life and my father to make enough money to pay the medical bills. As a child, I was left in ignorance of the world beyond my boundaried white middle class enclave.

It was my grandmother who stepped into the gap of parenting me and she came to play a pivotal role in raising me. I spent time over weekends and holidays with her and my grandfather in their apartment. My grandparents had immigrated to South Africa from Britain in the 1920s and they, more than my immediate family, provided the cultural markers of my habitus in my formative years. My grandmother's world was one of unusual food, fashionable clothing, make-up and accessories and conversation about culture and a world beyond the boundaries of my physical world. She introduced me to music, art and books, insisted on the proper use of English and formal table manners and instructed me on becoming 'a lady'. My grandmother was feisty, independent and at the age of 53 followed her long held passion for art and completed a fine arts degree through the University of Cape Town.

My grandmother was everything my immediate family was not and I loved the unique place in the world that she created for me. Through spending time with her during my childhood I came to embody the corporeal dispositions of her cultural and social world. My mannerisms, accent, propensity for particular foods, and my clothing and cultural interests, even as a child, could be viscerally seen in my corporeality. These differences stood in stark contrast to the rest of my family and this positioned me as an outsider to my immediate family. I became, particularly for a young female in the 1970s, quite independent.

How have these two childhood worlds, my biological family and my grandmother's influence, framed me? My early life habitus was formed in an environment which was framed by the core values and imperatives of my grandmother's independent spirit

and many of her British cultural markers, while my mother provided an inspirational driving force that fought for the rights of my sister to be afforded the same educational and social opportunities as everyone else. My father placed the value of education above all else and my unique childhood circumstances developed a level of social independence combined with privacy that continues in the way I conduct my life today.

2.4 My education and teacher training

My family will tell you that I always wanted to become a teacher. Any willing family or friends were always coerced into 'playing school' with me as a young child. However, my decision to become a teacher can also be explained as a form of 'cultural reproduction' that was fostered by my schooling and reinforced by my family and society's expectations of female occupations. Schools during apartheid were structured within society to socialise different children (girls/boys, black/white, rich/poor) in different ways and to sanction or reward distinctive patterns of behaviour (Christie, 1991). Girls in general could be described as being prepared for domesticity and inferiorised positions in society which were reinforced in schools by physical gender separation when lining up, sitting apart in formal assemblies and through subject choice and sport options. Girls did domestic science, boys did woodwork; girls played netball, boys played cricket and rugby; boys were prepared for military service, girls were coached in general life skills deemed appropriate for females. School career guidance lessons encouraged girls to study in professions such as teaching, nursing, social work and administrative jobs (Christie, 1991:157) and bursary opportunities for these particular career opportunities were provided as incentives.

Choosing to become a teacher was a relatively safe and easy choice for me, and the bursary I was offered was a deciding factor. My choice to complete my studies at a teachers' college as opposed to a university was due to the fact that the fees were significantly less at the college and the bursary I was awarded would cover all my expenses at a college, but not at a university. Despite being very vocal about the importance of a tertiary education, my father had always warned us that financially he was unable to pay for our tertiary studies.

I consequently enrolled to study to become a teacher at a white, female teachers' college from 1984 to 1987 completing a four-year diploma in education. I never at the time questioned the type of training I was given and did not critically examine the role that my training as a teacher played (or didn't play) in the unfolding of my educational career. Both my schooling and subsequent teacher training took place under an apartheid education that was based on a specific worldview, that of Christian National Education (CNE) which functioned as a specific belief system that shaped white middle class education.

Christian national education believed that not only should all school values and beliefs be established on a Christian foundation, but that all children should be taught Christian character through compulsory religious (Christian) instruction. National education referred to a broad national character that was to be imprinted "through the conscious expansion of every pupil's knowledge of the fatherland, embracing language and cultural heritage, history and traditions, national symbols, the diversity of the population, social and economic conditions, geographical diversity and national achievements" (Malherbe, 1977:147). White Christian education can therefore be summarised as having a political base that built a sense of nationalism via language and an educational system intended to inculcate patriotism towards a worldview of a specific power group. The definition of nation however, did not include black South Africans and referred only to white South Africans and was based on a specific form of nationalism, that of Afrikaner nationalism that included English speaking children (Christie, 1991:178).

2.5 My teaching career

Armed with good teaching strategies I confidently entered the field of education in 1988 and began my teaching career in an all-white primary school. My educational disposition and teacher training matched the expectations of the school field that I entered, and the alignment allowed me to experience success in my teaching endeavours and move seamlessly into a teaching career. I enjoyed what Bourdieu describes as a habitus-field match that allowed me to feel 'like a fish in water', i.e., to feel comfortable and at ease in the field of education (Bourdieu, 2000:14). Bourdieu describes this as having a 'feel for the game'. My habitus was attuned to the

unwritten 'rules of the game' of education and I understood the underlying practices required within the fields of education that I was involved in. My training had equipped me with a type of skills-based training that allowed me to flourish in executing the practical teacher requirements, such as planning and teaching lessons, preparing resources and executing required administration school tasks, but had provided me with no knowledge or understanding of the broader societal issues that impacted on education.

Five years into my teaching career three significant changes impacted on my teaching. The first change, in 1993, involved schools, pre-empting the demise of apartheid, opening their doors to students from all race groups. This was not an unexpected move and the school where I was teaching at the time embraced the changes that the de-segregation of schools brought. The change in how white state schools operated involved the state adopting a partnership approach with middle class white parents in order to encourage them to keep their children in state school education rather than removing them to private schools (Christie, 2008:140). It was believed that this would assist to maintain quality education in the public sector, allowing the state to provide for basic resources in previously disadvantaged schools while wealthier communities could supplement the state allocation with additional resources. A fee exemption policy was also adopted for those unable to afford school fees, however, the state failed to provide additional funding to cover school costs in poorer school environments and the new policy served to increase inequalities in the school system as former white schools in wealthier communities were able to charge fees to supplement state education while schools in poorer communities struggled to collect any school fees from their parent bodies. Patterns of privilege were carried forward into the post-apartheid system, this time driven by wealth, not race (Christie, 2008:140). It can be argued that the new educational policies were more instrumental in retaining white and elite school models of education rather than creating a fair and equitable education system for all.

The second change was my appointment to a management position in the school. The timing of this coinciding with the de-segregation of schools meant that I was positioned as an 'insider' to the decisions that the school management team employed in response to the de-segregation and policy changes post-apartheid. As a

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school, we, like many previously white schools, managed the changes in the diversity of our student body by finding ways to assimilate the new student body into the hegemonic school culture with as little disruption as possible. Most previously white schools failed to make any adjustments to the school's cultural register, often making only symbolic adjustments to de-racialise their reception cultures but never really recognising or adjusting their cultural register to accommodate the incoming students' student-cultural identities (Fataar, 2007). This forced instead, a form of cultural assimilation into the pre-existing dominant white school culture for incoming children from different cultural and racial groups.

The third change that impacted schools was the change in curriculum policy. The schools had just begun to adapt to the changes that the de-segregation of schools brought, when the new democratic government announced a key strategic transformation of the school curriculum that involved the implementation of Curriculum 2005 (C2005) which was based on outcomes based education (OBE) principles. The new curriculum was intended to serve as an instrument for the new political vision of the country (Harley & Wedekind, 2004:196) and was to be implemented in all schools from January 1997.

The proposed curriculum changes brought anxiety, negativity and frustration to most schools. While C2005 was welcomed as a political instrument by an overwhelming majority of people as a symbolic break with the past, as a pedagogical project it remained problematic and unevenly implemented (Harley & Wedekind, 2004:199). Schools vacillated between continuing as they always had and ignoring the new curriculum, or finding ways to adjust and change their teaching to implement the learning areas that the new curriculum proposed. The Department of Education (DoE) sub-contracted the OBE training workshops to a range of consultants and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) to assist with the implementation process, making the quality of training uneven and very frustrating for teachers attending the courses. Given the short time between the finalising and implementation of the curriculum, the DoE workshops were more crash-course training that employed a cascade training model which required teachers trained at the top of the cascade to train the rest of the teaching staff at their schools (Harley & Wedekind, 2004). Pedagogically C2005 was seen simplistically as changing from the undesirable

approach of 'teacher-centered' classroom learning to a new esteemed 'learner-centered' approach. Group work was seen as the major defining pedagogical shift in teaching practices.

While these new curriculum implementation changes were taking place I was offered the opportunity to leave government education and establish a new private school in a small rural farming town. Despite being very happy in my present position at the school, I experienced frustration and confusion over the curriculum changes, increased teacher-pupil ratio, and diversity of learning and language abilities that created a learning environment characterised by high stress levels and a large degree of uncertainty. I decided to accept this new challenge hoping that the opportunity would allow me to return to the core focus of teaching and learning which I felt had been impeded through the many changes taking place in government schools. Private schools, in democratic South Africa called independent schools, at that stage were required to follow government curriculum guidelines but were not monitored by the education department, and were generally able to design and implement their own version of the national curriculum thereby avoiding the curriculum confusion found in the government schools at that stage.

I moved to the small rural town in January 2000 and established the new independent school with three other teachers. The school had small classes (10 to 15 students), and could be considered an idyllic teaching environment. For me, however, I quickly came to realise that despite being in a management position at the school, the small rural schooling environment isolated me from the broader educational community. I had moved from the complex public school environment within a changing educational landscape to the quiet and slow-pace of a rural private school. Although the school was registered with the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), we were rarely invited to departmental meetings and I found that I missed being involved in the broader educational debates that being situated in the urban changing school context had offered me, especially in light of the changes taking place in the educational landscape during this time.

In 2002, I accepted a position to establish and manage a new international private school which positioned me back in the urban school environment. The premise of

this school was that both South African and international parents had lost trust in the South African school curriculum, which was now going through a revision of C2005 and further curriculum changes. The school I was invited to establish was one of three other international schools in Cape Town that followed the United Kingdom (UK) national curriculum and was registered with the WCED as well as the Independent School Association of South Africa (ISASA).

The school attracted a diverse range of students. Approximately one third of the students were international students who were often transient, as many of their parents were in South Africa on contract work for two to three years. Thus, the number of international students who attended the school was often in a state of flux. The South African students were from diverse backgrounds. No single primary school fed into our school and the school mostly attracted students whose parents were looking for a school that provided a small, more intimate classroom setting or one that did not use the South African curriculum. Our school culture was inclusive, in that we accepted a diverse group of students with special or specific needs, part-time students, as well as offering a range of bursaries. The children of the school's staff, academic and non-academic, were allowed to attend the school at a substantial fee discount, which further diversified the student group at the school as it brought a group of working class and lower-middle class students into a private, mostly wealthy school setting.

My cultural markers of a white middle class English female positioned me as a good candidate to lead the school. As a teacher and school principal I was generally able to apply the 'rules of the game' of schooling, and for those observing it appeared to position me as a successful player. Being a good player in the educational field was important to me and I worked hard to 'play the game' well. What my cultural markers were unable to reveal was the level of embodied discomfort that I experienced in this elite school environment. To understand and analyse my sense of unease that lay at the core of a position that I had accepted but over time struggled to embody, I draw on Archer's (2007) reflexivity to account for why I, with a privileged white middle class English habitus would experience this level of discomfort in an environment where one would presume I would enjoy a habitus-field match.

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Archer describes reflexivity as 'internal conversations' that "mediate the role that objective structural or cultural powers play in influencing social action and are thus indispensable to explaining social outcomes" (Archer, 2007:5). Archer suggests that it is one's inner conversations that allow an individual's subjective powers as active agents to form projects that advance or protect what they care about most (2007:7). Archer's position on individual agency is enacted through reflexive internal deliberations within oneself and around a course of action in relation to personal projects. According to Archer (2007), how an individual choses to enact either their powers of resistance and subversion, or of co-operation and adaptation, remains contingent upon their reflexivity. Thus, social structures and events do not act upon individuals without some conscious mediation of these structures by the individual and it is one's internal dialogues that govern one's subjective powers of reflexivity.

My cultural markers afforded me an external ease of fit and I admit to being drawn into the allure offered by the power that my position as principal of an independent school afforded me, however my internal dialogue was often one of unease or disquiet regarding working in an exclusive school environment. My internal dialogue was often suppressed and silenced by the need to present an external veneer of an accomplished disposition to those to whom I was accountable. However, during times of contention with parents, students, staff or the School Governing Body (SGB), my 'internal conversations' rose up and threatened to expose my composure and my privileged ease of disposition as fraudulent, because, in truth, I was not at ease. I did not feel aligned with the wealth of the parents, nor with the politics of independent schooling. Bourdieu describes this as occupying "awkward positionings", where one is unable to abandon or entrust oneself to the social world due to one's internal dispositions (Bourdieu, 2000:163).

My early life cultural markers, while physically positioning me in a certain way, did not reveal that my family was positioned at the lower end of the middle class echelon. My father worked part time jobs on the weekends to provide for our family life style and my childhood internal social positioning, stood in conflict to the elite school environment. Over time, fighting daily for the rights of the elite, came to gnaw away at my self-worth and, it was for this reason that I began to consider finding a new educational 'project' which could 'fit' my internal dialogue.

Seven years into my time as principal of the international school I was approached by an American parent from the school who ran an NGO that was establishing a boarding school for orphans and vulnerable children. I had over time, in response to my growing internal disquiet regarding my positioning in elite education, begun to seek out the possibility of new educational opportunities. Although unexpected, the offer provided a new course of action that, based on my internal deliberations, matched a 'project' which could better contribute to my personal self-worth in education. The envisaged school would provide free high-quality education and boarding for black African orphans and vulnerable children from an area of dire poverty on the Cape Flats. I accepted the position and was appointed as principal of the school.

The school was a High School and all the expenses for the children attending were mostly covered by American individual and church sponsorships. The school was registered with the WCED and received funding for operational costs. The staffing complement of the school comprised of student interns, South African teachers and American volunteers, many who were not trained teachers. Part of my job description involved extensive and on-going staff training. The school provided for all the physical needs of the students, such as uniforms, books, stationery, clothing, food and so forth. The school classes were small and teaching encouraged participation and engaging learning opportunities. Extra lessons, compulsory study time and support for the student's educational needs were provided. The school started with 30 students with the aim of growing to 100 students over a three-year period.

Despite me accepting the educational challenge that this schooling environment offered, within the first year of the school's operation it became apparent to me that my educational training and experience had not adequately prepared me to meet the educational or the social needs of these students. My initial training included a functional understanding of teaching that focused on a redistribution of the knowledge code, but had not equipped me to understand how to engage with the students' social-cultural background or cultural knowledge, nor was I equipped to manage the social issues that the students brought into the learning environment.

What I brought to the new school environment was a practical sense of a particular 'game of schooling', one that was founded on a particular set of beliefs and values, combined with 'things to be done', and to be done in 'the right way', according to the dispositions inscribed on my habitus, i.e. the doxa of a world that presupposes an agreement between one's habitus and the expectations or demands immanent of the social field in which they are inserted (Bourdieu, 2000:47). Caught in my embodied dispositional 'ways of being and doing' I attempted to legitimise my conduct as 'the done thing', the manner in which schooling is enacted, and in turn attempted to rectify the conduct of the students in accordance with the interests of a dominant white middle class English culture (see Bourdieu 2000:145). In other words, for me, this involved perpetuating the doxa of schooling that was embodied in my pedagogical habitus and which had shaped my educational condition of existence up until this point.

The school model presupposed that it was the poor township schooling that had impeded the student's education and consequently their future prospects. The model was premised on the ideal that removing the students from the social ills of township life and offering them quality education would provide successful learning, an opportunity to enrol in tertiary studies, and subsequently, job opportunities and improved living based on improved socio-economic conditions. The school was established 100 km from the children's homes, yet the social issues from their communities, which I came to realise I had very little understanding of, followed the children into the school. Drugs, violence, teenage pregnancy and crime became entangled with the education of the school.

During the first 12 months, the school enjoyed a 'honeymoon' period that provided me with a zone of educational comfort which I mistook as the successful implementation of a school structure and culture that promoted an effective learning environment for the students at the school. During this period I was given autonomy over educational decisions, and despite the school being significantly different to any previous school environment I had been involved in, I worked hard to apply my own doxa of schooling, which were a set of core beliefs and educational practices that I applied as inherently true and necessary to establishing a successful school system. This meant that my focus was on creating a middle class schooling environment that

encouraged the students to adapt to, and assimilate into, a dominant white English culture. At the end of the first year our Grade 12 students graduated with a 100% pass rate and 80% of the class was accepted into tertiary studies at local universities. This, I believed, was testament that we were establishing a supportive, caring and high quality educational environment that was making a difference in the lives and education of the previously marginalised students attending the school.

During the second year, the school environment, driven by the students, subtly began to change. It is difficult to pinpoint any one event that changed the manner in which the students began to voice their dissatisfaction with the school process, but a creeping dissatisfaction began to surface. Possibly what began to emerge were issues that had been present during the first year, but that had been masked and unrecognised by myself in light of the schools perceived 'success' based on the students' improved academic results during the year. However, what came to transpire during the second year was a series of confusing, demoralising and for me unexplainable events. With very little understanding of the broader social issues and the manner in which these issues played a pivotal role in education, I was left stranded in my lack of understanding about how to proceed. The students began to oppose assimilation into a school learning and social environment that continued to attempt to shift the black working class Xhosa cultural registers of the students in alignment with the expectations of a white middle class English set of school values and beliefs. What ensued was a simmering under-layer of enforced student compliance pitted against opposition by the students, combined with frustration and, at times, anger by the academic and volunteer American staff.

Bourdieu warns that the responses of the habitus are not infallible, or "capable of producing responses miraculously adjusted to all situations" (Bourdieu, 2000:159). When one's habitus is confronted with conditions that are significantly different to those in which it was produced, one's dispositions, which were well adapted in a previous state of the game, may become dysfunctional, and the efforts that one makes to perpetuate dispositions that were previously well adapted to the 'state of the game', may now "help to plunge them deeper into failure." (Bourdieu, 2000:161) Although the school was established on a value and belief system that was similar to my previous educational endeavours, the culture of the students was in disaccord

with my educational expectations. It was therefore my complete lack of understanding of how to engage productively with the students that threw my embodied habitus responses into disarray and confusion and made my educational endeavours ineffectual, and, during the second year, began to plunge me deeper into failure.

In the face of the simmering student oppositions, despite my position as director of the school, the school governing body (SGB) stepped in and began to operate as a regulating committee. I had begun to question the manner in which we routinely operated, attempting to find a way through the confusion by listening to student voices and trying to come to an understanding of what and why the learning environment at the school was inadequate in meeting the needs of the students. The SGB which was comprised of mostly white, upper-middle class American staff took over as the controlling body of the school enforcing their own set of rules and expectations, which added a further level of confusion. The SGB initially involved themselves only in decisions regarding non-educational issues such as social and behavioural issues that impacted on the school. Over time, however, the boundary of what was considered an educational issue and what was a social issue became blurred and the SGB, who were also the main fund raisers for the school, took control of the disciplining of students regarding most behavioural infractions. In my opinion, they dealt with behavioural misconduct in a strict and sometimes harsh manner, usually suspending or even expelling students. This unfortunately began a vicious cycle of rebellion by the students and further punitive responses by the SGB. The resultant outcome towards the end of the second year was that the SGB, believing that more could be done in the school to combat the negative student responses, began to involve themselves in the educational aspects of students' schooling. They questioned my decisions, and thereby, removed the authority and autonomy of running the school that I had enjoyed up to this point.

2.6 Hysteresis: My educational crisis

By the end of the second year and into the third year of the school I became caught in the middle of the SGB enforcement of a particular school culture and the students' oppositional responses. I struggled through a range of adversity and challenges,

misunderstandings and confusion and slowly began realising that my set of educational repertoires and norms from my white English middle class educational habitus had not equipped me to 'play' a successful game of schooling in this context. My attempted adaptations and responses were completely inadequate and I was left with a sense of ambivalence, insecurity and deep uncertainty about the way forward.

Bourdieu describes this as a state of hysteresis. The hysteresis effect, which is found in the disjuncture between habitus and field, impacts on the constitution of one's habitus and causes

> negative sanctions when the environment with which they are actually confronted is too distant from that to which they are objectively fitted … habitus which have been produced by different *modes of generation,* that is, by conditions of existence which, in imposing different definitions of the impossible, the possible, and the probable, cause one group to experience as natural or reasonable practices or aspirations which another group finds unthinkable or scandalous, and vice versa (1977:78; italics in original).

A cycle of confusion and feelings of incompetence ensued and I couldn't fathom how to intervene, respond or adapt. I had reached a crisis point in my educational trajectory. My core educational beliefs and values, my pedagogical habitus, which had been established and consolidated in a white English middle class schooling system was not applicable in this school setting and my inability to respond threatened my educational self-worth. I felt disempowered by the SGB and over time more and more incompetent to make the right decisions to support an effective learning environment given the student needs and challenges the school was facing.

2.7 My return to studying

Bourdieu states that our habitus, our ways of acting, feeling, thinking and being carries within it our history. We take this history into present circumstances and this structures how we make choices and decide to act in certain ways and not in others. Our current positioning in life can be understood as a continuous process of making history, but according to Bourdieu, not entirely of our own making. One's habitus, which always operates within a homologous relationship with a social field, may be

an "open system of dispositions", however the manner in which an individual responds to new experiences is "at every moment perceived through categories already constructed by prior experiences" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:133). As such the habitus facilitates diverse actions, however these remain "within the limits of the embodied sedimentation of the social structures which produced it" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:19). In other words, the structures which have structured one's habitus will predispose one to consider a range of possible choices or actions while disallowing other options.

Embodied in my habitus was the importance the role of education and studying played in positioning one more powerfully and strategically in one's social field. This had embedded into my thinking that the way to respond to feelings of incompetence or inadequacy was by acquiring further knowledge. While the hysteresis effect highlights a gap of possibilities created by the changed field conditions it also includes a struggle for change and an associated risk for a time period as the immediate future is unknown (Grenfell, 2008). Following my state of hysteresis, three years into my time at the school, I chose to leave the school and return to studying full time. This carried for me a deep risk and an unknown future. Studying further had never been my intention, but among my possible choices it seemed the best way forward.

My return to studying was not an easy or fluid process. Despite the structures of my habitus according me this choice, I had never studied full time at a university, my initial teacher education had taken place at a teachers' college which was a very different environment. I enrolled in the university's Masters course-work programme as I specifically wanted to engage in discussion with students and lecturers about the complexity of education. I wanted, in fact I craved, intellectual and academic discussion around the educational issues linked to society within the new South Africa post-apartheid, such as those I felt I had failed to leverage productively at my previous school.

The Masters course-work programme at the university was structured to run five different modules via interactive five-hour weekly sessions. Each module involved one or more written assignments. At the end of the first module I discovered two

things about myself. Firstly, I had an aptitude to express myself in written tasks, and secondly, that I lacked the confidence and academic language to engage in group discussions. Despite choosing a Masters course-work programme for the express purpose of being able to enter into discussions with contemporaries and lecturers about education within society, in the lectures I felt inadequate, incompetent and unable to verbalise my thoughts or engage verbally in a critical questioning of the debates highlighted in the literature provided by the modules.

My inability to engage in class discussions and lack of academic language deeply troubled me and I felt my college training and practical school 'habitus' alienated me from the academic university 'field'. In a desperate attempt to find my way forward I approached one of the professors and offered my assistance in tutoring students in order to engage in small, less threatening, group discussions on educational debates. I was invited by the professor to assist as a tutor in the Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours class. This opportunity and engagement with the Honours students played a pivotal role in my future research.

At the same time that I began to work with the Honours class, I was considering my Master's thesis research focus. In the beginning I tentatively began to discuss my desire to research staff development or mentoring teacher programmes coupled with a focus on teachers working in working class school contexts. My interest lay in finding a system for staff support and development programmes that moved beyond lesson planning and subject area discussions, to one that integrated the practicalities of teaching with the educational and social complexities involved in schooling in the diverse post-apartheid landscape. I remained troubled by the fact that most teachers seemed unaware of the reasons for the lack of student engagement in their education, particularly in working class contexts, while at the same time I believed strongly in the professionalism of teachers. Teachers and students are often placed as central to the problem of poor results in education and receive the most blame for not being able to deliver a high quality education (teachers) and for choosing to disengage and therefore lose out on the possibilities that education can offer (students). The BEd Honours module, *Education and Society*, which I was tutoring, engaged in rich discussions around these complexities and it was both these discussions and the students from the class that provided the impetus to

conceptualise and consolidate my thesis research focus that involved the setting up of a professional learning community for teachers' pedagogical learning.

At the end of the Honours module, which coincided with the start of my research, myself, my supervising professor and five teachers from the BEd Honours class formed a professional learning community with a focus on a social justice approach to teaching and learning. This approach, which I describe more fully in the introduction to this thesis, was in response to students' disengagement from schooling, and focused on finding ways to scaffold the student's lifeworld knowledge into the school knowledge through the practical design and implementation of classroom lesson units.

Over a two year period while conducting my research I worked with a range of different teachers from working class school contexts. The focus of the PLC, that of a social justice approach to teaching and learning, changed and morphed depending on the teacher, the school context and the subject area. The manner in which the PLC was conceptualised and established is discussed in depth in the first article. This article provides an understanding of the conceptual logic that underpinned the PLC process. The second article describes the teachers' frustrations, such as managing large classes, administrative requirements, and working with a curriculum that was regulated and performative driven, as well as documenting their tentative and then more confident adaptations and shifts in their pedagogy towards a more inclusive and participatory approach to teaching. The third article uses the narrative of one PLC teacher to show the complexity of teachers' embodied adaptations and changes. Journeying with this teacher in the PLC, particularly during the second year of the process, highlights the potential of PLCs in supporting teachers' embodied learning.

There were no external rewards for the teachers involved in the PLC process of adaptation and change, the rewards for these teachers was the internal gratification of seeing their students become interested, engaged and deeply invested in their own learning process. Many of the teachers reported an improvement in the students' results from formal assessments following the adaptations they had made

in their pedagogy. Although this was never the focus of the adaptations, it was, we all knew, a very important and valuable outcome.

2.8 Moving forward: My scholarly 'becoming'

My process of change, that of moving from the school field as a teacher and school principal, into the field of university study, engaged deeply with my embodied dispositions and corporeality. Fataar describes the process of a doctoral student finding their academic voice through the supervision process as one that links "between the personal or subjective dynamics [and] their knowledgeability acquisition process" (2013a:111). My scholarly 'becoming', therefore, encompassed a number of reflexive processes that, drawing on Archer who states that "our human reflexivity is closely akin to our human embodiment" (2007:1), provided a form of reflexive habitus engagement with my own embodied dispositions.

The first of these processes involved collective group socialising with other Masters and Doctoral students organised by my supervisor. The opportunity to engage in a postgraduate community of practice inducted us as a student group into academic conversations with other postgraduate students, and at times, other academics. This engagement in a scholarly 'community of practice' took place in small group settings of 8-10 students, or in larger groups across the faculty of education at the university. These group settings provided a safe space for me to engage in discussion and critical questioning with fellow Master and Doctoral students regarding our on-going thesis work. This was instrumental in helping me find my academic voice, my internal conversations made public (see Archer, 2007). In conjunction with this, as a student group we were invited to attend and present papers related to our research work at annual student conferences and national educational research conferences. These opportunities provided an exposure to a broader community of students and academics as well as an opportunity to debate research currently being conducted within education.

The second process that facilitated my 'academic voice' was provided by the on-going tutoring and later lecturing of the BEd Honours class *Education and Society* module as well as my involvement in lecturing the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) module on *Diversity and Inclusivity*. This module focused on

establishment of a conceptual platform for understanding how diversity and inclusion can be engaged and mediated in educational environments based on the ethical requirements of a social justice approach to schooling. The PGCE course at our university is presented over one academic year and consists of approximately 200 students who came from a variety of undergraduate degrees, which creates a very uneven and diverse group of students. Despite being a fairly large class format, the approach to the class, supported by my supervisor, included a discussion style of lecturing that engaged the students in debates around the course readings and focus of the module.

The class module, which resonated strongly with the focus of my research, provided me the opportunity to discuss the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of my thesis work in the PGCE class. However, presenting this work to the large and diverse class group, deeply challenge my embodied pedagogical disposition and corporeality. Despite fundamentally believing in a pedagogy that engages students in rich discussion during the learning process, I found adapting my style of teaching to include engaging discussions with a large diverse group of students very challenging. Thus, while the teachers in the PLC discussions were engaging in their pedagogical adaptation in consonance with a more socially just teaching orientation, I was working through my own shifts and changes towards a more scholarly 'becoming' through the teaching of postgraduate classes and engagement in a community of practice among fellow postgraduate students.

2.9 Habitus engagement: My embodied shifts and adaptations

This doctoral thesis places teachers' pedagogical learning as central to the PLC research process. However, as noted, part of the doctoral research journey included my own embodied habitus adaptations in relation to the particular fields I inhabited during the process. One's primary habitus which is acquired during early childhood "slowly and imperceptibly … with ease and insouciance", through one's immersion in family life contexts constitutes one's baseline social personality, and is the basis on which the secondary habitus is layered (Wacquant, 2014:7). My narrative has attempted to account for my primary habitus and it is a focus on the additional layers, those which during my three-year research process have become grafted through

"specialized pedagogical labor … [with] effort and tension born of ascesis" (Wacquant, 2014:7), to which I now turn.

One's primary habitus, which is grounded in cultural markers such as gender, class and race, interacts with and mediates the secondary layers of habitus formation, which for me included my university studies and doctoral work. Coming to understand that studies, such as doctoral work, did not only include an interaction with knowledge and cognitive thinking, but also involved a significant affective dimension, came as a surprise to me. Expecting my three years of studying to involve mainly a cognitive knowledge dimension of learning, I was unprepared for the depth with which my research process, which focuses on the teachers' pedagogical learning, challenged my own logic, values, beliefs and 'rules' of the social world. This included my 'logic of practice', my social patterns and meanings, which were inscribed in my habitus, and which played an important role in constructing my social reality in the research process.

Bourdieu states that within the research process our sources of resistance are not found in the epistemological but rather in the social. Reflexive research therefore requires a "systematic exploration of the unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine thought" (Bourdieu, 1982:10 in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:36). By this he refers to a form of self-reflexive research in relation to practice, one which takes into consideration "the *social and intellectual unconscious"* that affects the way in which we critically analyse our data and conduct ourselves in the research process (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992:36; italics in original). Self-reflexive research includes a consideration of social origins such as gender, race, class; the position occupied in the field; and intellectual bias which invites one to take into account the significance of an event, rather than the practical solving of a problem. Reflexive sociology therefore includes an uncovering of the social embodied by the individual (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:44).

It was the exploration of the 'unthought categories' embodied in my habitus and enacted in the social fields that I occupied, that combined to facilitate my learning and adaptation during the research process. Wacquant asserts that while formal research must involve a deployment of the "instruments of objectivism in accordance

with the standards of her discipline", an engagement with one's embodied dispositions requires an immersion and entanglement in the world under study, one that includes a process of learning, a coming to know "the world *by body in practice"* (Wacquant, 2014:9). My embodied social and cultural origins, that of a white privileged English middle class female, which reside both on and in my body, positioned me in my research and the unfolding PLC process in a specific way. These origins, which I concede to externally, took longer to clarify internally. By this I refer to an acknowledgement of the role that my cultural background and embodied habitus, my *'body in practice'* played in relation to my research.

At the start of the research process I identified myself as a teacher and researcher and felt that these overarching 'categories' were sufficient in positioning me relationally to the PLC teachers. A significant event, which I explain below, early on in my relationship with the PLC teachers, exposed the dynamic role that my cultural bodily markers played within the research process and consequently revealed that positioning myself only as a teacher and researcher was thoroughly insufficient and inadequate going forward. By this I mean, and as the story below exemplifies, that I had to accept that my external cultural markers positioned me first and foremost in a particular way, long before I could invoke the category of teacher or researcher in my relational endeavours with the PLC participants.

During my first visit to a working class school in a township to meet with a group of PLC teachers, I was disconcerted by a statement made by one of the teachers. I was discussing with the teachers the role of the PLC as well as my possible subsequent visits to the school as part of the research process, when one teacher stated emphatically that the next time I visited the school I should please teach her class. I initially thought that she wanted me to model some of the student participatory teaching practices we had been discussing, however, I soon realised that I had completely misread the situation as she followed this up by stating that she could see that I was a good teacher and she believed that her learners would benefit from my expertise. I realised firstly, that she could not possibly know whether I was a good teacher or not, and secondly, she was not requesting me to model a teaching strategy, but was positioning me as a teacher in a particular way based on my cultural origins.

I suddenly felt alienated and very uncomfortable in my whiteness and previous position of privilege, and aware that she, and probably most of the teachers in the PLC, had positioned me as coming from a background that assumed a 'higher' level of educational competence and ability in the education field. This positioning, I felt, alienated me from what I had thought was a collegial conversation about teaching and brought into question my research position in this school context. I had imagined that as professional educators, myself and the PLC teachers would be engaging on an equal footing, yet she had unwittingly separated me from herself and the other teachers and alienated me from my perceived comfort zone as fellow educator. I was disappointed and frustrated with this cultural arbitrary positioning, while at the same time coming to a realisation that I could not simply position myself within any school environment based solely on my familiarity with the field of education. My white privilege made that impossible.

This brought me back to Bourdieu's insistence that we continually engage in a form of reflexivity during the research process. The knowledge dimension of my research allowed me to understand that the field of education is built on arbitrary divisions that serve particular interests, what Bourdieu describes as "the struggle for the monopoly of the legitimate representation of the social world" (1990a:180). Faced with the comment made by the teacher, I realised that I had not reflexively internalised, or indeed come to know through my '*body in practice'* the role that my external cultural markers played in positioning me in the research process based on these arbitrary divisions.

Delving into what it meant to be a white privileged researcher in a working class school context was an uncomfortable but necessary process as part of my reflexive research endeavours. It was a process that required an excavation of my embodied disposition, an uncovering of the stratified layers that made up my primary habitus, as well as an understanding and acknowledgement of how these layers interact with the complexities of the social world, especially given the diversity of the South African education landscape. Wacquant (2014:5) describes this process well when he states that the "meeting between skilled agent and pregnant world spans the gamut from felicitous to strained, smooth to rough, fertile to futile", in other words it involves a chaotic, discursive and at times distressing journey of discovery.

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of the embodied changes and shifts in my corporeality during my doctoral journey as any process of 'becoming' remains incomplete and on-going. I have, however, come to realise the limitations of my previous 'logic of practice' within my social and professional world based on my embodied habitus. Within the social space and journey of my research, I have gained a deeper understanding of the complexity of education in the post-apartheid South African landscape, coupled with new awareness of my embodied dispositions, which include my cultural origins, which are deeply embedded in my pedagogical habitus and which are not just socially construct-ed, but socially construct-ing (Wacquant 2014:10). I have, over time, and in response to my cognitive and embodied learning and adaptations, begun to more willingly expose myself to difficult and uncomfortable conversations that challenge that which I take for granted, as well as engaging with an on-going reflexivity regarding what it means to be a socially just educator in the diverse and uneven educational terrain within the South African context.

2.10 In conclusion

In this section I describe my positionality as the initiator and facilitator of the PLC process which forms the focus of this thesis work. Using the conceptual 'thinking tools' of Bourdieu I have offered a reflexive account of my 'practical sense' and 'logic of practice' in relation to the cultural fields and my practices within those fields (Webb *et.al.*, 2002:49). Practical sense and the logic of practice as part of my narrative account can be described as my ability to both comprehend and negotiate the cultural fields I encountered both before, during and after in my research focus.

Bourdieu reminds us that habitus and field are relational structures and that it is the relation between these two structures that provides the key for understanding practice. Both habitus and field are homologous in that they represent objective and subjective realisations of the same underlying social logic (Grenfell, 2008). Thus, both structures are continually evolving and a synergy between the two structures is essential for successful practice to take place. Throughout most of my initial educational career, as discussed, I enjoyed a habitus-field match that allowed changes in each to take place gradually and along anticipated pathways. This

enabled me to enjoy an educational trajectory which positioned me as a strong player in the world of education, however, as I came to realise, this view of education was limited to a narrow conceptualisation of white middle class English education.

The disruption that I describe as a crisis point, while extremely disconcerting and distressing at the time, held within it as Bourdieu suggests, the possibility of new opportunities. Returning to my studies and my subsequent doctoral research is evidence of the new possibilities founded in this choice. The subsequent establishment and running of a PLC over a two-year period can be seen as an outcome of my educational endeavours combined with the crisis where I as a professional felt devalued, incompetent and diminished in my capacity as an educator. Driven to find answers as to why students reject their schooling, especially in light of an educational ideology that purportedly offers students the opportunity of educational success, my study as evidenced through the thesis articles, investigates teachers' pedagogical learning within a reflexive, on-going and dialogical PLC process with a focus on a socially just teaching orientation.

Chapter 3: Conceptualising the setting up of a professional learning community for teachers' pedagogical learning

Jennifer Feldman and Aslam Fataar

3.1 Abstract

This article focuses on the conceptual bases that have informed the establishment and functioning of a professional learning community (PLC) that involves a university lecturer and tutor (the two authors of the article) and a number of practising teachers. The article is a discussion of the intellectual approaches on which the PLC has been founded. Our starting assumption is that teachers' pedagogical learning requires a supportive and deliberative set of conversations about the intellectual terms and pedagogical capacitation needed for such change. We argue that PLCs are able to provide the reflexive dialogical space, based on action research approaches, for engaging in pedagogical learning. Our on-going PLC is not necessarily interested in results-orientated teaching outcomes. Instead, we favour an experimental, messy and recursive conversation that focuses on improving teachers' classroom teaching. The article considers the terms upon which a social justice oriented approach to pedagogical learning and adaptation might be pursued in a PLC. Inspired by the lenses of theorist, Pierre Bourdieu, we offer a view of PLCs as 'habitus engagement', to describe the ways in which our dialogical processing in the PLC might engender pedagogies that induct students into subject knowledge by working with students' lifeworld contexts and knowledges. We develop an argument for the use of a Funds of Knowledge approach as a way of engaging students meaningfully in their learning. The PLC is conceptualised as a safe dialogical space where the participating teachers are able to develop the conceptual capacity and intellectual skills to develop such a social justice approach to their classroom pedagogy.

Keywords: professional learning community, pedagogy, social justice, action research, habitus engagement, funds of knowledge

3.2 Introduction

This article discusses the conceptual bases on which a professional learning community (PLC) has been set up involving a university lecturer, a tutor, and practicing teachers who are studying towards a BEd Honours degree at our university. The PLC is intended to generate pedagogical learning and adaptation by these teachers to inform their school teaching. The PLC emerged out of a module called Education and Society that focuses, among others, on the conceptual parameters of pedagogical learning in complex educational contexts (See Stellenbosch University 2013). The teachers are participating voluntarily in the PLC and much of the conceptual approaches for setting up and running this PLC were vigorously engaged with during class time of the BEd Honours module. The key problematic of the Honours module and the PLC is a deliberative encounter with notions of social justice to inform teachers' active pedagogical engagement and empowerment. The PLC has acquired a life of its own after the BEd Honours class came to an end. Setting up the PLC started from the assumption that such a social justice informed pedagogical perspective requires important intellectual work, in addition to engaged professional processes and practices that capacitate teachers to teach with such an orientation. A recent government teacher development (See Department of Basic Education 2011) underscores the importance of PLCs in the generation of pedagogical capacity among teachers although there is currently very little rigorous activity among teachers in this regard.

This article is a conceptual consideration of the ways in which we approached setting up and running the PLC. The key conceptual premise that we explore in the article is that teachers' pedagogical practices are exceptionally difficult to shift, despite the optimism of policy pronouncements. Additionally, providing teachers with a pedagogical justice platform intended to explicitly leverage greater responsiveness to the social transformative objectives of society introduces a layer of complexity in addition to, or as part of, the implementation of the CAPS curriculum. We believe, though, that such complexity is not an excuse for not establishing practices that engage teachers in their pedagogical adaptation as a way of getting them to teach more inclusively in our country's diverse classes.

We conceptualised the PLC as a vehicle for exploring the participating teachers' pedagogical orientations and practices with a view to understanding how change may be mediated within their pedagogical habitus. As a form of 'habitus engagement' it is our intent to actively engage with firmly established teacher identities, educational practices and classroom pedagogical processes. Over time, teachers' pedagogical dispositions to teaching acquire a depth of complexity that is difficult to shift. Nonetheless, professional and pedagogical learning and adaptation is regarded as possible in light of vigorous engagement processes, the type of which the PLC is intended to facilitate.

This article firstly, provides a conceptual location for the formation of the PLC. Secondly, it moves on to key conceptual considerations of setting up a PLC, and thirdly, we discuss the actual PLC activity by which it was set up. Our main intention with the article is to provide a conceptual consideration of our thinking and doing in relation to setting up the PLC in line with the need to infuse the teachers' pedagogy with social justice commitments on the one hand and providing an engaging platform to generate pedagogical practices that recognise and include a diversity of learners in their classroom teaching on the other.

3.3 Towards a conceptual location for PLC work

Since 1994 South African schooling has witnessed a number of curriculum reforms intended to redress the inequalities and injustices caused by Apartheid education. Following a number of curriculum policy reforms during the post-apartheid period, the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (see Department of Basic Education 2014) was finalised and implemented from March 2011. According to Fataar (2012, 58) CAPS authorises a tightly scripted curriculum that can be considered 'teacher-proof' in its approach to implementation. Broadly in line with this reading we suggest that the CAPS curriculum has tended to reduce teaching to a scripted pedagogy that expects teachers to teach to the test in a climate of standardised systemic testing intended to improve the quality of education in schools. System-wide tests written in Grades 3, 6 and 9 (See Department of Basic Education 2013) and the National School Certificate written in Grade 12 are an attempt to infuse regimes of performance accountability into the operations of

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schools across the country. Many schools have become focused on producing measurable outputs and performances, with constant pressure on teachers to improve on these outputs. This often works in ways that discourage authentic and purposeful pedagogical processes in schools.

Ball explains that teachers in such a situation are no longer encouraged to "give an account of themselves in terms of [their] relationship to the [pedagogical] meaningfulness of what they do" (Ball 2003, 222) other than that officially sanctioned through policy. Instead policy constraints narrowly circumscribe the purposes of schooling within a climate of teaching to the test, which in turn foreclose on broader process orientated commitments to educational and democratic transformational goals. The current curriculum reform approach leaves teachers with little conceptual space to meaningfully engage students in lifeworld or socially generated knowledges that will engage and stimulate students within the schools (Fataar 2012, 58). Leveraged via PLC activity, we suggest that our pedagogical commitments require a pedagogic focus and approach to impact student learning that augments the narrow curriculum orientations implicit in the CAPS curriculum. To this end, we start from the view that teachers and their pedagogies are the one factor that can contribute the most significantly to improving student achievement (Coleman et al. 1966) as they are key to "changing the practices and relations that directly shape learning" (Zipin & Hattam 2007, 5).

We (the tutor and lecturer on the course in consultation with the students) conceptualised and set out to establish a professional community of teachers in light of the demands and challenges of the newly implemented CAPS curriculum, and motivated by desire to develop a space for professional learning to expand the participating teachers' pedagogical repertoires. The teachers from the BEd Honours class module on Education and Society were invited to embark on a voluntary action research journey that would focus on their classroom pedagogies and student relationships rather than the measurable outputs of their students. The focus of the PLC therefore includes an opportunity for the teachers to analyse their teaching practices and involve themselves in critical reflexivity about their pedagogies, deepen their own learning, adapt their pedagogies and shift their pedagogical habitus to include a socially just orientation in their pedagogical practices.

We understand a professional learning community (PLC) as a collaborative, collegial space where professionals use an inquiry-based approach to address daily teaching practices as they emerge within specific school contexts. Such collaborative inquiry allows teachers to "reflect on practice, examine evidence about the relationship between practice and student outcomes, and make changes that improve teaching and learning for the particular students in their classes" (McLaughlin and Talbert 2006 in Servage 2008, 63). We favour a collaborative inquiry approach which we suggest "has the potential to create deep conceptual change and dramatic changes in practice. It includes … ongoing and challenging engagement with new ideas, rethinking existing beliefs, unlearning past habits and practices, and going through the process of learning how to do things in (sometimes dramatic) new ways" (Katz & Earl 2010, 46). The PLC within this collaborative space engages participants in conversation about their pedagogic learning and lays the foundation for possible shifts in their pedagogic habitus. Conversations within the PLC would therefore need to be based on mutuality, trust and respect. This would create a safe space that engages teachers as they expose their implicitly held beliefs and practices to scrutiny and debate. Due to the level of implied risk of exposing one's teaching styles to critical scrutiny, the PLC emphasises the need to create a respectful and enabling dialogical atmosphere where honest engagement and reflection are encouraged, as well offering an opportunity for the teachers to talk about their uncertainties and conceptual weaknesses, to admit mistakes and expose their vulnerabilities. Within this dialogical space the PLC participants are given a voice in generating possible imagined responses to the problems they encounter during their classroom practices.

Fundamental to the success of a PLC is a clearly formulated and communicated focus that differentiates among the various needs and choices of the individuals involved in the group. An engaging focus challenges teachers to "reconceptualise, unlearn, or make changes to existing practices and structures, legitimating the change process by making the status quo more difficult to protect" (Timperley 2004 in Katz & Earl 2010, 29). We envisage the focus of our PLC to be problem-based within a socially just pedagogical orientation. The participants of the PLC have been

invited to identify and share pedagogical problems that they are faced with in their classroom setting, opening these up for critique and conversation. The emphasis on pedagogic change underscores the PLC as a conversation that unpacks the problem and focuses on the opportunity to infuse a more socially just pedagogical approach to the problem under discussion.

Our PLC follows an action research approach that involves cycles of planning, implementation, observation and reflection and invites teachers to participate in reflective recursive conversations that move between abstract pedagogical imaginaries and concrete implementation in the classroom. The PLC has thus far been functioning as a 'space of becoming' where teachers are conceptually and pragmatically engaging with a particular problem, while their classroom teaching serves as the locus for the implementation of their pedagogic adaptations. The classroom is the locus where the pedagogical adaptations are concretised. The PLC conversation therefore moves from the abstract to the concrete, cycling back to the abstract through the action research reflective process, bringing back into the PLC a new round of reflective conversation, planning and action. In this way the conversation unlocks the pedagogic imagination of possibilities and allows for the continual adaptation of pedagogical practices.

Teachers who engage in reflective practices are better able to respond to contextual circumstances in their teaching and in so doing refine their teaching practice (Daniel, Auhl & Hastings 2013, 159). Such practices support the continuous development of an effective pedagogy in response to the changing field of education, specifically as found in our South African schooling system. As teachers engage in critical reflection and conversation, a community of practice (CoP) is formed. This CoP serves as way of providing a "common conceptual framework for action" (Bain, Lancaster & Zundans 2009, 336), which for our PLC involves deliberative encounters with the notions of a socially just orientation that will inform the teachers pedagogical engagement. Teacher learning that takes place through a CoP involves active participation and engagement within a community of teachers. Wenger (1998) suggests that the reflexive nature of CoPs would likely lead to the construction of attenuated and adaptive teacher identities that are better able to connect to the imperatives associated with productive teacher learning. It is thus learning in

community that the PLC is intended to achieve.

Teacher's identities are defined by their personal experiences and are affected by external (policy) and internal (organisational) control. Personal, social and current roles, beliefs and values about their role as a teacher, and the type of teacher they aspire to be within the political, social, institutional and personal circumstances within which they find themselves all have an affect on their identity as a teacher (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons 2006, 610). Spillane defines teachers' identities as the way in which teachers make sense of themselves, "their knowledge and beliefs, dispositions, interests, and orientation towards work and change" (Drake, Spillane, Hufferd-Ackles 2001, 2; Spillane 2000). Teacher identities also encompass "the way teachers feel about themselves professionally, emotionally and politically given the conditions of their work" (Jansen 2001, 242). New experiences influence and lead to the modification and formation of new belief systems for teachers (or a shift in their pedagogical habitus) and it is at the intersection of these beliefs and experiences that a teacher makes professional instructional decisions and opens themselves up to new pedagogic possibilities (Opfer & Pedder 2011, 387). Teacher professional identities can therefore be considered to be "complex and dynamic constructions, never fully or finally achieved but continually re-achieved and re-defined" (Ovsienko & Zipin 2007, 3).

3.4 Working with Bourdieu: The PLC's conceptualisation of pedagogical change

We draw on theoretical resources offered by Pierre Bourdieu, especially his concepts habitus, capital and field in order to conceptualise pedagogical adaptation and change among the teachers in the PLC. Bourdieu states that the relationship between these concepts is enmeshed and cannot be separated one from the other as they interact and function together within society in complex ways (Bourdieu 1984, 101). Habitus functions below consciousness and structures, classifying and categorising the world we live in through a system of dispositions, internalised principles and values that generate, organise and shape our decisions, actions and thoughts. Although our habitus is adaptive over time, our primary conditioning from early childhood, our socialised perceptions, belief systems and conditioned

behaviour, remains dominant (Maton 2008, 59). Habitus also incorporates the structures of the world or "a particular sector of that world – a field – and which structures the perception of that world as well as action in that world" (Bourdieu 1998, 81).

It is our habitus that acts as the strongest and most durable mechanism that internalises the external social world and shapes our sense of our place in the world, what we are or are not capable of achieving. Our choices therefore are shaped by our habitus and although they might seem instinctive and autonomous, they are made based on our past experience, present circumstances and dispositions embodied in our individual habitus. As the product of social conditionings, the habitus is not static but is permeable and can be "endlessly transformed, either in a direction that reinforces it, when embodied structures of expectation encounter structures of objective chances in harmony with these expectations, or in a direction that transforms it" (Bourdieu 1990, 116). Habitus therefore responds to present circumstances which it internalises and adds as another layer to the early socializations already formed within the habitus (Reay 2004, 434), thus it has the potential for change or transformation.

We conceive of our PLC work as having the potential to engage teachers in an orientation to learning that can serve as an impetus for change or shift in their pedagogical habitus. Teachers' decisions and actions are affected by their knowledge of themselves, their interpretation of themselves as teachers as well as their experience as learners of knowledge. There is therefore an interplay between the knowledge, identity and practices of teachers. Critical reflection within a PLC has the potential to build on the idea of 'knowledge-of-practice' (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999), which involves a deliberate construction of knowledge as teachers draw on both outside experts and their own inquiry into their daily practice. This construction of knowledge in turn holds the potential to transform or shift their pedagogical habitus. Brodie (2013, 7) states that "in order to truly shift practice in ways that support learner improvement, teachers must be willing to challenge their own practice and give up long-held beliefs if these are seen to not be working". A key element therefore to shifting one's professional identity or pedagogical habitus, is having a disposition for ongoing learning to adapt one's pedagogy to meet changes

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in education that suit specific contexts. At the core therefore of our professional culture in schools, to enable this shift in the teacher's pedagogical habitus, must be an engagement with the knowledge, conceptual and skills base that informs the teacher's work. This, we suggest, has to be accompanied by a critical reflexive stance by teachers with regard to their pedagogical practices within specific school contexts.

Drawing on Bourdieu, we argue that it is one's individual habitus that develops a 'feel for the game' in relation to the 'fields of play' in which the habitus operates. A field is the social space within which interactions, transactions and events occur at a specific time and location (Thomson 2008, 67). The nature of the field defines the situation for its occupants (Maton 2008, 52) and a field can encompass subfields. We suggest that these fields for the group of teachers involved in the PLC, include their school sites, the BEd Honours class within the university site and the PLC site where the teachers' community of practice will take place. Each of these fields is a structured space organised around an accumulation of specific capital or combinations of capital. For Bourdieu (1990) the logic of practice is generated through the interaction of habitus, cultural capital and field and it is the concept of field that gives habitus its dynamic quality. "[H]abitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense or with value, in which it is worth investing one's energy" (Bourdieu in Wacquant 1989, 44).

For the participants of the PLC, these three fields (school, university and BEd Honours programme) are interlinked and each impacts on the other. The BEd Honours site made available the necessary and important intellectual work that provided the conceptual framework to stimulate the initial pedagogical learning for the teachers, motivating them to question and probe their own professional habitus and inquire into a socially just orientation in their pedagogies at their school site. It was through problematizing and capacitating their own reflexivity that a praxis involving an action research approach within a PLC site, was conceptualised.

Zipin & Hattam (2007, 9) state that "[a]ction research is crucially about reflexivity: about theory-in-practice aimed at changing social practices and relations, provoking reflection on how well the change effort is working, followed by rethinking/re-

practicing". Action research therefore has the potential to improve and change practices, approaches or attitudes and allows the teachers to co-construct knowledge and negotiate their identities, their pedagogical habitus, while researching their own practices. Thus, an ethical commitment and pedagogically just orientation, coupled with a methodological orientation that includes developing theory-in-practice that aims to problematize teachers' theory and practice in their classroom contexts (Zipin & Hattam 2007, 9), allows the teachers to take full ownership of their own habitus engagement and professional and pedagogical learning. In response therefore to the numerous curriculum changes in the South African context, action research can be used to critically question the status quo and through a reflective action research cycle, consider ways to implement improvements as well as generate and test the teachers' theories regarding the students' learning on a practical level (McNiff & Whitehead 2002, 34) as they find solutions to transform their pedagogies.

Through interaction within the PLC there is potential to permeate and shift the pedagogical habitus of the teachers to adapt their primary perceptions and belief systems that have been internalised and structured through socialisation within their particular 'fields of play'. Through the workings of habitus, practice (teacher agency) is linked with capital and field (structure) (Reay 2004, 432). Habitus thus becomes active in relation to a field and "the same habitus can lead to very different practices and stances depending on the state of the field" (Bourdieu 1990, 116). Thus the PLC is conceptualised in such a way that it has to contend with the 'field' effects of the teachers' practiced-based professional identities (Fataar 2013, 119). Their educational practices at their school sites or 'fields' involve their own structures, rules and thinking and their identities as teachers, their 'habitus' within their fields, will affect the manner in which they relate and engage within the learning opportunity afforded them through the PLC. Members of the PLC will need to negotiate the structures and discourses of each of their professional 'field' sites as they navigate the learning and reflective process within the PLC. The PLC process will thus work "within the possibilities and constraints of their habitus positions" (Fataar 2013, 119) in order that an identity that includes a pedagogically just approach to their teaching profession may emerge and merge with their embodied habitus which, in turn, might allow such an approach to become part of their everyday educational practices.

When conditions in the field change, the habitus is required to change accordingly and reposition itself. Bourdieu points out that individuals might acknowledge the need for change but might not have the tools to realise the necessary change. An example of this can be found in teachers' response to the implementation of CAPS in the South African school system, which is the latest iteration of government-mandated curriculum change. Discussions in the PLC 'field' involving the BEd Honours teachers are therefore positioned in light of a shifting curriculum policy environment, challenging the teachers as to the ways in which they are able to change and adapt their professional identities as they reposition their pedagogical practices. Our PLC work is aware of the ostensive intractability of human change. We are aware that "[a]sking human beings to alter their theory-in-use is asking them to question the foundation of their sense of competence and self-confidence" (Argyris 2004 in Servage 2008, 71). A disposition for pedagogical adaptability, we argue, has to take into account the difficulties involved in undergoing an alignment of their professional identities and knowledge dispositions in light of the expectations of any new or adapted curriculum. Our PLC work is intended to provide a productive conversation about the conceptual terms upon which such an alignment could take place while providing a supportive and non-threatening environment for experimenting with teaching styles and knowledge work in the classroom. The aim of the PLC conversations is therefore intended to stimulate innovation and inquiry by connecting the theoretical literature discussed in the BEd Honours class to the practical setting of the teachers' classrooms as the teachers critically interrogate their pedagogical learning and adapt their pedagogy to include a socially just orientation within their teaching practices. Such an orientation pivots on the necessity to engage learners in their classrooms. Making pedagogical connections across the range of this learner diversity is the fulcrum of a socially just pedagogical orientation.

Effective interventions in classrooms require teachers to have an understanding of how the inter-relatedness of the curriculum, learning opportunities of their diverse students, as well as how their students' life world contexts affect the way in which students perceive and act in social situations and relations as are found in school sites. Lingard (2007, 245) calls on us to consider what he and his colleagues call a

productive pedagogies approach which includes creating supportive classroom environments that connect all students to the learning process and value and deal with difference while upholding intellectual quality in our pedagogical practices. Classroom pedagogies must incorporate authentic instruction, "higher order thinking, deep knowledge, substantive conversations and connections to the world beyond the classroom" (Newman and Associates 1996 in Lingard 2007, 254). To consider ways in which we can ensure that we include these dimensions in our pedagogies, we use Bourdieusian insight to understand the way in which different structural positions of students and their cultural dispositions or 'habitus' operate in differing school contexts as 'cultural capital'. We suggest that a socially just pedagogical approach has to engage students' cultural capital, i.e. work with their embodied intellectual capacities as learning assets, in order to establish an effective and inclusive pedagogical engagement platform in the classroom. We go on below to explain the outlines of such an approach for our PLC work.

3.5 PLC engagement with students' habitus and cultural capital

This section concentrates on the manner in which PLC engagement turns on an acute understanding of the ways in which teachers in their classrooms are able to get students engaged and involved in their school learning. Conceptions of the students' learning dispositions and how to shift these with appropriate classroom pedagogies, are key to such a consideration. Bourdieu (1984) describes the early-life immersion where children embody distinctive qualities of cultural dispositions or habitus as the 'primary habitus'. These repetitive patterns of practice and interaction, the child's 'primary habitus', are internalised during the formation of core dispositions for perceiving and responding to different conditions and relations. Primary habitus formation takes place in family and community contexts and are, according to Bourdieu, largely bound up in specific class contexts, i.e. a working class child's primary habitus would correspond to a working class habitus.

Secondary habitus acquisition is conceptualised as taking place at the school, the site at which students are provided a knowledge platform that engages them in acquiring elements of a more expansive middle class disposition (Zipin & Brennan 2006, 335). As children navigate their social spaces by moving from their home-

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based settings to school sites, they begin to acquire overlays of the 'secondary habitus' as new experiences are assimilated onto the dispositional scaffolding of their 'primary habitus'. Schools are meant to facilaitate this habitus shift via engaging students in learning processes that facilate secondary habitus acquisition, i.e. processes that educate students to develop new knowledge conceptions. Their subconscious and early-formed patterns of habits will operate as a scaffold that forms the base in new contexts. Bourdieu explains that while habitus is a composite of multiple dispositions, it is also always individual. It embodies codes that it senses as a familiar identity and in turn will make a distinction to that which it is less familiar with, considering them as 'others' (Bourdieu 1984). The degree of this secondary assimilation by students, via their learning at school, will therefore depend on whether the codes of pedagogic interaction as well as other features in the school site are familiar to, and connect with, the student's primary habitus. Our PLC thus operates on the view that pedagogical activity at school has to connect with, and actively engage the student's home socializations, interest and knowledges. We support the view that interaction between the students' primary habitus and mainstream school 'standards', which is often framed as disconnected from the students' lives, is where a misrecognition of the embodied dispositions can take place. It is here that teachers within the PLC must consider ways of engaging with the students' lifeworld knowledge to connect their students to the learning process that allows them to acquire the 'secondary habitus' layer. This would mean that PLC activity is made up of conversations and activities among teachers that connect the students' home-based identities and knowledge practices to their school-based learning engagements. Here we favour a social justice pedagogical orientation that gives expression to providing access to school knowledge on the one hand and emphasises that such knowledge production processes are done via deep recognition and engagement with the life world contexts and knowledges of the students.

In order to afford all students in our class the same opportunities to achieve success or feel that schooling is in their best interests within our classrooms, Lingard (2007, 246) encourages us to consider pedagogies that work with the "weave of identity construction and knowledge generation". Teachers in the BEd Honours class showed a strong support and caring attitude towards their students but found it more

challenging to find the balance between the need for intellectual demand, authentic connectedness to the students' life worlds and an engagement that valued the diversity of students in their classes. The PLC is meant as a dialogical space to generate reflexive conversation about the ways in which the teachers' pedagogical orientations can become informed by teaching that emphasises knowledge acquisition via active connection and engagement with students' life world contexts and knowledges. Such an orientation, we explain below, can be facilitated by emphasising a funds of knowledge infused teaching approach.

3.6 Pedagogical justice

To address the intractability of a socially just orientation, the teachers in the PLC through an action research approach, were invited to consider ways to include and recognise the diverse cultures and identities of their students while engaging them in meaningfully relevant learning that would enable academic success. This includes building a rigorous and meaningful engagement with school learning while working with pedagogies that connect the students' lifeworld and community knowledge to school-based learning. Finding ways to value and scaffold student lifeworld knowledge into standardised school curricula work assists to establish a link for students to experience the intrinsic value in education, one that allows them to see schooling as 'for' them rather than internalising a sense that they are a 'failure' within the educational context (Delpit 1988). By acknowledging and providing a significant curricular place to the cultural codes that are valued in the students' home and community lifeworlds, teachers value the students' lifeworld knowledge, their cultural capital, and assign it value within the schooling context.

Bourdieu (1998) states that mainstream pedagogy preserves universal standardised curriculum knowledge (school codes) that actually only a small elite group has historically cultured in the process of investing school knowledge with their selective values (Zipin 2013, 4). Codes of standard performance remain implicit, allowing the students from power-elite positions to perform successfully while students from non-elite positions are seen as having 'deficit' cultural capital within school sites (Zipin 2005, 4). Despite notions that schools teach students how to perform according to the assessment standards at schools, this is rarely the case and the school codes for

'good' academic performance are kept implicit rather than made explicit (Ovsienko & Zipin 2007, 1). By "making explicit the usually implicit codes for school success, one hopes to cut to the redistributive chase, enabling learning of dominant cultural capitals without need for those capitals to dominate classroom time and space, thus leaving room for more meaningfully engaging learning based on lifeworld funds of knowledge" (Zipin 2005, 5). Too often students receive messages from schooling that they suffer deficits in their learning. Yet these students have valuable cultural assets, their 'funds of knowledge', that if shared and incorporated in the curriculum would engage them in their learning and enhance the learning of all the students (Zipin 2013, 1). When the students trust that the curriculum that we teach will value and include their cultural knowledge, dispositions and identities, they will choose to engage with the learning process. The PLC work therefore involves a challenge to the teachers towards a socially just pedagogical orientation that redistributes the power-elite cultural codes, or cultural capital, of schooling to those who did not inherit them from their families, while recognising the students' lifeworld ways of knowing that engages their identity structures, thus working on the 'weave' as Lingard suggests. This approach involves a curriculum that recognises cultural knowledge and identity and scaffolds this into the learning process, creating a pedagogically responsive curriculum and a pedagogy by which diverse students can thrive in mainstream institutions.

3.7 Funds of knowledge approach to student engagement

The 'funds of knowledge' (FoK) approach provides a theoretical framework that can inform teachers to adapt their teaching practices and find ways to reconceptualise their teaching to increase the academic and social outcomes for all the students (Lingard, Hayes & Mills 2003, 410). It is essential that we retain a rigorous but meaningful engagement with our students by providing curricular activity that resonates with their ways of knowing that has informed their core identities and dispositions and is deeply ingrained as their primary habitus. By capitalizing on household and community resources, the funds of knowlwdge approach offers a socially just alternative that "far exceeds in quality the rote-like instruction"(Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez 1992, 132) that children commonly encounter in schools. Using this approach teachers are encouraged to discursively and practically reach

beyond the received curriculum and mobalise the students' lived knowledge, using this as an asset and resource in classroom work.

The FoK approach conceptualises a theoretical framework where teachers use "historically accumulated bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household functioning and well-being" (Gonzalez, Andrade, Civil & Moll 2001, 116) to enhance classroom learning. This approach values the students' ways of knowing, acting and being (Zipin 2013, 3), thus their 'cultural capital', and incorporates this into intellectually challenging curriculum units that enable school achievement and academic success through a pedagogic orientation that bridges lifeworld-relevant curricula into the learning of cultural capitals that are needed for mainstream academic success (Zipin & Hattam 2007, 3).

The FoK approach links to a pedagogical justice orientation that works on the 'weave' of recognition of student identities and redistribution of school knowledge. When we demonstrate to our students that we desire to learn about them and from them, we value and recognise their identities and acknowledge that they are experts of their lives and that we can learn from them. This gives the students psychological assurance that the classroom is a safe environment for them to share their FoK as well as an "ethical affirmation that their intelligence and cultural ways of knowing deserve respect" (Zipin 2013, 8). This honours their FoK and uses it productively in the classroom, establishing a pedagogical relationship between the teacher and student as well as a "strong and fundamental form of democracy" (Zipin 2013, 8). By the teacher showing a readiness to learn from the students, the students learn that they have value and agency to shape their own learning.

Zipin however warns that student engagement will not simply follow by putting the students' FoK into the curriculum. The students will require further persuasion and invitations to encourage them to engage with their learning. "Processes of making such invitations are matters of pedagogy – in particular, of teachers' efforts to develop learning-and-teaching relationships in which the invitation feels real to students" (Zipin 2013, 8). Teachers still need to work hard to enable FoK to come alive as they incorporate it into the standardised curriculum work. Working with the FoK approach forms part of the PLC deliberations as the teachers consider ways for

the students' FoK to provide the building blocks for the further development of school concepts and academic work. The PLC will discuss ways in which they can engage their students to become co-constructors of knowledge and to deepen and extend the students' engagement with the curricula knowledge.

3.8 Conclusion

This article focused on our conceptual approaches for setting up a PLC based on what we called a socially just pedagogical approach. The focus in the PLC is not on the success of the pedagogic actions and adaptions that the teachers embark on but on the teachers' learning, specifically with regard to their students' habitus via adaptive pedagogical capacity acquired through the collaborative and dialogic processes during PLC activity. The PLC is aimed at leveraging a safe space where, through deliberative and supportive conversations, the teachers can critically reflect and challenge one another regarding their responsiveness to a socially just transformative platform.

Bourdieu warns that although a person's habitus can be shifted, it is never easy and takes time and persistent effort. Accepting therefore that teachers' pedagogical dispositions have acquired a depth which is difficult to shift, the PLC attempts to build on the idea of knowledge-of-practice towards a deliberate construction of a pedagogically just orientation towards teaching. The PLC is playing a vital role in encouraging teachers to constantly re-position their thinking and pedagogies towards a pedagogical relationship that includes a democratic two-way give and take between students and teachers as both work towards shaping curricula work through an attitude of democracy and agency (Zipin & Hattam 2007, 8).

We've suggested that the FoK approach provides a conceptual framework for the teachers as such an approach would encourage students to bring their lifeworld knowledge into the classroom and share the community space that they inhabit beyond school with the class and teacher. By scaffolding the students' lifeworld knowledge into the curriculum, teachers would create a learning environment that takes into account the diversity of the students, making classrooms a safe place where students can take risks and have a voice and agency in their own learning.

The classroom environment should also include a pedagogy that engages all students through intellectually challenging learning that is made richly relevant to their "lived-cultural identities" (Zipin, Brennan & Sellar 2006, 2).

Our conceptualisation of the PLC therefore lies in the dynamics of a possibly messy, staccato and non-linear process that does not necessarily focus on finding the answers, but on questioning and disrupting the teachers' current notions of their classroom pedagogy. By building trust among the teachers in the PLC and encouraging critical reflexivity, teachers' pedagogies will hopefully be challenged regarding "pedagogy for transformational learning" (Servage 2008, 74) that lies at the heart of a socially just pedagogical approach to teaching and learning.

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Chapter 4: Working through the "hardness" of teachers' pedagogical habitus: Pedagogical learning among teachers in a professional learning community

Jennifer Feldman and Aslam Fataar

4.1 Abstract

The focus of this chapter is on the dialogical engagement of five teachers in a professional learning community (PLC). The PLC was conceptualised as a means of generating pedagogical learning and adaptation among the participating teachers in consonance with a socially just educational orientation. This chapter discusses the difficulty that the PLC encountered as it engaged with the 'hardness' of pedagogical change among the teachers. We discuss how the PLC conversations remained 'stuck' in discussions that revolved round issues external to pedagogical knowledge transfer. We ascribe this to an absence of didactic language and pedagogic reflexivity and suggest that the on-going dialogical approach of the PLC, as a form of 'habitus engagement', holds the potential to capacitate pedagogical adaptation and change in the teachers' classroom practices. We describe how introducing a pedagogical 'tool' into the PLC deliberations enabled the teachers to begin to engage with a pedagogical language that allowed them to challenge their teaching practices to include a more participatory and engaging approach. The exemplifying basis of this chapter is our deliberations with the five teachers in the PLC over a twelve month period. The chapter describes the twists and turns that the PLC dialogue took as it actively searched for a platform that capacitated a generative pedagogical disposition for a social justice approach to teaching that incorporates active student learning engagement.

4.2 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the dialogical engagement of five teachers in a professional learning community (PLC). We (the two authors of the chapter)

participated in the PLC as facilitators. The PLC is being run from a university location but does not form part of its formal programmes. This chapter is a discussion of how the PLC encountered and engaged the 'hardness' of pedagogical change that it came up against during the initial months of its existence. The PLC was conceptualised and set up as a means of generating pedagogical learning and adaptation among the participating teachers in consonance with a socially just educational orientation.

This chapter revolves around the PLC's struggle to deliberate productively about the modalities of pedagogical adaptation and improvement and the difficulty that the PLC encountered in its struggle to gain traction for productive dialogue among the teachers about their approaches to pedagogical change. We observed that the way they spoke about their teaching revolved almost exclusively around ways to achieve classroom discipline and control, which seemed to be the overriding consideration that trumped their pedagogical discourses. This left little to no space in the PLC dialogue for conversations about the teachers' interaction with their students which the focus of the PLC placed as central to the emergence of active teaching that engages students meaningfully in their learning (see McFadden & Munns, 2002). The nature of the dialogue in the early months of the PLC, centring as it did on a preponderance with classroom control, prevented a concerted focus on the core objective of the PLC, which was to engender a socially just approach to teaching based on a richer notion of knowledge transfer aimed at the teacher's actively engaging their students in their school learning.

The chapter describes how the teachers, although eager to consider and dialogue about pedagogical engagement with their students, were initially unable to productively focus on these possibilities. Our pedagogical engagement with the PLC teachers revealed an absence of a didactic language and pedagogic reflexivity. This caused the PLC conversations to remain 'stuck' in discussions that revolved around issues external to pedagogical transfer such as complaints about large classes, recalcitrant student behaviour and social issues that impacted the schools. The PLC conversations revealed an inability by the teachers to dialogue and engage with issues involving pedagogical and knowledge transfer processes. In other words, the

teachers in the PLC found it difficult to focus on ways of adapting their pedagogies in consonance with a socially just approach.

This chapter describes the difficulties that the PLC conversations encountered as an absence of a didactic language and pedagogical reflexivity among the teachers. We term this as a type of 'pedagogically emptying reflexivity'. This draws on Giddens's (1991) view that the reflexive capacity of human beings is 'reworked' or 'emptied out' during periods of social turbulence. Emptying refers to the mobilisation of language or rhetoric as a psychological means of withstanding the impact of social change. 'Pedagogically emptying reflexivity' thus refers to the teachers' lack of access to a productive language to dialogue about, and engage in, pedagogical adaptation. We ascribe this 'pedagogic emptying' to the teachers' narrow pedagogical socialisation in both their training and teaching contexts, combined with a tightly scripted school curriculum[1] which exhibits a strong external control over the framing of their pedagogy. This situation works against the possibility of teachers engaging in authentic and purposeful pedagogical dialogue and practices in schools. It is against the backdrop of this constricted discursive environment that our PLC operated. However, as facilitators, in conjunction with the focus of the PLC, we refused to allow the deliberations in the PLC to be restrained by this narrow pedagogical discourse. We set out to purposefully challenge and disrupt such a discourse in order to establish a space for generating an engaging and open-ended approach to the participating teachers' pedagogical approaches.

The approach adopted by us as facilitators was based on viewing dialogical interaction in the PLC conversations as a form of 'habitus engagement'. This approach, we suggest, provides a basis for actively engaging the teachers' pedagogical dispositions to understand how change may be mediated within their pedagogical habitus, which we explain below. Habitus engagement acknowledges the durability of the teachers' pedagogical habitus; in other words, we accept that teachers' pedagogical approaches, rooted in their professional socialisation and educational practices, are difficult to shift and adapt to the expectation of newer conceptual requirements. Adopting attenuated pedagogical repertoires are

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[1] Fataar (2012, p. 58) describes the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) as authorising a scripted pedagogy that can be considered 'teacher-proof' in its approach to curriculum implementation.

constrained by the durability and impact of extant teaching styles. In this light, the PLC adopted a dialogical approach as a vehicle to capacitate a set of supportive and deliberative conversations that engaged with this durability by challenging the pedagogical reflexivity that the teachers had internalised and structured via their professional socialisation in their school contexts.

The chapter offers a consideration of the PLC's engagement with the durability or 'hardness' of the teachers' pedagogical habitus, what it entails and how to understand it. It also explains how, through the insertion of a pedagogical tool in the PLC deliberations, the teachers were capacitated to shift and adapt their teaching practices. This tool, which we discuss in more depth below, was used to develop a pedagogical language among the teachers that would allow them to experiment and dialogue about ways to actively generate student engagement and participation in their learning.

Our role as facilitators within the PLC was to support and assist the conversations to progress productively by situating the teachers' adaptation in a dialogue that centred on the perplexity of the teachers' pedagogical change. This necessitated us, from time to time, to raise tough issues, at times either inserting complex conceptions of pedagogical practice into the discussion that brought the multi-dimensionality of teaching to light, while at other times reducing the complexity to enable the emergence of workable and manageable pedagogical strategies that could assist the teachers to find practical ways of making pedagogical adaptations and changes. Our role included assisting the participants to remain on track regarding the focus of the PLC, working through the conceptual challenges that the PLC conversations faced, and introducing external knowledge and resources into the PLC when we deemed necessary (see Brodie & Shalem, 2011; Brodie, 2013). We raised conceptual and practical pedagogical issues that informed the way the teachers dialogued about, and experimented with, the pedagogical discourses and repertoires that they deemed necessary to make a shift towards a socially just approach in their pedagogy.

The exemplifying basis of this chapter is our deliberations with the five teachers in the PLC. The chapter is based on the twists and turns that the PLC dialogue took to

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actively search for a platform that capacitated the teachers' pedagogical adaptations. Our data for this chapter is drawn mainly from the audio-taped PLC conversations that explored the teachers' dispositional adaptation mediated by the dialogic engagement in the PLC. The PLC-based data is supported by individual interviews that we (the authors) conducted with the teachers, which explored their educational biographies and professional socialisation as teachers. These placed us in a position to come to grips with some key aspects of their pedagogical habitus formation, which we argue is key to the PLC's work in effecting a shift in their pedagogical repertoires. Various observational visits to the teachers' classrooms provided further background on the teachers' actual classroom practices that assisted our understanding of the PLC participants' teaching contexts and the way in which their pedagogy played out within this context.

A final dimension of the chapter is a discussion of how the dialogically reflexive approach of the PLC supported a shift in the teachers' pedagogical habitus to begin considering new possibilities in their pedagogy. We describe how introducing the pedagogical tool into the PLC deliberations enabled the teachers to move towards a more open-ended disposition that included different and more participatory pedagogical transfer modalities. We discuss how the teachers, in their unique ways, began to explore and implement teaching strategies that moved beyond a tightly regulated framing of knowledge transfer towards a more participatory approach. We argue that it was the dialogical processes in the PLC over time that were able to generate a positive pedagogical disposition among the teachers for experimenting with engaging, open-ended pedagogies. This gradual shift in the teachers' pedagogical disposition, as observed in the PLC conversations and confirmed by visits to the teachers classrooms, provided the PLC participants with the traction to move to a multi-dimensional approach in their pedagogy based on knowledge transfer modalities that were able to engage their students in active learning processes.

4.3 Engendering pedagogical adaptation via dialogue in a professional learning community

The PLC was set up involving a university lecturer and tutor,[2] and practising teachers who had completed the Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours programme at our university. The key problematic of a particular BEd Honours module called *Education and Society* offered by the lecturer, included a deliberative encounter with the notions of social justice to inform the teachers' active pedagogical engagement with their students and teaching contexts. At the end of this module five teachers each teaching in different school contexts, voluntarily formed a PLC to engage in reflexive conversations regarding the incorporation of a socially just orientation in their classroom pedagogies. As lecturer and tutor, we participated in the PLC as discussion partners, facilitating the discussion and at times identifying conceptual challenges that we felt impeded the connection to the social justice purposes of the PLC.

In conceptualising the setting up of the PLC (see Feldman & Fataar, 2014) we acknowledge that teachers' pedagogical practices are exceptionally difficult to shift. The dialogical approach of the PLC was therefore envisaged as a vehicle for engaging the teachers in active interchange aimed at assisting them to take on board shifts in their pedagogical orientations. Linked with an understanding of the teachers' pedagogical habitus is an understanding of their socialisation into their teaching careers, which provides us with insights into the formation of their pedagogic repertoires. Three of the participants completed a four year BEd programme in the intermediate and senior phases (grades 4 to 9) and two participants completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) for teaching in the Further Education and Training schooling phase, (grades 10 to 12). One of the teachers had just begun her teaching career, while the other four teachers had been teaching between two to six years. All of the participants are enthusiastic about their teaching and in our interviews with them indicated that their intentions were to remain in teaching and pursue further studies in Education.

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[2] The two authors

The PLC meetings were held bi-weekly at the university campus. We adhered strictly to an hour meeting duration and the teachers participated readily within the group. They exhibited a commitment to the focus of the PLC, that of considering ways to infuse a socially just orientation in their pedagogy, which we elaborate on below. The PLC thus became a space where these teachers connected with each other and shared the frustrations and successes of their teaching. The first year teacher reflected on her involvement in the group:

> The PLC group for me is a place of support… for me as a novice teacher.
> I feel as though getting the 'hang' of teaching takes a few years and
> being in the physical teaching environment does not come with support –
> mental and emotional from my colleagues or from the Senior
> Management Team [at school]. Sometimes teachers, or I speak for
> myself as a beginner, I need to be able to talk about the daily challenges
> I face to be able to work through it. I do not get the opportunity to do so
> at school.

The PLC discussions began by engaging with Fraser's (1997) notion of social justice. This approach emphasises the need to consider the tension between the redistribution of school knowledge as set out by the currciulum and the need to recognise and work with the lifeworld knowledges and social-identity formations of students (see Lingard, 2007). This latter element is founded on the view that making curricular connections with, and actively engaging the students' home socialisations, interests and knowledge, is one key way of securing students' intellectual interest in their schooling (see Fataar, 2012). A social justice approach brings the redistribution dimension of school knowledge into an interactive relationship with the recognitive dimension, i.e. the curricular connection to the students' life knowledges and identifications. The conceptual underpinning of the PLC was therefore an attempt to bring these two dimensions into a productive relationship with each other, allowing the conceptual resources to inform and begin to shift the teaching practices of the PLC teachers.

The initial stages of the PLC laid the foundation for creating a collaborative and collegial environment where the teachers could talk about their teaching practices

within a safe dialogical space. The PLC conversations invited the teachers to actively engage in dialogue and critically inquire into their pedagogical practices with one another, to find ways to leverage change and adaptation in their pedagogical practices and find ways to implement a pedagogy that both engaged and connected with the lifeworld knowledges of their students. It is our contention that this form of collaboration and dialogical engagement, founded on a basis of trust, mutuality and respect, holds the potential to adapt or shift the teaching practices of teachers. One of the participants describes how the safe dialogical space of the PLC allowed for honest and critical debate:

> Here you can speak your mind … talk about things that are going wrong and tell what you think will work better. I can feel that I am improving in my teaching from coming here. Here you can question things that are done in your school, it is not going back to anybody. It is hard to talk about things that went wrong in your classroom with your colleagues and management watching and listening.

Our approach to the PLC was framed by an understanding that a teachers' pedagogical habitus is durable and resistant to change and requires a form of vigorous 'habitus engagement' and reflexive dialogue to achieve meaningful change or shifts in pedagogical practices. This includes on-going commitment, effort and time as well as a willingness to question beliefs and educational practices that do not hold much teaching and learning merit and might have become ossified within school contexts.

4.4 Identifying the problem encountered in the PLC conversations

The PLC placed the teachers' conversations about teaching and learning as central to its deliberations, allowing the participants to direct and take ownership of the conversations. Initially however, the teachers' conversation seemed to focus primarily on their classroom control and management concerns. Although they willingly participated in dialogue concerning the need for socially just pedagogies, talk about their teaching practices mostly remained rooted in maintaining order and discipline in their classrooms. The PLC teachers described their pedagogy in terms of strictly regulated classroom control and we found that they seemed unable or

unwilling to critically discuss what was not working within their actual pedagogies i.e. the modalities of the knowledge transfer to the students. Discussions regarding the implementation of the curriculum, assessment or reflective practice, were diverted to talk about classroom management and control, which, it became apparent, they positioned as central to their teaching. Although they verbalised a desire to engage their students in a participatory learning environment, their substantive dialogue in the PLC displayed a closed and tightly regulated content transfer approach to their pedagogy. One of the teachers described her inability to engage the students by saying that

> they [referring to the students] just take over and you are just trying to control the class in order to do your job, to give them the subject content. All my classes are over 40, 42, 43 students. I do my best but I just can't engage them so I put up the work and they copy it down.

Accepting the need to discuss these classroom organisational issues, as many of the teachers taught large classes, the PLC dialogue initially allowed the conversations to address these issues. As facilitators we continued however to pose critical questions to direct the conversations towards a pedagogical discourse with a socially just focus. Yet despite a willingness to discuss the elements of an engaging and participatory approach to teaching, our PLC interaction was constantly diverted back to issues of management and control by the teachers, and conversations about the internals of pedagogy became elusive. The teachers volunteered accounts of their practices in anecdotal terms but as the following extract from the PLC deliberations illustrates, they struggled to define and discuss their actual pedagogical practices.

> Facilitator: Today we want to respond to the challenge of now moving directly forward to the actual teaching … we want to get inside the process that you engage in when you teach … how are you processing whatever you are teaching?
>
> Teacher 1: What do you mean by processing?
>
> Facilitator: How are you thinking about it? Before you go into your class what do you do? How do you intellectually and conceptually prepare yourself,

prepare your resources? … let's use a Bernsteinian frame … it's about pacing and sequencing and framing and how you organise that in your class. How do you start, how do you move through the work? … And then secondly … it's the organising of the knowledge transfer. If you go into the class and you have a topic to learn … how do you engage your kids in a set of explanations whereby they are able to get the knowledge that you want them to get? Do you use visible pedagogy … or invisible pedagogy, or do you allow the children a lot of leeway to find their own path through the knowledge?

Teacher 2: I think the whole class will end up in chaos if that [give the children leeway] happens so I sort of must take the lead, it is basically what they expect of me, to be the teacher … they expect of me that the focus should be on me as a teacher, so it is difficult for me to have that, to give them the leeway to do this and that, I have to lead because that is what they expect of me.

Facilitator: Who is they?

Teacher 2: The learners. All of them… because it is like they come to school already programmed in order to listen to my teacher in order to do this. That is what happens in my school.

Teacher 1: My kids are also like that, spoon-fed … they don't want to think for themselves, they want me to write the whole essay for them, put it on the board for them and they want to write it down exactly like that in the exam, they don't want to think about it.

Facilitator: Is this a matric [Gade 12] class?

Teacher 1: No Grade 11. You were asking me how I organise the learners, for me to organise them, to be able to learn … I need to be hectic, I turn into a dragon, but that is not who I am. But for me it is getting the discipline right and then checking up on all the homework … and it takes time, so much time just to start my lesson, to be able to teach … and while I am busy, the other kids are busy with nonsense… And now today you can't prepare for tomorrow because you are busy the whole day with other stuff.

Facilitator: You speak about tight control, very tight control … so that you try to get them to do what you want … and in terms of the knowledge transfer it consists of a very visible pedagogy … every step of the way you are in control of what they are learning and it is almost kind of pre-packaged.

Teacher 1: Everything is pre-packaged on slides at our school.

Teacher 3: Teaching Maths to Grade 4s in a township school …. They just take over and you are just trying to control in order to kind of do your job and then from somewhere else there is just so much pressure to get through what assessment standards you have to get through … there are 50 kids in the class … so everything you have to control … otherwise it is not going to work … with so many children in a class you just think it is just so chaotic, no one is listening … I feel that to get through the discipline it takes ninety per cent of the time and like you said checking their homework, so later I really just left it, checking their homework because it took too much time.

From this extract and others in our data corpus, it is clear that the PLC continuously tracked back to issues of discipline and control despite our (the facilitators') attempts to move the conversation into a focus on pedagogy. Refusing to allow the PLC conversations to be trapped in this one-dimensional space we remained motivated to move the conversation towards finding ways to open the teachers' pedagogy to a different frame of knowledge transfer. It was within this debate that we discovered that the teachers struggled to articulate clear descriptions of their actual modalities of pedagogical practices and they displayed a limited pedagogical vocabulary to problematise and discuss the central aspects of their teaching.

Four of the five schools where the participants teach are located in working class environments, which brought various social issues into the PLC discussions. The teachers discussed their tightly regulated classroom control as a response to the demands of their working class schools and the impact of the social issues in their classes. Discussions revolved around broken and abusive home situations, a lack of parental support and related homework issues, as well as dealing with recalcitrant students that the teachers expressed as undermining their teaching and students' learning. These issues remained prominent throughout our discussions. One of the

teachers explained that this tight control was the only way he survived large and difficult classes.

> I see my Geography class once a week…I just don't know, they are just going to chaos. So if I get them quiet and I start teaching, obviously I want the interaction, I see now … there must be interaction between us. Then I ask them things, but then it is chaos. So at a stage I just used to say, you keep quiet, you write the notes, do your activity and then we are done, the bell rings and you go. Just to survive.

Most of the teachers expressed a lack of support from colleagues and management at their schools and admitted that within their school very few discussions take place around subject content and its transmission. One of the teachers ascribes this to a lack of trust and a fear that teachers have in admitting that they are at times unsure, or in need of support. She notes that teachers do not want to expose the fact that their teaching may overwhelm them:

> teachers never talk about how they teach…they are too afraid to be vulnerable and to say we don't know how to do this or we are making a mistake. We should encourage the teachers … to talk more about how they teach because this will benefit them and the children. I don't think that the teachers trust each other as well. We have all these issues going on and no-one is willing to talk about what is actually happening in the classrooms.

It would appear, based on interviews with the PLC teachers, that discussion surrounding teaching modalities of knowledge transfer in their schools is not a prominent feature of day-to-day teacher discourses. In other words, productive dialoguing about pedagogy can be said to be sidelined. School pedagogical practices seem to have been replaced by a survival mode that ensures that the curriculum content is delivered, assessed and recorded as required by the school and the department. Discussions about pedagogy centre around discipline methods, time constraints, lack of resources and external factors that impact on the school. Within the PLC dialogue, the teachers showed a willingness to discuss the possibilities of a socially just approach that actively involved the students in the

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knowledge transfer, however, beyond verbalising the positive impact this could have on their students, the teachers were unable or unwilling to allow this approach traction in their actual classroom practices. Each week the conversations continued to return to the teachers' focus on the maintenance of order and discipline routines as an articulation of their pedagogy.

In the PLC conversations, the teachers countered the possibility of change in their pedagogy by giving various reasons for the way in which they managed their classes and interacted with their students. One teacher focused specifically on motivational programmes that assisted his control of students' behaviour. While the programme was a well-intentioned effort to connect with the students, it did not include an attempt on his part to adapt his teaching practices. Neither did he consider establishing learning practices that engender intellectual depth. A second teacher blamed the lack of resources and unavailability of technology to support the teaching process as the reason that she relied on reading out of textbooks or writing notes for the students to copy off the board, while a third stated that the school management expected her to teach in a certain way. She was not allowed to photocopy notes for the students and they therefore needed to copy down the content information from the board during the lesson, leaving little to no time for any discussion or student participation.

Within these constraints the participants found it difficult to problematise their pedagogy and consider alternative possibilities that incorporated student participation and active learning engagement. The focus of their pedagogy was on content knowledge transfer and the teachers saw their tightly regulated class control as the best way to control the transmission of the knowledge to their students. To gain a conceptual understanding of the durability of the teachers' pedagogical orientations that made it so difficult for them to consider new approaches, we now turn to a discussion of the PLC teachers' professional socialisation that informed their pedagogical positioning.

4.5 Teacher socialisation and pedagogical habitus

Understanding how teachers go about their work is contingent on understanding their professional biographies and how they were socialised into their teaching

careers. Teachers' professional socialisation includes their own schooling experiences, teacher training and induction into their teaching careers, which, along with critical incidents in their lives and teaching contexts (see Amin & Ramrathan, 2009), shapes their professional and pedagogical teacher identity. This identity includes their sense of self, their knowledge and beliefs, dispositions, interests, and orientation towards their work (Drake, Spillane & Hufferd-Ackles, 2001, p. 2) and changes and shifts over time as they grow as teachers.

One of the teachers describes the substantial effect that a teaching context had on her professional and pedagogical identity. She taught at a school that was situated in a poor socio-economic environment and after two years of teaching she chose to leave this particular teaching environment, describing herself as

> drowning…I lost myself. I became this other person and then I realised that this is not what I want to do. I felt like I failed. I tried to start some new things at the school but when people don't support you, you lose your energy. I knew that I was a much better teacher than I was becoming in that situation, I just couldn't be the teacher I wanted to be while I was teaching there, and that is why I had to leave. I had to opt out and it was just because I had to save myself. Maybe now I am ready to go back and challenge myself again with those children. But at that point I was drained and you don't want to let that happen, you need to protect yourself to be a good teacher.

During interviews the teachers in the PLC revealed a range of ways in which they were socialised into the teaching profession and thus the manner in which their professional and pedagogical identities had been formed. One of the teachers did not initially train to become a teacher. She first completed a B.Com in Management Accounting and worked in the business field for three years before deciding to complete her PGCE after which she took a job as a teacher. She feels that her time spent in the business world has been instrumental in acquiring an in-depth understanding of the business and accounting concepts she teaches her students. She describes her teaching by saying that "I love what I am doing, every single aspect of it". But she is frustrated by an inability to share her business world

experiences with her classes due to the behaviour of the students who make it difficult to engage with them in this manner. She explains by saying:

> I would love to have a conversation with my class and make them think and talk about what we are learning about, but if you try that it gets out of control. With my class of 41 kids, when one starts to comment they all start to laugh. I have tried it and it doesn't work so how I survive is I give them the notes to copy down and if I can keep them busy writing they are quiet and they work. As soon as I try to engage or discuss things with them to find out what they know and understand or have a conversation with them it doesn't work.

Another teacher refers to how he initially completed a diploma in pastoral psychology while involved in a church. It was here that he discovered his enjoyment in teaching as he worked with youth in the church and enrolled to study a BEd degree via correspondence. During his first year of studying he was invited to teach at a high school where he taught for the next 3 years while completing his degree. Starting his teaching career with very little understanding of teaching was a challenging experience. He describes how this experience socialised him into the teaching profession:

> I had only studied for 6 months and now I am a teacher…with different classes with my own subjects and that was quite a shock. And there my learning curve started…I had to survive, my main goal was to survive, to control this 47, 49, sometimes 50 kids in a class…I struggled with so many things. I had a mentor who helped me. At the beginning I had discipline issues and every now and then I had to call him to talk to the kids. He was a very respected man and he taught me how to show love and care in my class, exactly what I am doing now. He was shaping me as a teacher. He would talk and advise me on things…over time I slowly picked up things and found out things that worked for me and I realised that I was doing things wrong. Every year I got better. I became more experienced but it was hard work.

These type of descriptions of the teachers' socialisation into teaching show how the amalgam of professional socialisation and interactions between themselves and their contexts operates as a structuring and internalising set of rules that impacts on their teaching repertoires and formation of their pedagogical habitus.

In order to understand the impact of these socialised experiences on the teachers' professional and pedagogical identities and formation of their pedagogical habitus, we draw on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and the logic of practice. Bourdieu describes one's habitus as a set of dispositions that incorporates social structures and affects our view of the social world and its practices (Webb, Schirato & Danaher, 2002, p. 21). Operating largely below the level of consciousness, our habitus is both durable and transposable and allows us to respond to cultural rules and contexts in a variety of ways. Our choices, which may seem instinctive and autonomous, are shaped by our habitus and we make our decisions based on our past experiences, present circumstances and dispositions embodied in our individual habitus (see Webb *et al.*, 2002). The PLC participants' socialisation into their teaching careers as well as their life histories are therefore instrumental in the formation of their pedagogical habitus which informs their teaching practices and their pedagogical repertoires.

Although one's habitus allows for improvisation, one's responses are largely determined by one's context and those directly involved with us within the context. Bourdieu's calls this one's 'fields of play' which he refers to as structured social spaces or force fields within which interactions, transactions and events occur at specific times and locations (see Thomson, 2008). These contexts or 'fields of play' include the "discourses, institutions, values, rules and regulations" (Webb *et al.*, 2002, p. 21) that have produced and adapted the teachers' pedagogical habitus. Teachers, therefore, within their specific school fields, will incorporate into their pedagogical habitus the values and imperatives of the field within which they operate (Webb *et al.*, 2002, p. 37). The teachers' pedagogical habitus, which incorporates their identities, practices and dispositions, are therefore shaped, reinforced and changed by the nature of each school 'field' or context within which they work and the teachers will incorporate a complex array of strategies and tactics that they will use within a teaching situation given the circumstances they face.

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It was their different school contexts and the teachers' socialisation into teaching that had inscribed a certain way of doing things for these teachers and consequently had informed their pedagogical repertoires. The teachers found it difficult to challenge the dominant practices at their schools. One of the teachers describes herself thus:

> I feel like I am already becoming one of those teachers…I feel like I have to conform to doing things and disciplining children in ways that I don't want to. What happens if the children are so used to being disciplined in a certain way…the other teachers discipline them in ways I don't agree with. What happens if that is what the children come to expect? Because that is what I am finding…I won't do it, I won't become that teacher…but they are so used to that way of doing things that they don't respond to you or listen to you when you try to do it differently.

This teacher describes herself as middle class and recognises that her habitus is incongruous with the working class students she is teaching. She confronts this difference in her reflections thus:

> My habitus is different to theirs, but how do they meet? What can we do for them to meet, it's very difficult? Sometimes I feel confined by my own teaching situation, especially the poor socio-economic school situation that I find myself in. Many of the teachers at my school face the same problems that I do and I feel as though many of them have a stagnant mentality being 'if you can't beat them, join them' suffice to say that they are not willing to change. At the PLC meetings, I am encouraged to change the things that seem to be unchangeable… I would like to incorporate profound theories in my classes. However, firstly I need to find ways and means to transcend the barriers between the learners and myself.

The PLC teachers' pedagogical habitus formation therefore includes a conscious and unconscious incorporation of pedagogical orientations and dispositions that form over time. These include their complex and multi-dimensional personal and social biographies, their professional socialisation and their professional and pedagogical

identities that shape their attitudes and responses to their circumstances within their school contexts.

4.6 Engaging with the teachers' educational doxa

Dialogue in the PLC was facilitated to bring elements of the teachers' habitus formation to the surface, including an awareness of the options or restrictions available to them as they considered their own educational trajectory in their professional habitus. PLC discussions were intended to provoke the teachers' taken-for-granted ways of teaching that were inherent in their pedagogical habitus through their socialisation into teaching, and thus informed their teaching practices.

Bourdieu describes conforming to a dominant view of a field as 'doxa', i.e. we conform not because we agree or because it is in our best interests but because there does not seem to be an alternative. We may not even be aware that we are complying with the dominant discourses, or agree with them, but we accept the status quo because it is the way things are, or always have been. Doxa is the taken-for-granted assumptions found in one's 'field of play' and is reproduced through expectations and behaviour in social institutions, structures and relations (see Webb *et al.*, 2002). As the teachers engaged in the PLC conversations they came to recognise that their tightly regulated knowledge transmission was a form of doxa that did not engage their students. They were however unsure how to change. One teacher explained how she is constrained by teaching routines of her fellow teachers in the following way:

> Today I was teaching a lesson and I was trying to explain the different concepts and things and the children didn't want to listen, they just want to write down the notes and get finished. Because all the other teachers come into the class and just write. So it is a sort of routine for them, they expect it from you.

Bourdieu points out that even common-sense reflection on established rules is mediated and restricted by day-to-day experience and taken-for-granted practices which stifle the possibility to question or change what is implicitly accepted (see Webb *et al.*, 2002). This form of doxa could be found within the school structures

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where the teachers taught. In defending the way the teachers conducted their classroom practices, they regularly compared themselves to other teachers at their schools and what they were doing as well as stating that the school management had certain expectations that they had to comply with. This form of doxa for the teachers therefore found its traction in the mutual reinforcement between the acceptable discourses in their schools and their own professional and pedagogical habitus, which positioned them to enact what they have come to regard as allowable and expected teacher practices in their classrooms.

Recognising that the teachers were in effect 'stuck' in the teaching doxa into which they had been socialised, coupled with the lack of a reflexive pedagogical language that prevented productive conversation about their pedagogy, we decided to develop a 'pedagogical tool' to leverage dialogue about the modalities of pedagogical transfer. At this stage we (the authors) adopted an intervention type facilitation stance. The tool was based on three elements namely; 1) a set of pedagogic transfer modalities using Bernstein's (1975) concepts of sequencing, pacing and scaffolding, 2) student engagement via active participation, and 3) an experimentation with adopting teaching styles on a continuum of a closed or firmly held pedagogical approaches on the one end and an open-ended or relaxed approach on the other.

This tool enabled the PLC to discuss the modalities of content transfer, what we referred to earlier as the 'internals' of pedagogy, in other words we shifted the PLC's dialogical focus to the 'how to' of teaching. We also employed the use an of an analytical device adapted from Hugo (2013) which invites the teachers to analyse their educational practices by considering which pedagogical practices should be separated or held apart from one another (closed) or allowed to flow together or integrate (open). Hugo uses this device to analyse and deliberate about pedagogy in differing educational situations, asking teachers to consider carefully the 'what' (selection of knowledge) and 'how' (transmission of knowledge) of their classroom pedagogy.

The PLC used this tool to develop pedagogical capacity among the teachers in terms of which they would be able to employ an approach to generate active and participative student learning while retaining an orderly and disciplined learning

environment. Enabling a pedagogical stance based on deciding when to relax (open) or close the frame was decisive in the PLC's dialogue. Engagement with these three elements, we believe, enabled an insertion of a pedagogical language of experimentation and reflexivity in the PLC with which we dialogued vigorously and with enthusiasm, underscoring the messiness and 'hardness' of engaging the durability of the teachers' pedagogical habitus.

The following extracts from the PLC dialogue shows the beginning stages of the teachers talking tentatively about opening up the regulative frame of their teaching to include student participation within the lessons for the first time.

Facilitator: Last week we spoke about how Teacher 1 and 2 manage their classes.

Teacher 4: You mean by just writing off the board? I see a lot of teachers who write the boards full because they [the students] need to copy the work before the bell rings and then they are quiet and they copy.

Facilitator: Yes that is exactly what we spoke about last week.

Teacher 4: But I see that as surviving and not teaching.

Facilitator: Exactly … we need to acknowledge that that is how we survive and cope … but our challenge from last meeting was how can we relax that slightly … so that we engage the students and include a participatory approach.

Teacher 1: I have tried that actually in one of my classes this week and it really helped. You know because I have the slides and it is that big class of 41 kids and I have put the slides on so that when you push the button only one sentence comes at a time and then I keep them writing but when they have written the sentence I start a conversation. And then I tell them a story about something that relates to their world and where that fits in. And then they look at me and they converse with me so that I can see that I have them.

Facilitator: That is brilliant because you have now mixed the two together, control and participation.

Teacher 1: So that is something that I found that works… I couldn't do that in the beginning, but now I have just tried this and it works.

Teacher 4: I find the same with my kids that as you say when you actually engage and talk to them … sometimes when I give them work to do and everyone is quiet I start talking to some of them about how they are doing…sometimes they bring up a topic or conversation and then four or five of them will take part in it.

Teacher 2: I am starting with my practicals in Natural Science next week and so I am going to use that to try to engage them more.

Teacher 1: I will try to relax it more this week or with tight control in the beginning and then open it up a bit.

This extract illustrates how the teachers were tentatively beginning to explore teaching strategies that relaxed the frame that allowed their students to participate in the lessons. By inserting into the PLC conversation the tool as a type of analytical device we were able to challenge the teachers to deliberate on what we had come to recognise as a closed regulative dimension of their classroom practices and consider finding ways to open the instructional dimension of their pedagogy i.e. the pedagogical transfer of knowledge in lessons, to incorporate a more participatory and engaging approach. Engaging with this tool allowed us to introduce a pedagogic language to begin to discuss, question and critically analyse how the teachers frame, i.e. organise the relations of knowledge transfer, their teaching, control the content transfer and organise and sequence the transmission of knowledge. This enabled the PLC conversations to move in a new direction. The PLC's reflexive dialogical process, centring on the teachers' pedagogical repertoires as a form of 'habitus engagement,' began to shift the teachers' pedagogical language, which, in turn, began to shift the focus of the PLC towards dialoguing about ways to incorporate a more participatory approach in their transmission of knowledge. This process challenged their taken-for-granted ways of teaching, i.e. their doxa, that informed their teaching practices, opening space for more nuanced dialogues about their pedagogical approaches.

4.7 Eliciting a shift towards a socially just orientation

Opening up the PLC discussion by using Bernstein's concepts to provide a shared language and Hugo's analytical device that challenged the way in which the teachers were engaging with their pedagogy, provided the necessary impetus to draw the teachers into critical pedagogical discussions about their modalities of knowledge transfer. By engaging with an emerging pedagogical language via the pedagogical tool, the teachers were able to begin describing and challenging their pedagogical modalities. The PLC conversations were now able to start moving towards our initial PLC conceptualisation, that of eliciting change and pedagogical learning among the teachers towards a socially just orientation. These conversations allowed the teachers to understand and discuss ways in which they could begin to open their tight regulative frames, i.e. the over-emphasis on using order and discipline to regulate their teaching.

The PLC dialogue was now able to shift towards conceptualising pedagogical possibilities that moved beyond the limitations that the teachers initially felt had been imposed on them by their large classes. Conversations moved towards finding ways of opening or relaxing the regulative frame to include student participation for sections of the lesson and then closing or tightening the frame, becoming teacher-controlled when required. Once the teachers realised the possibilities that this open/closed approach held, they began to experiment with this in their school lessons. We observed on our visits to their classrooms how they began tentatively to try out more open-ended teaching styles. In other words, they were beginning to implement a more flexible pedagogical approach as illustrated in the PLC dialogue illustrated below:

> Facilitator: Let's discuss the changes that have taken place in your teaching. You were saying last time, and I really liked what you said about how you tried that change with your slides, you know where you encouraged some discussion by putting the slides up slowly and talking in between.

> Teacher 1: After our discussions I tried, I thought maybe I should give the notes to them and then talk. Then I thought let me just talk for the first 15 minutes. So I just sat on my table and I had a conversation with them about

inflation and money and interest rates. And they were all looking and listening and interacting. I tried to use examples out of their own life world to help them understand what I was explaining… Then it got a bit rowdy and so I put the slides on for them to copy down the information so that they would settle down and work… but it worked and I really enjoyed it for a change…because I felt that what we were talking about things and they actually learnt something, it wasn't just a transferring of knowledge, but we were talking together as a class…so I am excited to do that again.

Teacher 2: I also started doing that, and talking more. It is so much better than just going to the class, opening a page … saying let's read. I started with the talking.

Facilitator: Because that is engagement and participation

Teacher 1: That's exactly what it is, engagement

Teacher 2: They have a lot of questions actually

Teacher 1: Yes, they ask all sorts of things

Teacher 4: So my challenge was to loosen the tight content transfer that I used …so I sat and I taught by talking to them about the content and they interacted and responded to me. Then I gave them work to do and it seemed like chaos because there was a lot of noise, but … when I listened to what they were talking about, the noise was them talking about work … about what we had discussed … about the topic. In the past I have been angry when they are so noisy because I thought that they don't have respect for me because if I walk past the other teachers' classes they are dead quiet and they are working. But I realised now … that the children like my class when we talk together, they are learning something and they do respect me for being their teacher although it doesn't look like it in the class when it is so noisy, it looks like chaos and maybe people think that I cannot control my class.

Teacher 4 refers to the doxa of schooling practices that equates a quiet and well-controlled class environment with effective and engaged learning and teaching. This

view repeatedly emerged as the teachers struggled to consider allowing students to talk during a lesson. The teachers felt that the school expected their classes to be quiet and orderly and that noisy classes implied that poor or no teaching was taking place.

The teachers agreed to experiment with ways to open their teaching practices to include interaction with the students, allowing them to actively participate in the lessons, and return to the PLC to share how the changes played out in their classroom contexts. One teacher shared how he had experimented with group work during a lesson:

> In my Grade 7's I have 45 learners in one class for Geography. For me it is quite difficult because they don't even fit in my class and I always have to go to a hall or somewhere and it is a different environment … and then it is just chaos. So I said to myself I must do something. I put them into little groups and gave each group a section from the text book. Each group had to work together and then tell everyone else about how for example an earthquake works. They had to teach it to the class. I didn't teach the section, I put them in groups. Then you must see how they came to ask me questions.

The success that the teachers experienced as well as the positive responses from their students encouraged and motivated them. They experimented with spending more time opening their lessons to include interactive student engagement and closing the interaction down when needed. Sharing their successes and positive student responses provided the impetus for different PLC conversations. While issues around student discipline, behaviour issues and the social issues of their students still remained a concern, they no longer dominated the PLC conversations. The teachers themselves moved the conversations into a new pedagogical discourse. Using a pedagogical language to dialogue about an open or closed pedagogy enjoyed prominence in the discussions and the PLC conversations now included a pedagogical reflexivity initiated by the teachers.

Changes and success were not instantaneous, neither was the process linear but rather messy and staccato. However, the PLC participants slowly became both more

reflexive and critical about their own pedagogy as they either opened or closed their regulative teaching frame and incorporated a more student recognition and participatory orientation. Experimentation with opening or closing the frame took place over a three month period of time and there remained many times that the teachers returned to the PLC discussion deeply frustrated with lessons that they had taken time to prepare with an engaging participatory element, which were then 'hijacked' by student behavioural issues. The PLC collegiality and on-going discussions played a definitive role in allowing the teachers to vent their frustrations but not give up on the process. The participants allowed one another to share their frustrations but then rallied around that teacher's situation to offer alternative possibilities and encouragement. The collaborative PLC environment played a vital role in providing the teachers with renewed energy and enthusiasm to continue to find ways to open up their teaching practices to a more participatory approach.

However, the changes that we describe the teachers beginning to make in their pedagogy, facilitated by the PLC conversations, were only the beginning of their adaptation towards a socially just orientation. Creating a participatory teaching environment would now allow the PLC focus to move into a deeper discussion around student identity recognition as well as finding ways to incorporate the students' lifeworld knowledges into the school curriculum. We envisage on-going reflexive dialogical engagement in the PLC along the lines of a social justice pedagogical orientation. As previously discussed, the teachers' pedagogy was powerfully informed and constrained by their preponderance over order and discipline. It is thus through on-going dialoguing in the PLC and experimenting with a more multi-dimensional approach to teaching that the teachers will be able to build on the initial pedagogical habitus shift that the PLC dialogue had initiated.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter we described the process that unfolded in a teachers' PLC over an eight month period. We discussed how our initial conceptualisation of engaging with a socially just discourse was unable to find traction in the PLC conversations. Taking into account the durability of the teachers' pedagogical habitus we discussed a form of 'habitus engagement', via the reflexive dialogical PLC process, meant to elicit a

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shift or adaptation in their teaching practices. We described how, despite the teachers showing a willingness to consider the merits of a socially just approach, discussions about their actual pedagogy revealed a disjuncture between what they wanted to achieve and their actual classroom practices. Discussions around the externals of teaching, those of large classes, recalcitrant students, lack of resources and social issues that impacted on the school remained dominant during the PLC meetings and the conversations constantly returned to these issues.

Central to our discussion in this chapter is the teachers' difficulty to dialogue about, and engage productively with, the need for pedagogical adaptation. This we ascribed to the absence of a pedagogical language which supported dialogue around pedagogical modalities. Using Bernstein's modalities of transfer, we introduced a pedagogical language into the PLC conversations and, how linked with this, we adapted Hugo's analytical device that allowed the teachers to deliberate on an open or closed approach to their teaching.

Our chapter includes a discussion on the slow but deliberate PLC process that ensued, taking months for the conversation to find traction first into discussions on the pedagogical modalities of transfer and then into a pedagogical adaptation that allowed the teachers to begin to find ways to open up their modalities of knowledge transfer to include a more engaging and participatory approach. This process involved frustration and sometimes despair, but it was the PLC participants themselves who refused to give up on the process and continued to engage in finding ways to adapt or shift their pedagogical habitus by challenging the educational doxa that they encountered in their schools. This enabled them to consider new possibilities and approaches in their teaching practices. The teachers initially resisted the idea of giving up their tightly regulated teaching approach, but still returned to the PLC to argue against their own educational doxa. It was within the dialogical PLC engagement and reflexive conversations that the teachers themselves chose to risk changes in their pedagogy by valorising the importance of the beginnings of a socially just approach over the educational doxa that had hitherto informed their pedagogical habitus.

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We shared the messy process that unfolded in the PLC as the teachers engaged with the pedagogical tools that provided a platform for them to begin to understand and experiment with ways in which they could both open and close the modalities of the knowledge transfer within a lesson. The teachers, at first tentatively and then with more confidence, began to find ways to open the tightly regulated framing of their teaching to include a student recognition and participatory approach. It was their students who further encouraged this approach as they embraced the opportunity to participate in the lessons and more actively engage with their learning. Encouraged by their successes and positive feedback from their students, the teachers returned to the PLC to share the adaptations they had made to their teaching. Discussions about modalities of pedagogic transfer now became the centre of the PLC conversations.

The pedagogical change that had impacted on the PLC participants' teaching practices, however, is only the beginning of a shift in pedagogical thinking towards a socially just orientation. The PLC dialogue now needs to move towards a deeper engagement with student identity recognition and lifeworld knowledges, and find ways to connect these to the school curriculum. This chapter has focused on how the PLC deliberations have established a generative pedagogical disposition for social justice pedagogies by opening the teachers up to the possibility of a knowledge modality approach that incorporates active learning engagement. Building on these successes, the focus of the PLC has now shifted to the knowledge dimension. The PLC has entered the crucial phase of deliberating and building pedagogical capacity to design and teach lessons aimed at engaging their students in generative knowledge processes. As discussed in this chapter, we believe that it is the on-going dialogical PLC environment that includes a form of 'habitus engagement' and critical pedagogical reflexivity that holds the potential to adapt and change the teachers' pedagogical habitus and teaching repertoires towards a transformative socially just platform that will engage all students in the learning process.

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Chapter 5: Embodying pedagogical habitus change: A narrative-based account of a teacher's pedagogical change within a professional learning community

Article submitted to the journal: *Education as Change*

5.1 Abstract

Situated in the context of teaching in South Africa, this article narrates the journey of pedagogical change and adaptation of one teacher collaborating within a professional learning community (PLC). It discusses the *durability* and *malleability* of this teacher's pedagogical dispositions by arguing for a conceptualisation of teacher change that moves beyond a cognitivist approach, i.e. one that is driven solely by knowledge acquisition, to one that engages the embodied practices of teachers in the light of the shifts and adaptations that they undergo when trying to establish augmented pedagogical approaches. Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, bodily hexis and doxa, this article argues that sustained pedagogical change requires the teachers to not only shift and change how they teach, but involves an engagement with their embodied pedagogical habitus which has formed over time given the educational spaces they have inhabited. For Bourdieu habitus is fundamentally an embodied phenomenon and relates not only to how we think about the world, but includes our bodily dispositions. Bourdieu describes this as 'bodily hexis', stating that our dispositions are inscribed on our bodies. By conceptualising pedagogical change as embodied habitus engagement, we refer not only to changes in how the teachers convey knowledge to their students, but to the actual corporeal enactment of pedagogy. The article is based on data collected over a two year period and includes the PLC transcripts, observations from school visits and multiple in-depth interviews with the teacher. This article describes the constraints or 'hardness' of change as the teacher engages with his embodied pedagogical habitus which has developed over time. However, this article further argues that possibilities of embodied pedagogical adaptation and change exist in the reflexive, on-going dialogical space that a professional learning community offers.

Key words: professional learning community, pedagogical habitus, bodily hexis, field, doxa, pedagogical change, reflexivity

5.2 Introduction

Situated in the context of teaching within South Africa, this article focuses on the journey of pedagogical change and adaptation of one teacher within the context of his participation in a professional learning community (PLC). It discusses the *durability* and *malleability* of this teacher's pedagogical dispositions by arguing for a conceptualisation of teacher change that moves beyond a cognitivist approach. That is, an approach that is driven solely by teachers' knowledge acquisition, to one that engages the embodied practices of teachers in the light of the shifts and adaptations that they undergo when trying to establish augmented pedagogical approaches. Central to the argument is the role of PLCs in facilitating teachers' pedagogical adaptation and change in consonance with a socially just approach to teaching and learning.

Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, bodily hexis and doxa, I conceptualise teachers' pedagogical adaptation and change as a form of habitus engagement (see Feldman & Fataar, 2014). I argue that sustained pedagogical change requires an engagement with teachers' embodied teaching practices, what I will call their 'pedagogical habitus', which has formed over time in the educational spaces that they inhabit. Through a presentation of Johan's narrative - the teacher whose story is at the centre of this article - I consider habitus as both a *topic* and *tool* of investigation (Wacquant, 2011; 2014). Habitus as a *tool* of investigation allows me to come to an understanding of the manner in which Johan acquired his teaching habitus and his embodied corporeal disposition. As a *topic* of investigation, habitus enables me to understand how actively engaging his embodied habitus holds the potential to effect changes in his teaching practices (see Wacquant, 2011).

The article is based on data collected over a two year period and includes transcripts of the PLC conversations, six months of weekly school visits and multiple in-depth interviews that I had with him. I include a discussion on the 'methodo-logic' of a social justice approach that was the focus of the PLC conversations and use Bourdieu's thinking tools to conceptualise Johan's pedagogical change mediated through the PLC process. This article, exemplified by Johan's narrative, argues that

changing or adapting teachers' pedagogy is never linear or straightforward, as many traditional teacher development models suggest, but rather recursive, messy and deeply reflexive. Further, I suggest that teachers' pedagogical change requires a form of habitus engagement that takes into account the teachers' embodied cognitive and corporeal habitus which, I argue, is best facilitated within a reflexive and dialogical PLC process.

Both narrative and storytelling are used widely in different kinds of research and will form the basis of this article. Clandinin and Connelly (1994:416) define *storytelling* as the research participants' accounts of their experience told to researchers, and *narrative* as the researcher's account that has been refined through some form of research inquiry. Reason & Hawkins (1988) suggests that storytelling can be used by both researchers and participants as an expression and explanation of events that took place, "not as competing modes, but as poles of a dialectic" (83). This article is based on Johan's storytelling as a PLC participant and my interpretive narrative account of his story in my capacity a researcher and facilitator of the PLC process.

The article's focus on pedagogical change is situated in the current South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) which is described as tightly regulated, results driven and 'teacher proof' (Fataar, 2012). The PLC is motivated by a desire to generate a pedagogy that invites teachers to move beyond the mandated curriculum requirements to a more enriched notion of teaching and learning that embraces a social justice orientation. The premise of the PLC's deliberations, and the research process that I have facilitated, is that teachers' pedagogical practices are extremely difficult to shift or change. I argue therefore that conceptualising PLC work as a form of habitus engagement, provides an opportunity for the teachers to reflexively and collaboratively investigate their embodied pedagogical practices in order to consider possible adaptation and change. This article singles out Johan's story from the PLC participants as he remained in the PLC over a two year period and actively worked to adapt and change his embodied teaching practices.

5.3 The professional learning community as context for Johan's pedagogical habitus engagement

I first met Johan in the Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours module *Education and Society* in my capacity as the class tutor for the module. The Honours module focused, among others, on the conceptual parameters of student learning in complex educational contexts. The focus of the BEd Honours class was a consideration of the pedagogical bases on which students, in particular working class students, disengage from their learning. This is founded on an understanding that the school knowledge message system (Bernstein, 1975) does not engage with the students' cultural knowledges that they bring from their homes and community environments. The readings and class discussion included a consideration of ways in which South African schooling can be transacted to include a more socially just approach to teaching, one that engages all students in their learning (see McFadden & Munns, 2002).

A group of the Honours students who taught in schools in working class communities displayed an interest in finding ways to adapt their pedagogy to incorporate the theoretical concepts discussed in the module. In response to their interest, I invited the five Honours students to participate in a PLC process which I would establish for the purpose of engaging the teachers in pedagogical learning informed by social justice orientations. The PLC was intended as a dialogical space where participating teachers could collaboratively consider ways of adapting their pedagogy in consonance with a socially just approach to teaching. Incorporating their students' social-cultural knowledge from their homes and communities into the standardised school curriculum would be one key feature of such an approach. The PLC process included on-going reflexive conversations about pedagogical adaptation as well as the practical design and implementation of lesson units. Johan was one of the teachers who committed to the process and this article narrates his pedagogical adaptation and change driven by the PLC process over a two year period.

5.4 Methodo-logic of the professional learning community

In order to guide the dialogical process of the PLC conversations and practical design of lesson units by the teachers, I adopted what is called by Hattam, Brennan, Zipin and Comber (2009:304) a 'methodo-logic' approach for chasing a socially just change through research. This approach does not refer to research methods or methodology, but to the logic of an approach that guides the decisions and activities of the process. In other words, the methodo-logic provided the logic for the unfolding dialogical engagement within the PLC process.

The methodo-logic of the PLC was premised on a Bourdieusian insight that students enter schooling from different structural positions, bringing with them to school embodied qualities, dispositions and knowledges from their families and communities (see Bourdieu, 1998). These dispositions operate as 'cultural capital' which resonate and align with the school knowledge code, as is the case for most middle class students. Conversely, the school code alienates and isolates working class students from school learning because their 'cultural capital' does not align with the 'cultural capital' codes valued by the school. Bourdieu describes this form of social stratification via education thus:

> The education system … maintains the pre-existing order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital. More precisely, by a series of selection operations, the system separates the holder of inherited cultural capital from those who lack it. Differences in aptitude being inseparable from social differences according to inherited capital, the system thus tends to maintain pre-existing social differences (1998:20).

Middle class students whose embodied cultural capital aligns with the education (school) system enables them access to the codes of schooling while at the same time operating in such a way as to deny most working class students the opportunity to achieve success at school. These students find that the curriculum makes very little connection to the capitals they bring from their community contexts and therefore they see no intrinsic value in engaging with the educational experience.

The methodo-logic of the PLC was trained on finding ways in which the participating teachers could adapt and change their pedagogy by infusing the

standardised CAPS lesson units with a rich familiarity with, and pedagogical connection to, their students' community contexts and lifeworld knowledges. This included finding ways to design curricular and pedagogical work to include the literacy and other cultural dispositions of less powerfully positioned students in order to redistribute the 'culture of power' more equitably (see Hattam *et al.*, 2009:307).

In order to find ways to engage the students more deeply in the learning process, the PLC conversations drew on the 'funds of knowledge' (FoK) framework (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992). This approach discursively and practically mobilises community and family knowledge and resources and draws them into classroom curriculum and lesson units in a manner that moves beyond the rote-like teaching instruction that students commonly encounter in schools (Moll *et al.*, 1992:132). Utilising the FoK framework enables teachers to draw on the cultural capital of their students and recontextualises their lifeworld knowledge and interests into relevant and meaningful lesson units that are better able to create cultural congruence in school learning. In this manner classroom learning becomes a hybrid space where school knowledge combines with the students' FoK and cultural interests to enable the students to experience meaningful connection to, and greater intellectual engagement with, their school learning.

The PLC process, in combination with the FoK framework, invited the teachers to engage in an action research cycle of design, implementation and reflection. Following the implementation of the FoK infused lesson units the teachers returned to the PLC to engage in reflexive conversations about further adaptations based on the success of the previous implementation process. Thus, the generative PLC process provided the impetus for on-going dialogue that engaged the teachers conceptually and pragmatically in finding ways to insert their students' FoK into the standardised curriculum units. It was this approach that framed the process of Johan's engagement in pedagogical adaptation and change.

5.5 Theoretical considerations: Bourdieu's social field theory

In order to theorise the change process with regard to Johan's pedagogy, I draw on Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' of practice, habitus, bodily hexis, field and doxa. These 'tools' allow me to analyse and explore both the durability and possibility of change in Johan's teaching practices at the intersection of his classroom discourse and

individual agency. In particular, I consider the manner in which Johan was able to embark on strategic action that moved him beyond his embodied teaching practices in relation to his classroom (field) context.

Habitus is fundamentally an embodied disposition that denotes not only how we think about the world, but includes a bodily system of dispositions that are physically enacted in a field. Habitus, as a system of durable transposable patterns of socio-cultural practices, is a complex amalgamation of one's past and present. Reay (2004) describes one's habitus as containing multiple layers that are acquired over time given the different social contexts or fields that the individual moves through.

Conditioned primarily during early childhood, habitus operates largely below the level of consciousness and gives one a sense of what actions are possible (or impossible) and provides one with a sense of how to act and respond "without consciously obeying rules explicitly posed as such" (Bourdieu, 1990a:76). One's habitus, described as a "strategy generating principle" (Bourdieu, 1977:72), provides one with a way of responding to cultural rules and contexts as well as unforeseen and ever-changing situations in different ways. Bourdieu (2000:161) explains that,

> Habitus change constantly as a function of new experiences. Dispositions are subject to a sort of permanent revision, but one that is never radical, given that it operates on the basis of premises instituted in the previous state. They are characterized by a combination of constancy and variation that fluctuates according to the individual and her degree of rigidity or flexibility.

Thus, one's habitus is able to respond and adapt to different social experiences and circumstances and these experiences are internalised and become another layer that is added to one's habitus.

Bourdieu expands the cognitive and dispositional focus of habitus to include an individual's corporeality which he calls 'bodily hexis'. Bodily hexis is the expression of all the factors which make up the habitus and is embodied in one's physical being in a manner which is "as durable as the indelible inscriptions of tattooing" (Bourdieu, 2000:141). It is in bodily hexis that one finds the embodiment of

social structures, which are inscribed onto the body in terms of gait, stance, facial expressions, speech and so forth (Bourdieu, 1990b).

Bodily hexis refers not only to our motor functions in the form of patterns and postures but includes a thinking or feeling that is inscribed in our physical beings and that determines our corporeality. Bourdieu describes bodily hexis as:

> a whole system of techniques involving the body and tools, and charged with a host of social meanings and values … a way of walking, tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and using implements, always associated with a tone of voice, a style of speech, and … a certain subjective experience … Bodily *hexis* is political mythology realized, *em-bodied,* turned into a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby of *feeling* and *thinking* (1977:87, 93; italics in original).

For Bourdieu there is no separation between one's body and one's mind. He describes the body as a mnemonic device on which the very basics of culture are imprinted and enacted. The way we relate to our bodies reveals the very deepest dispositions of habitus:

> nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and, therefore, more precious, than the values given body, *made* body by the transubstantiation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy (Bourdieu, 1977:94).

Hence the two concepts, habitus and bodily hexis, are inextricably linked, in that our practical beliefs are both a "state of mind" and a "state of the body" (Bourdieu, 1990b:68). One's body, Bourdieu states, is a "living memory pad, an automaton that 'leads the mind unconsciously along with it'" (1990b:68). Our dispositions that are embodied and inscribed within the unconscious formation of habitus, and through our social practices and discourses form the mediating link between our subjective and personal worlds and our cultural and social worlds (Jenkins, 1992:46).

Habitus does not act alone. There exists an iterative relationship between habitus and field, in that they are produced and reproduced in relation to each other through social practice. Bourdieu uses the analogy of playing a game to give insight

into the dynamic role that field and habitus play in the logic of one's practice and states that the adjustments and demands of a field require a certain "feel for the game" (Bourdieu, 1990b:66). Similar to a game, a social field such as a school is assembled with specific structures and rules. The relative smoothness of playing the social game in a school field often depends on the members accepting and following the given structures and rules within the field, regardless of how arbitrary they might seem. The longer that one continues to engage in the 'game', the more the structures and rules seem natural and unquestionable. Bourdieu describes how this complicit and (re)productive role is compounded from early immersion into a field:

> The earlier a player enters the game and the less he is aware of the associated learning … the greater is his ignorance of all that is tacitly granted through his investment in the field and his interest in its very existence and perpetuation and in everything that is played for in it, and his unawareness of the unthought presuppositions that the game produces and endlessly reproduces, thereby reproducing the conditions of its own perpetuation (1990b:67).

If we consider that teachers enter the game of schooling at the age of five or six, when they start formal school, it can be assumed that their embodied educational experiences include a tacit or unconscious investment in the game and rules of schooling which are acquired over a period of time, given the school fields they have inhabited. I describe these embodied educational dispositions as the teachers' pedagogical habitus.

Pedagogical habitus, I suggest, can be conceptualised as a layer of habitus formation which is grafted over time onto a teachers' primary habitus. Incorporated into a teacher's habitus are embodied social and cultural messages from the field of education which organises and positions them as certain types of teachers, and which in turn structures their teaching practices in particular ways. These dispositions include different teaching repertoires which are transacted, for example in their speech styles and patterns, their use of resources and the manner in which they both verbally and physically respond to their students. Bourdieu holds that our dispositions are preconscious and therefore not easily amenable to conscious reflection and modification – we perform them without conscious reflection, they are

obvious, common sense, and in fact, we have forgotten that we even learned them. Consequently, any substantial or effective change in a teacher's embodied teaching practices has to contend with the durability of their pedagogical habitus formation over time given the various social and/or educational 'fields' they have inhabited.

It was these uncontested pedagogical beliefs, which Bourdieu describes as doxa, that the PLC conversations sought to interrogate and challenge. These taken-for-granted or common sense values, discourses and practices of a social field, such as the field of education, "come to be viewed as natural, normal and inherently necessary, thus working to ensure that the arbitrary and contingent nature of these discourses are not questioned nor even recognized" (Nolan, 2012:349). For Johan, his doxa of schooling, which had been established on a particular worldview, which I discuss in more detail below, structured a certain form of teaching as natural and self-evident. It was this view, embodied in his pedagogical habitus and enacted in his teaching practices that the PLC conversations sought to engage in order to engender his pedagogical adaptation.

In order to come to an understanding of the constraints and possibilities of Johan's strategic action within his pedagogical adaptations, I discuss in the following section Johan's embodied habitus through key aspects of his biographical narrative. This discussion highlights both the *durability* and *malleability* of his pedagogical habitus in relation to the educational fields he has occupied.

5.6 Johan's embodied habitus

Johan is a young, white, middle class Afrikaans male who grew up in "a very white Afrikaans farming community" (Johan). As the middle child of three children he describes his family as "very close" (Johan). He has an older sister who is married with a young child, and a younger brother who currently runs the family business. Johan displays a firm embeddedness in his family and values his parents' opinions and affirmation regarding his decisions or practices.

Johan describes his parents:

> My father is a firm, white conservative Afrikaans man who has always run his own business. He is very strict and can get very angry when people don't do what he tells them to do. You have to respect my father

and speak to him properly … He believes that you must respect those in authority.

My mother is gentle and kind. She is submissive to my father, but also finds ways to do things she wants to, like when my father made the family go to the NG Kerk (an Afrikaans church). My mother didn't really want to go, she wanted to attend an English church, but she always made us go as a family to the NG Kerk with my father. Then, she would go to the English church in the evenings and I would go with her … My mother had a strong influence on me. She could manage people well and did it in a professional way and was good at solving problems (Johan).

Johan describes his family as a typical white Afrikaans family. His father was the dominant and authoritarian head of the family while his mother obeyed his authority and helped to ensure that the children were respectful and did what was expected of them. Johan's mother also played a mediating role that ameliorated the harshness of his father's authoritarian manner by providing a 'buffer' between the children and the strict manner of their father. Johan describes his mother as "very strong, I admire the way she does things. My father reacts emotionally but my mother is more objective" (Johan).

Johan started school in 1990 at the age of six. He attended the local white Afrikaans primary and high school. Despite schools in South Africa becoming racially integrated in 1994, Johan notes that during his time at school the schools in the rural town where he lived remained exclusively white.

During Johan's primary school years he was involved in the 'Voortrekker' youth organisation, which he describes as playing a significant role in his life. The 'Voortrekkers' is founded on a Christian Afrikaner nationalistic ideology that empowers young Afrikaans boys to be successful in their 'Afrikanerskap' (the condition of being an Afrikaner), as well as becoming positive citizens and dependable and committed Christians. Johan describes the role that his involvement in the 'Voortrekkers' played in his life,

> … being part of the 'Voortrekkers' was a very important part of my life and I believed in their value system. I liked the discipline that they taught us … we did marching and standing to attention and rituals when we hoisted the flag. We had ceremonies where we were rewarded for things we did … they taught us respect and discipline and they valued team work and team building … I always feel so proud when I talk about it … it was something that I really liked, especially the uniform we had to wear. I loved that uniform (Johan).

Here Johan describes his embodied childhood corporeality, both an ideology and a physical hexis that the 'Voortrekker' organisation embedded in his early year's habitus. This corporeality, founded on the principles of 'Afrikanerskap' that values the responsibility and dependable nature of a Christian citizen, is later evident in the way Johan comported himself as a teacher.

After completing school Johan enrolled to study psychology at an Afrikaans university, however he did not enjoy the course and at the end of the first year left university and travelled overseas to work in London. Six months into his time overseas his father pressurised him to return home to work in the family business. Johan worked in the family business over the next eighteen months.

Johan describes the time spent working in the family business with his father as very difficult. He did not enjoy the work and felt that he was not suited to the requirements of the job. During the second year of working with his parents Johan became involved in the local church as a youth leader. He enjoyed his work with the youth in the church and decided to enrol to study Pastoral Psychology through a distant learning college. This allowed him to continue to assist his parents with the business while studying towards a different career option. After two years of studying he decided to change to an education degree and continued to study part time, completing his Bachelor of Education degree, via correspondence, through the University of South Africa (UNISA).

The education degree required Johan to complete a practical teaching component each year. Following his first teaching practical stint he continued to do part-time substitute teaching at the school and was later invited to work as a substitute teacher at a high school which enrolled predominantly black African students. The area where the school was situated was a previously whites-only area

but the demographics had shifted to become a predominantly black African area. Johan initially stayed in an apartment in the school hostel and later moved into a more upmarket area renting a small flat.

The school comprised of mostly black learners with a diverse teaching staff. Johan describes this time of his life:

> I felt excited about the opportunity to teach but shortly after I started I felt confused and shocked because everything was so different. The school and the children were so different to my culture and background. I realised that I had to change my thinking if I wanted to survive. I had to learn how to teach these learners because the school was very different to the schools I went to. At first it was chaos and I realised that I had to find ways to structure and control my classes (Johan).

Here Johan is describing the disjuncture between his embodied habitus and the field context of the school. His pedagogical habitus that had been structured in a white privileged Afrikaans school context was incongruent with the students and school structure in which he was now teaching. Johan describes how he felt overwhelmed and frustrated by the unruly student behaviour, the noise, the different languages the students spoke, their attitude to school and the way they interacted with him and responded to his authority as a teacher. Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of bodily hexis, Johan highlights the dissonance between the students' behaviour and outlook and his expectations of how the students should behave, show respect and respond to his authority as a teacher.

Unsure of how to respond, Johan drew on support and encouragement from an older staff member who became his mentor during the two years he taught at the school. This teacher, also a white Afrikaner male, was instrumental in assisting Johan to put firm discipline structures in place to cope with the very large and unruly classes, while at the same time encouraging him to develop a caring attitude to his students. This approach to his teaching, which was rigid and somewhat paternalistic in nature, in conjunction with his embodied corporeality which favoured a teacher-centered authoritarian style, formed the basis of Johan's teaching practices.

Johan's embodied educational ideals, consolidated by his mentor relationship with a white Afrikaner male authority figure, draws on an educational ideology adopted by the apartheid state namely Christian National Education (CNE). CNE,

which was the education policy until 1994, is described by Enslin (1984) as a curriculum ideology for white Afrikaans-speaking children which, "purport to constitute the life- and world-view of the *Afrikanervolk*." (139-140) As underpinning of curriculum policy, CNE, while advocating for a particular dominant ideology of Afrikaner education, claimed a notion of racial superiority over Coloured and black African (Bantu) education based on the view that the Boer (Afrikaans farmer) nation is "the senior white trustee of the native", described as being in a state of "cultural infancy" (Enslin 1984:140).

Based on Johan's family, schooling and ideals derived from the 'Voortrekker' youth movement, Johan was positioned in a particular manner in his school. Johan describes how he initially struggled to relate to the black learners which he describes as "very different, at first I didn't know how to talk to them, or physically interact with them" (Johan). In order to survive in this unfamiliar schooling environment, Johan relied on the ideals and principles inscribed in his habitus, those of control, authority and discipline combined with a reward system which he used to manage his classroom discipline and control the behaviour of the learners. These systems formed the basis of his classroom structures and consequently came to form an integral part of his enacted pedagogy.

Johan states that his father was not happy with him teaching at a predominantly black African school. He pressurised Johan into leaving the school by offering to provide financial support for him until he found a new teaching position. After two years of teaching at the school Johan agreed and moved back home and substituted at the local primary school for a year until being offered a school governing body (SGB) post at the primary school where he currently teaches.

His current school is located on the outskirts of a middle class, predominantly white Afrikaans area. During apartheid the school was for white students only; however, with the desegregation of schools, the school now mostly enrols black and coloured learners and a small group of white students. The school has retained a predominantly white Afrikaans staffing component, which, by Johan's own admission, continues to perpetuate a white Afrikaans culture despite the racially diverse student group that now attends the school. Fataar argues that many schools have "made some adjustments to deracialise their reception cultures, but found ways to assimilate incoming students into their dominant cultural registers" thus retaining

the existing cultural orientation of the school (Fataar, 2015:17). Johan's school, therefore, by not acknowledging the diversity of its students, has created a teaching environment that likely works against the possibility of pedagogical adaptation that engages the cultural capital and everyday literacies of the students in their school learning.

Currently Johan teaches a variety of different subjects to Grade 5 and 6 learners, including English home language, Geography, Maths and Life Orientation. He describes himself as a good teacher with firm structures and systems and considers himself well-liked by his students and school staff. He believes he is seen as a leader in the school, as seen by his recent appointment to the school governing body (SGB) and his position as the Grade 6 head and subject head for Life Orientation and Afrikaans additional language. Being seen as a good teacher and a leader by his colleagues and liked by the students are important to Johan, and have formed the basis of many of his pedagogical decisions.

Johan's general demeanour could be described as someone who is affable, seeks to please others and who elicits on-going affirmation that he is liked by both students and colleagues. Complying to the dominant school structure is important to Johan, although he suggests that thinking strategically assists him to work more effectively within this system. He explains that he has,

> … learned to plan things strategically at school. You have to do that if you want to have power and authority … you have to plan and think carefully. Like when I wanted to be on the SGB, I worked hard … by being friendly and helpful and supportive to make sure that the staff liked me so that they would vote for me. I also made sure that I went to the right people and shared my vision and ideas for the school with them. … By the time we had the staff SGB elections I knew that half the staff would vote for me (Johan).

Johan explained that he joined the PLC because he

> … really enjoyed the discussions in the Honours module and so when I was invited to be part of the PLC, I didn't hesitate. I had learned from the theory in the class why my students were not interested in learning and it also helped me understand why their results were so bad, because that really bothered me. The PLC gave me the opportunity to

experiment and share my changes with the others. We all taught in different schools and I felt that I could help some of the other teachers (Johan).

Implicit in this statement, is that Johan believed that he could share his structures and systems, which he regarded as good teaching practices, with the other PLC teachers. He did not initially consider that adapting his pedagogy would require him to undergo significant corporeal changes in his teaching practices in order for him to engage his students via connections with their life world knowledges.

5.7 Habitus engagement: Reflexivity and strategic action

Engaging Johan in PLC discussions about changing the way in which he transmitted his content knowledge to include student engagement and participation was initially difficult. He struggled to accept that he needed to change the structures and systems that he had worked hard to put in place. These structures were not only embodied in his dispositional corporeality and deeply embedded in his habitus but, according to Johan, it was these structures that made him a good teacher. He followed the departmental textbooks diligently and exclusively, stating that this made him feel safe "if I did what the government wanted me to do and the students failed then I could argue that I had done what they told me to and therefore it wasn't my fault" (Johan). This approach is indicative of the current 'teacher-proof' curriculum that reduces the work of teachers to technical system implementers that requires them to follow departmental rules and regulations and transmit a pre-determined syllabi determined by departmental curriculum experts. This approach stands in contrast to one that treats teachers as professionals who are informed by an internal accountability system and who take responsibility for their students' learning and teaching outcomes (see Fataar, 2012).

Johan's corporeal enactment of his teaching was tightly bound in his embodied values of discipline, control and respect. His teacher-centered and authoritarian approach to learning, framed by his early childhood, his own schooling experiences, teacher education, and his socialisation into teaching operated as a durable and internal set of structures and rules that deeply constrained his adaptation to a more socially just teaching orientation. Johan admits that he had

hoped that the PLC process would assist him to find new pedagogical possibilities, but had not realised that he might need to forego his current structures.

Throughout my initial discussions with Johan he reiterated that a good teacher was one 'who stuck to the prescribed work and had good classroom discipline because that is what department officials want to see when they visit the school' (Johan). This adherence to the dominant values and discourses found in schools, means that teachers would tend to conform to certain structures, the doxa of schooling, not necessarily because they agree or because it is in their best interests, but because there does not seem to be an alternative. Working within the South African CAPS framing, teachers are constrained by the prescriptive expectations of the curriculum which controls the pacing and sequencing of learning and frames the curriculum knowledge as a form of pedagogical 'truth'.

Johan viewed his classroom as a 'container-like' space (Leander, Phillips & Taylor, 2010) which was teacher-controlled and where he enacted his embodied teacher-centered, authoritarian approach to teaching and learning, and in return expected respect and compliance by his students. He complied with the CAPS's routinised framing and implementation process of the prescribed content which included a narrow form of assessment. This didactic approach emphasises repetition, rote learning and memorisation with a focus on fulfilling the performative requirements of the school code (see Fataar, 2009:43). This tightly regulated form of knowledge control can be described as instantiating a thin, almost anaemic form of student learning which is unrelated to the students' life experiences and fails to understand and connect with the diversity of the students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It provides very little space to leverage a richer notion of teaching and learning, as found in a socially just approach.

Johan admitted that he found group work difficult and unsettling as he felt that he had no control over the students' learning and the increased noise in the class disrupted aspects of his teaching environment that he had worked hard to organise. He had internalised a doxa of schooling that was based on an expectation that students should be quiet, well behaved and respectful. Encouraging student involvement in the lesson made him feel that he was handing authority over to the students. He explain that all his

> … school life the teacher was in charge and we had to listen and do what they told us to. When I first started teaching that is what the school taught me to do otherwise the students take over and you lose control. The teacher who mentored me told me never smile until Easter. In that way you show them quickly who is in charge to get their respect (Johan).

He thus organised and managed the spatial configuration of the class and controlled and directed all student movement, for example, how the students entered the room, inhabited the classroom space, asked questions, engaged in dialogue and so forth. He considered student respect and good manners a matter of effective and authoritative pedagogy.

For Johan adapting his teaching practices to include student engagement involved grappling with an embodied dispositional shift that teaching differently required. During the first year of the PLC discussions Johan struggled between an adherence to the regulative forces and constraints found in the doxa of institutionalised schooling practices, and working against his embodied pedagogical habitus to shift his teaching in consonance with a socially just approach to student learning. During the PLC conversations he engaged willingly with the possibilities that this approach offered his teaching and student learning, but shifting his embodied pedagogy to engage with this approach required him to leverage a corporeal change in his teaching which he initially found extremely difficult.

In light of constraining forces that worked against Johan's uptake of engaging and participatory pedagogical practices, it is worth noting that Bourdieu warns that any adaptations or changes in our practice has to be understood and contextualised in relation to the objective structures of a particular culture. These include the values, ideas and narratives produced by cultural institutions such as the family, religious and social groups and education systems on the one hand and an individual's embodied values, beliefs and dispositions, on the other. Bourdieu argues that one's habitus is able to generate a repertoire of transformative actions given new or different field conditions, but states that these actions are always bounded by the social conditions in which the habitus was produced.

For Johan the objective structures that had produced his subjectivity, his embodied worldview based on authority, discipline and respect, were deeply

constraining and regulating in his teaching practices. It was here that the reflexive PLC conversations played a decisive role in continually engaging him in the possibility of new pedagogical possibilities. The PLC placed as central to the teacher discussions a social justice orientation to teaching and learning, which initially was incongruent with Johan's tightly controlled and teacher-centered pedagogy. Reay (2004 citing Sayer 2004) suggests however, that a disjuncture between an individual's habitus and social field holds the potential to produce a new awareness and self-questioning where the habitus finds ways to adapt or shift in alignment with the new field conditions. Throughout the first year of the PLC conversations Johan acknowledged that he struggled to acquire the adaptations required to shift his teaching orientation to that of a more socially just approach noting that,

> … it was exciting to think about teaching differently but I was still unsure how to make the changes, so I kept my structures and systems in place because they worked for me. I would try out some of the new ideas and then talk about them in the PLC, then test it a bit more ... after each PLC I felt like I had new fresh ideas, but during the week I seemed to end up back in my comfort zone … insisting on a quiet class, with order and discipline and being in control (Johan).

It was during the second year of the PLC that a number of factors came together to support his decision to adapt his pedagogy and classroom practice. Choosing to remain committed to the PLC process for a second year, Johan was joined by a new group of teachers. This positioned Johan as a supporting facilitator of the PLC conversations and required him to assist in leading the dialogue with the new teachers regarding the socially just focus of the PLC, as well as share the practical implementation possibilities from his own classroom practices. A further factor, and probably the most pivotal in supporting a more sustained adapted pedagogy, was a physical classroom change that saw him moving to a prefabricated classroom that was approximately 100 meters beyond the school building.

Johan's new classroom was positioned in relative isolation from the rest of the school building. This move signalled a substantial change in the way in which he managed his physical classroom space, which was directly related to his own growing awareness of his embodied pedagogical dispositions that he wanted to adapt and change. Johan acknowledges that relinquishing control over his students'

behaviour within the classroom space had been one of the most difficult aspects to adjust to. He had previously been vocal among his colleagues about the importance of a quiet disciplined class, and thus, foregoing these structures that were observable by his colleagues acted as a constraining factor within the school environment. Johan also confesses to an initial uncertainty regarding the pedagogical adaptations he felt were required of a more socially just teaching orientation; he explained that he

> knew that changing my teaching to being more socially just was right, but I needed time try it out before I felt confident that I could show my colleagues that teaching that looks uncontrolled and allows the students to talk and become noisy, can actually change the way the students learn (Johan).

Moving to a new environment that was outside the school building afforded him the opportunity to engage in more sustained strategic action in his adapted pedagogy as it granted him a level of freedom to experiment and adapt his pedagogy outside of the limitations which he felt were imposed on him by the expectations of the school and his colleagues.

From the start of the new year Johan changed the way in which he managed his new classroom space. He allowed his students to negotiate how the classroom environment was organised and encouraged the students to take ownership of their learning environment. With amusement Johan describes how he discovered that the prefabricated classroom walls allowed him to write on them with whiteboard pens and wipe them clean again as one would a whiteboard. To the delight of his students the entire classroom wall space became a large whiteboard which they could write and paste their work on. The wall space, which framed the classroom environment, became a continuation of their learning and written work and included drafts of work, pictures, in other words, it became a space where they could write their ideas and display their group projects.

The changed classroom environment instigated a more open disposition in both the manner in which Johan engaged with his students and the way in which his students involved themselves in the learning environment. This openness coincided with Johan's use of the 'funds of knowledge' (FoK) framework to inform his teaching. The FoK framework emphasises curriculum work that is built around culturally

familiar resources from the student's homes and community in order to "transform students' diversities into pedagogical assets" (Moll *et al.*, 1992:132). This approach utilises the students' lifeworld knowledge from their homes and communities to design and implement lessons, scaffolding this knowledge into the school knowledge. At the start of the second year Johan and the PLC teachers discussed the possibility of using this framework in their classes and during the PLC meetings the teachers collaboratively discussed the design of lesson units using aspects of the FoK framework. When Johan presented the lesson units to his class, the enthusiasm with which the students involved themselves in the new lesson approach exceeded his expectations.

His two Grade 6 English classes chose 'music and drama' as the overarching theme for the term and together Johan and the students decided on the written tasks and assessments based on the CAPS requirements for the term's work. He divided the learners in each class into groups and each group of learners took responsibility for creating their own drama production which included a written story, an oral, prepared reading, and a newspaper article to mention but a few of the curricula tasks that this theme easily encompassed. The students' story ideas were unique and some, particularly the boys, enacted real world scenarios such as violence, gangs and drugs, while others, mostly the girls, chose stories about singing contests, beauty competitions or broken friendships that were restored through a tragic event. Their English learning revolved around a combination of their ideas, the CAPS requirements for the term and the students' lifeworld knowledge scaffolded into the lesson units. The excitement and enthusiasm of the learners for their English learning through the negotiated lesson units provided a creative impetus in Johan's pedagogy which he shared with enthusiasm in the PLC meetings. The weekly collaborative PLC discussions played an essential reflexive role in Johan's pedagogical adaptations. The PLC teachers had agreed to work on similar pedagogical themes, and PLC teachers both affirmed and critiqued Johan's (and each other's) pedagogical adaptations, providing suggestions and possibilities emanating from their own pedagogical adaptations.

The final point which Johan describes as being instrumental in consolidating his belief in his adapted pedagogy was the results from his mid-year assessments. The results from the formal school assessments positioned his class as making such

significant improvements in English that only four students were placed on the 'at risk' school list, whereas previously more than half of the same class were considered 'at risk' for not achieving the basic requirements in English. In conjunction with this, some students who had been failing English before were now in his top ten students.

Johan describes the role that the PLC played as central in him engaging in reflexive pedagogical adaptations thus,

> … besides the PLC providing a form of accountability, motivation and guidance, it was also the intellectual support that really helped … if it wasn't for the academic based discussions and the literature and readings provided each week to support our PLC conversations, I don't think I would have been so successful in thinking about my teaching differently. During the first year I thought a lot about changing and tried some things, but it was hard to change what I had been doing. In my second year I decided to take action. It really helped that all the PLC teachers were doing it together (Johan).

Here Johan highlights the role that cognitive learning and reflexivity coupled with his strategic action played in adapting his pedagogical practices. Johan acknowledges that he kept slipping back into his old ways of teaching, for example taking control of the learning environment by teaching the information rather than allowing the students to discuss it together or expecting the children to work in silence. He notes that the weekly PLC conversations, where he was encouraged to share his implemented adaptations, held him accountable to continue experimenting with ways to adapt his pedagogy:

> I can't function in isolation. There must be people who are working with me, who keep telling me that what I am doing is good. The PLC provided this for me and the momentum to keep trying … because every week I could go back and share what I was doing with the others and then I could get new information and ideas which I could take back into my classroom (Johan).

The role of the PLC process in the teachers' adaptations and changes cannot be over-emphasised. The collaborative and reflexive weekly PLC environment provided a safe space for the teachers to share and challenge one another regarding

their pedagogical adaptations, and, as Johan notes, it also provided a form of accountability. He also highlights the importance of the cognitive input and the manner in which this supported his thinking about his adaptations as well as providing practical support and guidance.

5.8 Embodied habitus adaptation

Johan's pedagogical adaptations are the result of a long reflexive journey that required on-going embodied dispositional adjustments that got him to the point where he has now begun to embrace the possibilities that a more participatory and engaging teaching orientation offers. As a weekly observer and conversational partner with Johan, I noticed how the pace of learning in his classroom gained momentum driven by his students. As the students gained confidence and came to trust the changes Johan had instituted they began to make their own suggestions and negotiate their learning. These exciting new possibilities, however, were constantly impacted by the durability of Johan's pedagogical habitus. Johan is honest enough to note that even two years into the process he still has to work against dispositional structures and rules that remain embodied in his pedagogical habitus. He admits that he

> … still want to take control at times and I struggle to be patient with the noise levels in my class. I still get annoyed when they interrupt me. This year I have tried to make the classroom belong to them, but sometimes when I am tired or stressed, I want to take it back, control them, insist on quiet, just stand in front and teach. I can see how different the learners are now, how they want to learn. Their results have also improved and so I know that the changes I have made are working to keep them excited and involved in their learning. At times it is hard work as it goes against everything I was taught to do as a teacher (Johan).

Johan's own description of how hard it is to change is indicative of how a cognitivist or knowledge driven approach is unable to work in isolation of one's embodied habitus to effect adaptation and change.

Johan has exhibited a strategic choice to move beyond the embodied dispositions that have hitherto framed his pedagogy. This process, facilitated by the

collaborative support of the PLC enabled Johan to imagine teaching and learning practices that allowed him to invite his learners to become 'insiders' in the classroom and school learning process by engaging with their cultural worlds and lifeworld knowledge. However, while Johan has embarked on a journey of strategic action and change, the doxa of the school field has remained relatively static in its pedagogical structures and continues to perpetuate a closed, regulated and controlled approach to teaching and learning. This remains a frustration and an on-going constraining factor for Johan, who explained that

> … now, nearly two years later I look at some colleagues who control their classrooms beautifully and their classrooms are quiet and so controlled ... I just want to go in there and wake them up and say look what you are doing, look at these learners, they are sitting here like dead little souls (Johan).

On-going adaptation and change for Johan, within his school field, will require continuous reflexive awareness and a continual resistance to the current regulative and prescriptive curriculum framing and his embodied pedagogical habitus that is structured on authority, discipline and control.

5.9 In conclusion

This article has provided a narrative account of Johan's pedagogical adaptation and change facilitated through his involvement in the PLC process over a two-year period. Central to my discussion I offer pedagogical change and adaptation as a form of bodily hexis and habitus engagement. Exemplified by Johan's story, the article demonstrated both the durability of his embodied pedagogical habitus that needs to contend with his deeply held educational beliefs and values, and the possibility of change capacitated by the on-going reflexive PLC dialogue.

Acknowledging the doxa of his schooling context is described through Johan's story telling as a necessary consideration within his adaptation and change in pedagogy. The PLC conversations did not encourage the teachers to move out of the CAPS framing but placed an emphasis on finding ways for the teachers to design and implement lessons that generated a richer notion of student engagement and participation by connecting to the students' lifeworlds and lifeworld knowledge. Johan's narrative highlights how, despite the seemingly intractable nature of the

CAPS framing, there exists a gap, which can be widened and enriched, allowing teachers to invite students into curriculum work that is participatory, engaging and richly related to their own cultural lifeworld knowledges. In other words, to provide a pedagogy that involves students in a high quality learning environment within the current restrictive curriculum framing found in the South African context at present.

Johan's story reveals a cycle of pedagogical adaptation and change that, I have argued, needs to move beyond cognitive learning to involve a teachers' corporeality and embodied habitus. This cycle of change is neither predictable nor smooth, but rather recursive, chaotic and often discordant with one's embodied habitus and taken-for-granted doxa of schooling. Wacquant reminds us that "practice is engendered in the *mutual solicitation of position and disposition,* in the now-harmonious, now-discordant encounter between 'social structures and mental structures', history 'objectified' as fields and history 'embodied' in the form of this socially patterned matrix of preferences and propensities that constitute habitus." (Wacquant in Bourdieu, 1984:xvi) The body, therefore, as a 'memory pad', perceives and enacts embodied structures, both cognitive thoughts and physical behaviour that is expressed in the systematic functioning of one's socialised body within a particular field structure.

Thus, adaptation and change, facilitated via dialogical PLC engagement, requires a deep reflexivity with one's inveterate embodied pedagogical habitus, which is read on and through one's bodily hexis. Bourdieu reminds us that

> [d]oxa is the relationship of immediate adherence that is established in practice between habitus and the field to which it is attuned, the pre-verbal taking-for-granted of the world that flows from practical sense … enacted belief, instilled in childhood learning … [is] a repository for the most precious values, is the form par excellence of the 'blind or symbolic thought' (Bourdieu, 1990b:68).

For teachers, therefore, adherence to the social school field, and a submission to the existing school conventions, can be seen as a 'bodily dressage' which is visible in one's hexis and enacted in one's pedagogy. It was therefore the re-ordering of thoughts and marshalling of the teachers' bodily dispositions, emotions and practices as well as "deep-rooted linguistic and muscular patterns of behaviour" (Bourdieu, 1990b:69) that the PLC sought to bring to consciousness and interrogate in order to

engage with the constructs of a more socially just pedagogy and incorporation of the FoK approach. This corporeal engagement I argue, must interact with what has been "learned by the body", as this knowing "is not something that one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something that one is." (Bourdieu, 1990b:73) Thus, as Johan's story of adaptation and change has highlighted, it is the on-going dialogical engagement in a PLC that supports pedagogical learning through engagement with one's corporeality and dispositions that have shaped one's social identity, that hold the potential for embodied pedagogical change.

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Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Outlining the journey

Some projects have definitive starting and ending points, a place where the project starts and ends with a clear directive between the two points. This thesis work was not one such project. This work emerged out of a personal educational crisis which resulted in what Bourdieu calls hysteresis or inertia in the habitus (see Hardy, 2008:131-5). Hysteresis, a time of disruption and misalignment between habitus and field, has both negative and positive consequences. Described as a time of crisis where the habitus has to respond to abrupt and sometimes catastrophic field changes, this process also involves a 'creative reinvention', or 'novel field opportunities' which occur as the habitus evolves in response to the new field opportunities which are highlighted as a consequence of the disruption experienced between habitus and field (Hardy, 2008).

My inter-leading section in this thesis describes what took place during this time in my life and my subsequent return to studying. While the decision to return to the field of study might sound decisive, it wasn't. It was an attempt to find answers and, if I am honest, it was a breathing space away from what had become for me a disorientating educational field. I needed time to think, to plan a new way forward, and educational studies seemed a good option for a period of time. It is possible, therefore, to suggest that the starting point of this thesis work began in that decision, the decision to begin a journey into the unknown that began with a university Masters course-work programme.

Although fairly independent, I am not one to journey alone. I seek out others to walk with me, conversational partners who support and challenge me, and who help me, through reflexive conversations, to find my way. Archer describes this as a 'communicative reflexivity' (Archer, 2007:93-95). Communicative reflexives, she suggests, in contrast to autonomous reflexives who rely on their own mental resources to decide on courses of action, involve an individual's internal conversations that are completed and confirmed through external dialogue with others before making decisions regarding a course of action.

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Situated in a new and fairly unfamiliar educational field, I felt unsettled and apprehensive. I was seeking to re-align my embodied disposition, my habitus, within the field of education and my purpose over the next three years was to find a way to accomplish this through my research and thesis work. Given the unfamiliar context in which I was now immersed, I sought to establish new connections and trusted interlocutors whom would journey as communicative partners, individuals who I could invite into regular public 'communicativity' with my internal conversations (see Archer, 2007:94).

My involvement in the Masters course-work programme, however, did not provide the 'regular public communicativity' that I thought it would. This was due, not to the course-work or fellow Master students, but to my own lack of confidence. I was comfortable listening to my peers debate the issues that emerged from the readings, and enjoyed the challenge of the written assignments where I was able to take time to read and formulate a response through my writing to questions posed. However the one aspect I placed central to my learning, a "communicative mode that entails 'thought and talk', that is, internal conversation which is completed and confirmed by external dialogue with others" (Archer, 2007:94) eluded me.

In the inter-leading piece I briefly describe the initial contact that I made with one of the lecturers three months into the Masters course. The invitation to involve myself as class tutor in the Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours class offered to me by the lecturer, who later became my thesis supervisor, became a lifeline into a 'communicative mode' that over time facilitated my engagement and intellectual capacitation within the university field. Additionally the invitation to involve myself in the Honours class in support of this communicative process, drew on my teaching skills, skills in which I had relative confidence. Initially I was required to spend time with the students in small group discussions supporting their discussion and critical analysis of the work. During the unfolding of the six-month Honours module, my supervisor increased my exposure to communicative opportunities by inviting me to present sections of the classes, mark class assignments, and give students feedback regarding their essays.

During the same period, I was deciding on my own research focus guided by discussions with my supervisor. As the possibility of working with teachers in a professional learning community with a focus on a socially just approach to teaching emerged, my supervisor encouraged me to begin to share my research readings with the Honours class as it connected directly into the focus of the module, that of a deliberative encounter with notions of social justice to inform the teachers' active pedagogical engagement with their students and teaching contexts. These readings would also form the focus of the professional learning community (PLC) which was central to my research. Towards the end of the module my supervisor and I began to actively discuss the parameters of setting up a PLC with the Honours students and invited them to consider committing to the dialogical and reflexive PLC process in the following year. My involvement in the class over the six-month period had established strong connections and relationships with the Honours students, and this enabled a fairly easy transition into the establishment of a PLC with the five teachers who committed to the process.

6.2 The unfolding dynamics of teacher learning in a professional learning community

Lingard notes that "[h]istorically, education policy has had more to say to and about curriculum and assessment than to pedagogies." (2007:248) Yet, it is through teacher pedagogies that learning takes place, not through the monitoring of the delivery of a curriculum or the on-going measurement of the learner performance by the assessment performance indicators based on standardised assessments. Fataar notes that "pedagogy remains the key leveraging site for providing an ameliorating platform for social justice in education." (2012:57) The PLC placed teachers and their pedagogies as central, with a focus on a conceptualisation of a social justice approach to teaching and learning. Building on the conceptual and theoretical foundation established in the BEd Honours module, the PLC sought to dialogue with the teachers regarding finding ways to leverage a pedagogical platform that engaged the lifeworld or socially generally knowledge of students, scaffolding this knowledge into the school knowledge code to capacitate a richer notion of teaching and learning within the current South African educational implementation field.

The first year of the PLC, building on the Honours module, was established on the teachers' theoretical and conceptual understanding of why many of their students were disengaging from school learning. The first article in this thesis provides a conceptualisation of the establishment and functioning of the PLC process and describes the intellectual approaches, based on a social justice approach, on which the PLC discussions were founded. This approach is based on Nancy Fraser's (2009) conceptualisation of a socially just orientation that joins the redistribution of knowledge with an ethical consideration for the recognition of the students' diverse cultural knowledge and a representation of the diversity of the social-cultural groups in the process of knowledge selection.

This article introduces the 'funds of knowledge' (FoK) (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992) as a theoretical framework to assist the teachers in their endeavour to find ways to reconceptualise a teaching platform that increases the academic and social outcomes for all students. This approach valorises student lifeworld knowledge and incorporates it into intellectually challenging curriculum units that enable school success by creating a pedagogical orientation that bridges lifeworld-relevant curricula into the knowledge and learning needed for mainstream success. The FoK approach responds to a pedagogical justice orientation by working on the weave of recognition of student identities and redistribution of school knowledge (Lingard, 2007).

This article employs Bourdieu's theoretical tools of habitus, field and doxa to conceptualise the teachers' pedagogical adaption and change. Key in this article is the concept of the teachers' pedagogical habitus and an understanding of teacher adaptation and change as a form of habitus engagement. Teachers' pedagogical habitus, this article suggests, includes the embodied pedagogical practices of teachers that have formed over time given the various educational fields they have moved through and that have structured their pedagogical thinking and consequently their teaching practices. This article argues that PLC work provides a space that encourages discursive, on-going conversations to support the process of pedagogical adaptation and change facilitated by the reflexivity of the teachers within the dialogical process of the PLC. The PLC process is thus conceptualised as a vehicle for exploring and interacting with the participating teachers' pedagogical

orientations and practices as a form of habitus engagement, with a view to understanding how change may be mediated within their pedagogical habitus and consequently enacted in their teaching practices.

The focus of the teachers' learning in the PLC during the first year was founded on what can be described as a cognitive approach to adaptation and change. Acknowledging the durability or 'hardness' of change, the PLC engaged with the teachers' pedagogical habitus in order to capacitate their pedagogical adaptation and change by building on their intellectual learning in the Honours module. As facilitator of the process, and based on my own recent schooling experience that culminated in my return to studying, I supported the belief that a focus on theory, concepts and knowledge provided the tools to respond to the educational challenges that the PLC teachers faced in their school contexts.

What transpired during the PLC's first year of operation is described in the second article. This article, exemplified by data from the PLC conversations, biographical information of the PLC participants and observational school visits, highlights the 'hardness' or difficulty of pedagogical adaptation and change experienced by the five PLC teachers. The PLC conversations, situated as they were in a theoretical understanding of their students' disengagement from the learning process, struggled to pragmatically mobilise a more open framing of a knowledge transmission, one that invited the students into a participatory and engaging learning environment. Combined with this, the PLC dialogue during the first six months, revealed an inability of the teachers to discuss their actual teaching practices, by this I refer to the 'how' of the knowledge transmission process. Discussions around the externals of teaching such as social issues that impacted the school, recalcitrant students and administration loads that drew the teachers away from a focus on their classroom teaching, remained central in the weekly PLC meetings. When asked to describe 'how' they engaged their students in the learning process, they discussed the manner in which they either used the prescribed text book or powerpoint slides to transmit the subject content and complete the required assessment tasks.

Despite the PLC discussions weekly revolving around a conceptual understanding of how to invite their students into more engaging pedagogies, the teachers were

deeply constrained by the need to adhere to school expectations that controlled the pacing and sequencing of knowledge via the prescribed curriculum and textbooks. I describe this as an adherence to the doxa of schooling. One conforms and accepts a specific set of educational beliefs or practices, not necessarily because one believes them to be true or best practice or in one's best interests, but because one does not believe there to be another way. Teachers may not even be aware that they are complying with the dominant discourses, but they accept the schooling status quo because the manner in which schooling is transacted aligns with their pedagogical habitus expectations based on the way things are, or always have been. These doxic pedagogic discourses are often deeply embedded in teachers' habitus and their practices are consequently enacted in an almost pre-conscious manner.

For the teachers in the PLC, the manner in which schooling was enacted in a particular way was embodied in their pedagogical habitus. The focus of the PLC dialogue, therefore, was to facilitate a bringing to consciousness of the teachers' embodied values and beliefs, their imperatives of schooling and taken-for-granted ways of teaching that was inculcated in their pedagogical habitus through their socialisation into teaching, as it was these durable pedagogic mechanisms that would continue to inform their enacted teaching practices unless brought to consciousness and challenged.

In the process of challenging the teachers' inherent pedagogical practices, it became apparent that the teachers lacked both a pedagogic reflexivity and a didactic language to discuss their teaching practices. This issue is brought to the fore in the second article. In this article we discuss the manner in which the PLC dialogue, supported by the teachers' theoretical and conceptual knowledge from their studies, was able to challenge the manner in which the teachers were thinking about their pedagogy differently, but were unable to mobilise sustained adaptations and changes in the manner in which they pragmatically enacted their pedagogy. Wanting to shift the PLC dialogue beyond the practical constraints which focused mostly on the externals of teaching, as the facilitator of the process I prepared diligently for each PLC meeting. Based on my own immersion in academic readings and understanding of theoretical concepts that had assisted me to come to a better understanding of my own recent educational experiences, each week I prepared

summaries and discussions around articles that responded to the teachers' concerns and frustrations (see for example Thomson, 2002; Munns, Sawyer & Cole, 2013; Prosser, Lucas & Reid, 2010; Zipin, 2013). These readings provided a conceptual understanding and practical possibilities of pedagogical adaptation and change exemplified through examples of teachers who had engaged in new and different ways of 'doing pedagogy' across a variety of different knowledge disciplines. Johan, in the third article, acknowledges that these readings were effective in assisting him to think about his pedagogy differently. What Johan's narrative highlights is that a cognitivist approach, such as the one I was employing by building on the teachers' theoretical BEd Honours learning, did not engage the teachers corporeality, their embodiment of the theoretical and conceptual knowledge in the enactment of their classroom pedagogy. This meant that the PLC dialogue was unable to productively support a sustained shift in the teachers' pedagogy towards a more socially just approach. What the PLC conversations encountered instead, was a weekly discussion that focused more on the externals of pedagogy, an almost achromatic engagement with their embodied pedagogical habitus and teaching practices which was unable to drive sustained pedagogical adaptation and change in their pedagogy.

Six months into the first year of the PLC, as facilitators of a process, we (my supervisor and I) came to realise that the teachers' daily professional practice had become 'stuck' in a teaching doxa into which they had been socialised. Despite the PLC dialogue being situated within a theoretical understanding of alternative pedagogical practices, the teachers' lack of pedagogic reflexivity and a didactic language to interrogate the internals of their pedagogy, the 'how' of knowledge transmission, caused the PLC dialogue to cycle around issues mostly external to their actual pedagogy, and did not move productively into pragmatic adaptations and changes in their teaching practices. A further frustration was the lack of time available each week to delve deeply into pedagogical adaptation possibilities of each teacher, given their school context and grade and subject areas they were teaching. The PLC met bi-weekly, and at times, if the teachers missed meetings due to school commitments, the flow of pedagogical discussion was interrupted and struggled to regain a momentum that enabled sustained pragmatic pedagogic adaptation and change. The time allocated to the PLC meetings was one hour, which, given the

complexity of their various school contexts, was not enough time to move beyond the factors constraining their adaptations and into a productive discussion about the possibilities of change in the internals of their pedagogy.

In response to the constraints that the PLC process was experiencing, and in consultation with my supervisor who periodically sat in on the sessions, we adopted an intervention type facilitation which utilised a pedagogical 'tool'. This 'tool' or heuristic, which is discussed in the second article, enabled the teachers to begin to discuss ways to allow for student participation while still maintaining a controlled teaching environment. During the mid-year holiday break the teachers agreed to workshop the possibility of adopting this heuristic that would support a more generative didactic language and pedagogical discussion, as well as a pragmatic approach to experimenting with more sustained adaptations in their pedagogy during the second half of the year. Employing the heuristic enabled the second half of the first year's PLC conversations to become more productive and centred the PLC dialogue in a more focused and critical manner around the issues of teacher pedagogy and student engagement.

6.3 Embodied habitus engagement: the cognitive, affective and conative

At the end of the first year, a new group of teachers joined the PLC in response to an invitation issued to the schools surrounding the university campus by my supervisor and myself. A group of about 20 teachers responded, of which 10 eventually formed the core group during the second year.

As the facilitators of the PLC process, reflecting on the 'hardness' of change experienced during the first year, we planned the second year of the PLC by evaluating the manner in which the PLC dialogue and process took place. Initially, as discussed during the first year of the PLC operating, we believed that a cognitivist approach to adapting and changing the teachers' pedagogical practices was required. Building on the knowledge dimension of the BEd Honours class, as facilitators of the PLC conversations, we placed an understanding of the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of student disengagement as central in driving the PLC discussions and consequently the teachers' adaptations and change in their

pedagogy. However, as the second article exemplifies, this approach constantly came up against the 'hardness' of change based on the inability of the teachers to embody the aspects of the change process. By this, I refer to the teachers' inability to transfer the pedagogical adaptations that were reflexively dialogued about within the PLC field, into their pragmatic enacted pedagogy in their school fields.

In the second year in order to engage more directly with the teachers' embodied pedagogical habitus to elicit sustained adaptation and change in their pedagogy, drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and bodily hexis, I incorporated an approach that connected with affective dimensions of the teachers' pedagogical habitus. The logic of this was based on an understanding that one's beliefs, that are embedded in one's habitus and enacted in and through practice, are both a 'state of mind' and 'state of the body' (Bourdieu 1990b:68). Thus, one's thinking and feeling dispositions are embodied and inscribed within the unconscious formation of habitus and enacted through one's corporeality. In order for the PLC process to effect sustained adaptation and change in the teachers' pedagogical practices, it was necessary to engage with the teachers' embodied habitus. Wacquant (2014) suggests that this requires a consideration of the cognitive, affective and conative aspects of habitus.

The term conative stems from the Latin word *conatus* which refers to a natural tendency to strive or maintain directed effort. One's corporeality, which is found in the embodied dispositions of habitus and bodily hexis, consist of a combination of the cognitive, affective and conative. The cognitive refers to the process of coming to know and understand information, the affective refers to the emotional interpretation of perceptions, information and knowledge and conation refers to how the cognitive and affective dimensions combine to produce one's behaviour and practices. In other words, the conative, that is central to an individual's habitus and bodily hexis, executes how one acts on knowledge, thoughts and feelings, and, in relation to field structures, can become a structure of reproduction or adaptation and change. Thus, for the PLC teachers, endowed with a personal pedagogical propensity (their pedagogical habitus), operating in and through the social relations and structures of the PLC field and school field contexts, it is the combination of the conative,

cognitive and affective, that holds the potential to enact, through corporeality, a striving by the teachers towards a more socially just teaching orientation.

In order to consider how the PLC process, via habitus engagement that engaged with the teachers' corporeality, could effect a more sustained change in the teachers' pedagogical habitus, we, as facilitators placed the affective component of the teachers' pedagogical habitus as more central in the PLC dialogue. The logic of our approach argues that embodied change, a coming to know through the 'body in practice' (see Wacquant 2014:9), cannot be sustained unless the conative, the cognition and affective are present in the teachers' personal volition to change. Each person's knowledge, emotion and individual will, are involved in the process and desire to change and all three provide the impetus by which an individual strives towards adaptation and change.

On reflection, an example of this logic of change, as directed by one's enacted will or desire to change, is seen in my own narrative. My desire to change was initially driven by the affective, the emotional component of my corporeality. I was emotionally displaced within the educational field which had, for me, been a stable and supportive structure for most of my teaching career. This emotional component directed my corporeality in my desire for adaptation and change. Returning to studying, I immersed myself into a cognitivist modality, placing knowledge and the field of university studies in the foreground (over the affective dimension) in order to use knowledge to make sense of my practice. Moving through the process of my research work, I moved back to embrace the affective dimension as I involved myself in the lives of the teachers through the PLC process. At the same time, however, I was engaged in an on-going theoretical and conceptual (cognitive) process which was taking place through my research and thesis writing. Thus, the conative, cognitive and affective were all involved in the iterative process of my embodied learning that, over time, capacitated my own pedagogical adaptation and change.

The PLC process during the second year was therefore adapted to engage more directly with the teachers' embodied teaching practices. This process encompassed the mind (cognitive), habitus and bodily hexis (dispositions and corporeality), and engaged aspects of emotion (affective) to drive the teachers' practice (conative)

between the PLC field and school field. By citing the role that the conative plays in driving the practice between the PLC field and the school field, I refer to the 'hardness' of change experienced during the first year of the PLC process, where the teachers were unable to effect pragmatic change that moved beyond the PLC field and into their enacted teaching practices in the school field. The process of reflexive change in the PLC during the first year, driven mostly by the cognitive dimension that provided an understanding of student disengagement and teachers' possible responses, was unable to sustain pragmatic change as the teachers moved back into their school fields. My argument is that unless one embodies changes in one's practices, which are then executed through repetitive corporeal enactments within the pragmatic field site, the proposed change will not be sustained over time or across different fields. What this means in the practical application of the PLC process is that the PLC focus, that of a social justice teaching orientation that provides the impetus for the PLC dialogue via habitus engagement, needs to be fundamentally driven by a combination of the conative, affective and cognitive.

Practical changes that were made during the second year to support the teachers' embodied changes, was that the PLC now met weekly, as opposed to bi-weekly during the first year, and the teachers committed to an engagement in the PLC conversations for an hour and half each week. This change and support for additional time spent engaging in the PLC conversations, was accomplished through working directly with the school principals of the four schools involved. Eliciting their support for the PLC process was pivotal in the teachers' focus on the possibilities of adaptation and change within the CAPS framing and doxa of schooling. The support of the school principals at each school was crucial in assisting the teachers to embody and enact their pedagogical adaptations from the PLC field to the school field.

The shift in PLC dynamics also required a shift in the facilitation process of the PLC dialogue. As facilitator of the process, I now placed more emphasis on engaging with the affective and conative dimension of the teachers' pedagogical adaptations. Thus, the main difference between the first and second year of the PLC process was that the first year was driven by the knowledge component – a cognitive understanding of a social justice approach to teaching and learning. In comparison, the PLC process

during the second year placed the affective and conative component of the teachers' pedagogical habitus as central in effecting sustained adaptation and change. This allowed the reflexive PLC dialogue to engage more directly with the teachers' embodied pedagogical habitus to effect changes in the corporeality of their pedagogy.

An example of how the PLC facilitation and reflexive dialogue shifted is found in the manner in which the cognitive aspect of pedagogy was introduced into the PLC conversations only in response to a problem encountered, and not as the driving force to adapt the teachers' pedagogical practices. For example, as the teachers experimented with relaxing the frame of their English teaching to include a more participatory approach that encouraged their students, many whom were not English first language speakers, to engage more fully in the communicative aspect of English learning, they encountered a reluctance, even a refusal by many of their students to engage in speaking in English in the class. The teachers understood that many students lacked the confidence to attempt to engage in a more communicative environment, and chose to opt out of engaging in the lessons, but the teachers were unsure how to productively respond to the problem they were encountering.

In response to the problem presented by the teachers in the PLC, I provided excerpts from Lisa Delpit's (1995) book, '*Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom'*. In a section of her book she discusses how she allows students to initially use their home language or informal language in the class to support their acquisition of the target language. She describes how, through explicit teaching and participatory immersion in the new language over time, the students gain more confidence to begin interacting in the communicative English learning environment. She explains pragmatically how she scaffolds their language use from their homes and community origins into the more formal language use required in the standardised curriculum. This process, she explains, provides the 'culture of power' to students who do not have the dominant codes required for formal school learning. By explicitly scaffolding formal school learning onto their cultural ways of knowing from their homes and communities, the students are able to acquire the 'powerful' codes of learning and begin to achieve success in the school context. Delpit's writing, which draws from personal teaching examples within the schooling context of

working class students, provides a good example of how the affective, cognitive and conative are able to come together to interact with the corporeality of teachers' pedagogy to effect a more socially just learning environment for the students.

What is important to note here in the PLC process, is that I introduced the knowledge component only after the teachers had raised their concerns about their pedagogical adaptations in their English classes. In other words, the knowledge component was not placed central to the discussions as the impetus for the teachers to change their pedagogy in response to a new (knowledge-based) idea presented. Driven by the teachers' affective desire and volition to adapt their pedagogy based on a problem they encountered, the teachers were better able to embody the suggested changes, which they pragmatically enacted in their classrooms, returning the following week for a further round of discussions based on the changes they had instituted. Therefore, I argue that this cycle of repetitive corporeal enactments of adapted pedagogy, based on the affective and conative, the will, striving or desire to adapt one's teaching, stands a better chance of finding more sustained purchase in the teachers' pedagogy, than a more knowledge-driven, or theoretical approach to pedagogical adaptation.

The 'funds of knowledge' approach remained a central component of the PLC dialogue in considering how to engage the students in their school learning, but, in keeping with the shifts in the facilitation of the PLC focus during the second year, this approach drew on a more affective approach to student learning, that of student engagement via a social relations of pedagogy approach (see McFadden & Munns, 2002). This approach provides a platform for the teachers to engage with more socially just pedagogies, ones that connect with the subjective and relational aspects of the students' lives and school going, their cultural and linguistic practices from their socio-historical backgrounds (Fataar, 2012:59). A social relations pedagogical approach, which argues for explicit pedagogies to be supported by authentic and productive pedagogies (Lingard, Hayes & Mills, 2003), provide a rationale for how working class students can become 'insiders' in the culture of the classroom. Productive pedagogies, which place an emphasis on intellectual quality, connectedness to the students' lifeworld knowledge, supportive classroom environment and recognition of difference, were presented in the PLC discussions in

combination with the FoK framework to support the design and implementation of the teachers' lesson units that scaffolded from the student's lifeworld knowledge into the standardised school units.

The third article, based on one teacher's pedagogical adaptations and changes, highlights the role that the affective dimension played in Johan's learning and sustained embodied pedagogical adaptations and changes. Johan's story encapsulates the 'hardness' of pedagogical change combined with the possibility that the reflexive, on-going dialogical PLC work holds for capacitating this process.

This article, describes how the PLC work during the second year, engaged more directly with the affective and conative dimension of Johan's pedagogy. Employing the FoK framework in combination with a social relations of pedagogy approach, Johan's narrative highlights the manner in which his emergent conative practice began to shift his embodied pedagogical habitus in consonance with a more socially just teaching orientation. His corporeal pedagogical enactment of his teaching practices, although constantly constrained by the doxa of schooling and the school field where he is positioned, over time began to shift more consistently to include a more participatory approach in his classroom teaching. As his biography narrates, it was his students' response to this approach that affirmed him as a teacher and supported a more embodied change in his pedagogy.

6.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, and in response to my main research question,

> *How do the dialogical processes of a professional learning community capacitate teachers' pedagogical adaptation and change towards socially just pedagogical practices?,*

I would like to highlight key aspects of this research work as central to the knowledge contribution that this thesis makes to teachers' pedagogical learning in a PLC.

First, and core to this thesis work, is the role of the PLC in capacitating teacher learning and pedagogical adaptation and change with a focus on a socially just teaching orientation. This focus encouraged teachers from different grades and

subject areas to coalesce around a discussion on student (dis)engagement and the potential of utilising the 'funds of knowledge' approach to connect students to school learning. Key to achieving this outcome through the PLC process was the on-going, reflexive and dialogical approach to collaborative learning that engaged the cognitive, affective and conative dimensions of the teachers' pedagogical habitus in their teaching adaptations.

The shift to meeting weekly for a longer period of time was fundamental in facilitating a cycle of more consistent pedagogical adaptations in the teachers' classroom practices. The weekly action research cycle, that involved planning, enacting, reflecting and re-planning, proved decisive in creating more repetitive corporeal opportunities for the teachers to adapt their pedagogy. As this thesis proves, these repetitive corporeal enactments, combined with the teachers' embodiment of their adapted approach to teaching and learning, provided the impetus for more sustained change during the second year.

Linked with the cycles of adaption was the opportunity for the teachers to reflexively discuss their pedagogical adaptations and changes in the weekly PLC conversations. Moving beyond the limits imposed by the CAPS and the constraints encountered in their school contexts, to a consideration of a more socially just approach to teaching and learning, was facilitated by the on-going reflexive PLC dialogue. The extended duration of the PLC meetings enabled the teachers to move beyond a focus on the constraints found in their school contexts, to concentrate more consistently on the possibilities of pedagogical adaptation and change. As mentioned, a further crucial dimension of this was the support of the school principals of the changes the teachers were instituting.

Facilitation of the PLC was central to the unfolding process. My capacitation as facilitator of the PLC, which formed part of my thesis and research work, was enabled through reflexive conversations with my supervisor, who was co-facilitator of the PLC process. By placing habitus engagement as central to the manner in which we engaged the teachers' pedagogical habitus, the PLC facilitation process required constant adapting and shifting to work within the constraints as well as the possibilities presented through the participants' dialogue and enacted pedagogical

adaptations. Facilitation of such a process can never be linear, straightforward or tightly controlled. Rather, it involves a process that is complex, messy and discursive. Key to engaging the teachers in reflexive pedagogical adaptation, therefore, lay in facilitating the PLC dialogue through the unfolding complexity and messiness of change, to an embodying of sustained adaptations in the teachers' enacted pedagogy. This process, as discussed in this concluding chapter, must involve a combination of the cognitive, affective and conative dimension that engages the teachers' pedagogical habitus, i.e. their embodied pedagogical beliefs and practices.

A key focus and knowledge contribution in this thesis is the conceptualising of the teachers' pedagogical habitus. This concept, which I theorise in the introduction to this thesis, was integral to the PLC process and the manner in which the PLC dialogue reflexively engaged with the teachers in their pedagogical adaptation and changes. The establishment of the PLC, as discussed in the first article, conceptualises the PLC process as a form of habitus engagement that interacts with the teachers' embodied pedagogical habitus, to effect change in their teaching practices.

Teachers' pedagogical habitus, working in relation to the school field, is enacted (produced and reproduced) through practice. For the teachers, their 'fields' included the PLC field at the university site and their school field which included their classroom sites. What the second and third articles highlight is the difficulty the teachers encountered moving from the PLC field, which engaged them in the possibilities of their pedagogical adaptation and change, into the school field, where they encountered the 'hardness' or doxa of schooling and struggled to sustain the implementation of their adapted pedagogy.

In response to this disjuncture between the teachers' engagement in the PLC field and their enacted pedagogy in the school field, we, as facilitators of the PLC process during the second year, shifted the focus from a cognitivist approach to one that involved the affective dimension of the teachers' dispositions that engaged with their corporeality. Shifting or adapting teachers' pedagogical practices, I suggest, must work through bodily hexis, as it is here that ones' deepest dispositions of habitus

reside, 'tattooed' in one's physical being. These "values given body, *made* body by the transubstantiation achieved by the persuasion of an implicit pedagogy" (Bourdieu, 1977:94) which are deeply embedded in the corporeality of one's habitus as a "set of instituted dogmas and doctrines ('beliefs')", become enacted in one's practices in an almost pre-conscious or unconscious manner (Bourdieu, 1990b:68). Thus, to effect change in the teachers' embodied pedagogical practices, the thinking and feeling component of the teachers' pedagogy, their beliefs and values embedded in their pedagogical habitus must be brought to consciousness, challenged and engaged, for the teachers to consider new or adapted pedagogical practices.

The PLC dialogical approach which engaged the affective and cognitive aspects of the teachers pedagogical habitus, was decisive in assisting their 'thinking and feeling', i.e. their choice and desire to change, to support and sustain adaptations and changes in their teaching practices. However, it was the conative component, their striving and volition to enact their adapted pedagogy that assisted the teachers to move from the PLC dialogue about change, into their enacted adaptation and change in the school field. What I argue in this conclusion is, that if the striving and volition, the conative aspect, is not present and enacted through repetitive cycles in the teachers' corporeality of their teaching practices, then change in their pedagogy will not be sustained over time and in different field contexts. In other words, only an engagement with the teachers' deepest dispositions, their pedagogical practices inscribed in their beings, will effect sustained change in their pedagogical habitus and subsequently in their pedagogical practices.

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