

**Drawing as intervention to improve concentration in the classroom at
four schools in the Western Cape**

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This research was sparked by my interest as an art educator in drawing. Whilst observing the calming effect drawing lessons had on learners in my classroom, I realised that drawing might assist other educators to manage problematic behaviour in their classrooms without making use of traditional discipline practices. In conjunction with the alarming statistics connected to violence, neglect, dropout rates, bullying, and inadequate funding associated with South Africa, I became concerned that such practices do not effectively improve learning or concentration. The purpose of this study was thus to investigate whether a positive intervention such as a series of drawing exercises facilitated by the educator could contribute to better learning in high schools.

By adopting the arguments of enactionists and instructional literature on the art of drawing in this study, I developed my hypothesis that a drawing intervention could enable changes in perception that can remediate the behaviour of a learner. Driven further by literature on compassionate teaching approaches from abroad that included more expensive interventions, compassionate teaching practice also links problem behaviour and poor concentration with stress. Curriculum responsive theory corresponds with compassionate teaching but considers the economic and social needs of South African learners. Hence, I aimed to find out whether quick gesture drawing exercises, could provide a cost-effective solution for South African learners with similar restorative qualities as was claimed abroad. Furthermore, it was necessary to determine whether South African educators would be willing to facilitate a gesture drawing intervention and which drawing exercises would best suit their classroom contexts.

The data collected for this study was gathered through case studies of four diverse educators who were working at different educational institutions in the Western Cape. Two interviews and a drawing workshop were employed to investigate the unique experiences and reflections of the participant educators. The study adopted an inductive approach and consequently utilised an interpretive paradigm to dictate how the research was analysed and interpreted.

The analyses revealed that the educators were enthusiastic about a drawing intervention and could easily imagine most of the exercises being used in their classroom contexts. The participants additionally identified a shortcoming in teacher training that lacked guidance for handling various instances of disruptive behaviour, a shortage of support, and the need for interventions.

Supported by theory and the feedback from the educators, the study arrived at the conclusion that a drawing intervention should offer a choice of different exercises to the learner. The educators selected different effective and ineffective drawing exercises for a potential intervention. A further conclusion was that, although the educators were convinced that drawing could improve concentration, this does not prove that the gesture drawing exercises would unquestionably improve learning, behaviour, or concentration. Gesture drawing exercises hold credible possibilities that can offer the educator a compassionate response to disruptive behaviour, although they could experiment with this strategy either in the art domain or in other fields.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie navorsing is die gevolg van my belangstelling as 'n kunsopvoeder in tekenkuns. Die kalmerende effek van tekenklasse op my leerders het my laat besef dat tekenkuns moontlik ander opvoeders in hul klaskamers met problematiese gedrag kan help sonder om gebruik te maak van tradisionale dissiplinêre prosedures. In ag genome die ontstellende statistieke wat gepaard gaan met geweld, verwaarloos, druipeysers, afknouery en onvoldoende befondsing wat met Suid-Afrika geassosieer word, is ek oortuig dat sulke prosedures akademiese sukses negatief beïnvloed. Die doel van hierdie studie was dus om ondersoek in te stel of 'n positiewe intervensie, soos byvoorbeeld 'n reeks tekenoefeninge wat deur die opvoeder gefasiliteer word, 'n verbetering in leervermoë en konsentrasie in die hoërskool kan lewer.

Enaktiewe argumente en instruksionele literatuur oor tekenkuns het die studie gelei tot my hipotese dat 'n tekenintervensie die persepsie wat die gedrag van die leerder beïnvloed, kan aanpas. Empatiese onderwys benaderings soos gevind in internasionale literatuur wat deur intervensies beskryf, koppel problematiese gedrag en swak konsentrasie met stres. Leerplan-reaksie teorie wat met die empatiese onderwysbenadering ooreenstem, neem die ekonomiese en sosiale behoeftes van Suid-Afrikaanse leerders in ag. Dus het ek gepoog om uit te vind of vinnige tekenoefeninge wat op gebaarteken gebaseer is, 'n goedkoper opsie vir Suid-Afrikaanse leerders kan bied, met soortgelyke herstellende gevolge soos in internasionale studies beskryf word. Verder was dit nodig om te bepaal of Suid-Afrikaanse opvoeders gewillig sal wees om 'n gebaarteken- intervensie te fasiliteer, asook watter tipe tekenoefeninge hul leerkontekste die beste sou ondersteun.

Die data wat vir hierdie studie ingesamel is, het gevallestudies van vier diverse opvoeders wat by verskillende opvoedkundige institusies in die Wes-Kaap gewerk het, behels. Twee onderhoude en 'n werkwinkel is in die navorsing gebruik om die unieke ervarings en refleksies van die deelnemende opvoeders te bepaal. Die studie het 'n induktiewe benadering gevolg, en dus 'n interpretatiewe denkraamwerk gebruik om die navorsing te

analiseer en te interpreteer. Volgens die analise was dit duidelik dat die opvoeders entoesiasies oor 'n tekenintervensie was, en hulself maklik kon voorstel hoe die tekenoefeninge in hul leerkontekste toegepas kan word. Die deelnemers het addisionele tekortkominge in onderwysopleiding geïdentifiseer, en die teenwoordigheid van problematiese gedrag, benodigde ondersteuning, en 'n behoefte aan intervensies aangedui.

Soos deur teorie en vanuit die terugvoer van die opvoeders bewys, is 'n gevolgtrekking van die studie dat 'n tekenintervensie 'n keuse tussen verskillende tekenoefeninge aan die leerder moet aanbied. Die opvoeders het verskillende effektiewe en oneffektiewe tekenoefeninge vir 'n potensiële intervensie uitgekies. 'n Verdere gevolgtrekking vanuit die studie was dat, alhoewel die opvoeders oortuig was dat teken konsentrasie kan verbeter, dit nie noodwendig bewys dat gebaartekenoefeninge leer, gedrag, of konsentrasie onteenseglik sal verbeter nie. Gebaartekenoefeninge hou geloofwaardige moontlikhede in wat opvoeders 'n empatieke reaksie op problematiese gedrag bied, of hul in staat stel om verder met die strategie in die kunste of ander velde te eksperimenteer.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CTE	Career and Technical Education
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NATED	National Technical Education Diploma
NCLBA	No Child Left Behind Act
NCV	National Certificate Vocational
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OBE	Outcomes-based education
PE	Physical Exercise

QCTO	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations
TFA	Teach For America
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

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CHAPTER 1:

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Background

I have experienced many different teaching and learning environments during the eleven years of being an art educator in South Africa and abroad. In some contexts, learners often struggled to concentrate because of internal or external factors that prevented them from focusing on their work. Such factors are often not known to the educator, but the educator, notwithstanding, could introduce positive interventions to help learners refocus for improved learning. To my mind, traditional disciplinary models, which include being sent out of the classroom, detention, suspension, and expulsion, have not been deemed effective. If refocusing is not deliberately and constructively facilitated, precious learning time is lost once learners, for instance, are removed from the classroom to defuse. In my experience, when a learner was in need of professional intervention, the institution often did not have adequate funding for counsellors or the available counsellor or appointed social worker was so overburdened that they could not manage to effectively attend to the learner. At best, educators are inclined to deal with problem behaviour¹ intuitively or by applying conventional disciplinary methods.

I have noticed how learners tend to become quiet when they draw. They immerse themselves into constructing and shaping with marks. Driven by this observation, I have made use of drawings during class time to provide distracted learners with a breather instead of punishing them. The prospect of drawing was received well by the learners, with some beginning to request drawing breaks as a result. I propose that various drawing exercises facilitated by the educator could pose as a positive intervention in a classroom environment to mitigate poor concentration. Instead of reverting to conventional forms of discipline, sensorimotor exercises such as drawing may improve

¹ In this thesis I argue that problem behaviour includes daydreaming, withdrawn behaviour, behavioural changes, absenteeism, not doing homework, interruptive behaviour, inconsiderate talking, and attention distraction such as verbal insults.

the relationship between the learner and educator², and influence a learner's resilience to enable learning.

1.2 Introduction to the research

Educational institutions in South Africa are under a great deal of pressure to improve teaching and learning and thereby to enhance the pass rate of learners. According to a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) report, South Africa is heading towards a teacher crisis due to a deficit of 25 000 educators per annum (Maphalala & Mpofu 2019) while dropout rates comprise sixty percent of enrolled first graders (Weybright 2017:1353). The National Youth Policy acknowledges concern for the effects of dropout rates but fails to address the development of the skills that learners require to improve school completion. The policies exist, but much work remains to be done because merely half of the learners who pass grade seven complete grade twelve (Shung-King, Lake, Sander & Hendricks 2019:55). Substantial attention has fallen on early childhood development initiatives, but the necessity to address matters concerning older learners remains³.

Learners fail for various reasons ranging from economical to social and cultural circumstances and experiences, such as falling victim to violence⁴, abuse, molestation, rejection, bullying⁵, poverty⁶, death, gangsterism, tragedy, family conflict, substance abuse, and unwanted teen pregnancy (Shung-King et al. 2019:4). Adverse experiences can result in a variety of mental and behavioural problems, which negatively affect cognitive

² I prefer using educator as an ode to the teacher who has moved beyond the job title of teacher.

³ In this thesis, the term 'learner(s)' generally implies high school learner(s).

⁴ The South African Child Gauge in 2019 determined that violence against children is omnipresent throughout the country. In Soweto, 99 percent of children had reportedly experienced or witnessed a form of violence, with approximately 40 percent accounted to have witnessed multiple exposures to violence at homes, schools, or communities (Shung-King et al. 2019:4).

⁵ A study by the University of South Africa in 2012 found that 55.3 percent of local learners were victims of emotional bullying (Laas & Boezaart 2014:2675).

⁶ Currently, sixty percent of children remain impoverished in South Africa, giving rise to multiple forms of deprivation (Shung-King et al. 2019:52).

development, academic performance, and future employment (Shung-King et al. 2019:52). Caring for the well-being of learners during school time can encourage learners to remain in school and build resilience to enable focus. Learners are at school for long intervals during the week, which position schools as ideal safe havens for the reinforcement of positive influences. Educators possess the ability to become powerful instruments for improving academic outcomes. They should therefore step forward to alleviate the pressure on the support structures of schools by ensuring that their classrooms become a “learning environment of healing” (Wolpow, Johnson, Hertel & Kincaid 2011:xiii).

There is a lack of occupational therapists and counsellors in the education sector (Shung-King et al. 2019:112). Whilst it is necessary to involve a social worker or counsellor in the event of violent outbursts or extreme behaviour, more subtle forms of problem behaviour can be addressed immediately by the educator. Regardless of what has caused unwanted behaviour, an educator as first responder should react compassionately. This study argues that the art educator in South Africa can design art courses to respond to problem behaviour in the classroom for the prevention of this kind of behaviour, which affects the concentration of a learner. Additionally, art courses could assist other educators to address problem behaviour in their classrooms. The basis for the arguments on behavioural matters primarily rests on the responsive and compassionate facilitation method informally termed a ‘trauma-informed’⁷ approach. Trauma-informed methods similarly are comparable to compassionate and responsive teaching. Literature reviews on this topic make use of the expression of ‘trauma’ as an umbrella term to describe “the inability of an individual or community to respond in a healthy way” to stress which

⁷ In this dissertation, “trauma-informed” refers to the vernacular of the contemporary South African educational environment. A trauma-informed school makes use of a layered approach that strives for recognising and responding compassionately to learners whose learning is affected by stress. All staff members at the school receive training and work together strategically to form a community of awareness in terms of behaviour, relationships, and an ability to regulate internal states in the learners, regardless of what the learner has suffered. Positive interventions are preferred to traditional disciplinary practices to address problem behaviour (Kaufman 2019).

negatively influences concentration and learning (Wolpow et al. 2011:xvi). In South Africa, trauma⁸ is intricately connected with political upheaval and oppression.

A group of researchers concerned about the statistics in the United States of America (USA) studied a flagship 'trauma-informed'⁹ school from 2012 until 2015 to measure stress symptoms in students (Crosby, Day, Baroni & Somers 2019:582). They found a considerable decrease in stress symptoms when curricula and facilitation methods responded to learners' distressed behaviour. They additionally acknowledged that race and ethnicity did not influence their findings and concluded that such pedagogy successfully improved learning (Crosby et al. 2019:582). Consequently, the educators and school staff at the flagship school reported a higher level of well-being in learners, which proved that responsive approaches could benefit both learners and educators (Crosby et al. 2019:590). Since the Annual South African Child Gauge report calls for a more holistic approach to address complex challenges across the many life domains of learners (Shung-King 2019: 86), I surmise that such a method might alleviate the large dropout statistics of South African high school-aged learners.

I further speculate that, instead of traditional disciplinary practices, various forms of positive intervention would best support learners. In the American flagship school study, the 'positive interventions' entailed the use of weighted blankets, drama activities, writing, exercises with gym equipment, fidget toys, gadgets and music interventions (Crosby et al. 2019:589). These interventions are provided in a special room called the 'Monarch Room' where learners are sent or may decide to go to when they feel emotionally unstable. The intention and goal are for the learner to return to class within ten minutes after having regained focus to concentrate in class (Crosby et al. 2019:589). As mentioned before, this school's 'trauma-informed' pedagogy is synonymous with compassionate pedagogy, which, in turn, aligns with curriculum responsiveness.

⁸In the context of this study, the term denotes stressful experiences that affect learning.

⁹ In this thesis, I am referring to this school as a flagship school.

Compassionate pedagogy is a new concept in South African schools. While a few educational institutions¹⁰ have recently started to acknowledge the value and relevance of such an approach, theoretically it was previously proposed for higher education in the early 2000s in the form of curriculum responsiveness. The Annual South African Child Gauge report acknowledges major gaps in basic and post-basic teacher training (Shung-King 2019:112) which further fuels my reasoning for suggesting that local professional development programmes or teaching qualification curricula should include such training. In the meantime, factors such as the ever-increasing levels of poverty, high crime rates, and strained home circumstances emphasise a need for addressing our roles as compassionate educators as this need has become unavoidable. Whole schools should work collectively as a community of awareness while involving the broader community to support learners as much as possible so that they will complete their twelve-year education.

Even though compassionate teaching pedagogy has proven successful abroad, numerous schools in poorer South African communities where adverse experiences are more evident cannot imitate the methods of international schools entirely. Many schools do not possess spare rooms or access to funding for equipment for such 'positive interventions' as those listed above. Nor would funding to train the educators of those schools possibly be forthcoming from the government. In some areas, to send a learner outside to play with a ball in the school yard poses too much danger. Accordingly, I admit that South African interventions should be accomplishable inside classrooms. Drawing can offer an opportunity to respond to a learner who has lost concentration in a way which does not echo conventional forms of discipline. In making use of drawings as an intervention, schools would not need an extra room because learners could remain safely inside the classroom. Even more, drawing does not demand much of a budget. As drawing engages the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor facilities to create a positive intervention, it may prove to be effective in calming a learner to induce improved focus for better learning.

¹⁰ Two of the participant educators admitted that their schools offered training in compassionate teaching.

This study was aimed to search for a positive intervention to address the lack of concentration which fuels the soaring dropout rates in South African high schools. The models that already exist internationally will have to be adapted to suit unique South African cultures and conditions. By this I mean that, even though compassionate pedagogy has been proved to be successful abroad, in this study I investigated whether drawing as a positive intervention may offer a low-cost alternative for South African educators to respond compassionately to problem behaviour. I further aimed to find out which drawing exercises completed within less than ten minutes could best provide similar restorative qualities as those provided internationally by the motor activities of the 'Monarch Room' in schools. The drawing exercises were meant to enable educators to continue with their class while disruptive learners regained focus. This was done by keeping compassionate and responsive methodologies in mind. I discuss the drawing research of the study in more depth in Chapter 5.

1.3 Problem statement

As is clear from the above discussion, the inability of learners to concentrate adequately in class is of central concern in this study. I argue that the art educator, when designing art courses, should be responsive to issues that might prevent high school learners from making academic progress. I propose that certain drawing exercises could possibly help educators to improve their teaching and learning environment to become responsive to individual learners, which, in turn, would improve academic outcomes. To accomplish the above and to be able to propose the most effective exercises to schools, I evaluated various drawing exercises with four educators from different educational institutions. These educators have all taught at high schools, and three of them have worked with high-risk learners.

The main research question was therefore formulated as follows: How and in what way could focused and purposive drawing exercises serve educators for use in the classroom as an intervention for disruptive practices?

The Sub-questions were as follows:

- a) What are the reactions of four educators at different educational institutions to the drawing intervention?
- b) Which drawing intervention worked best for the educators in the various learning contexts?

The aim of the study was to prevent or react to problem behaviour in the classroom to enhance teaching and learning through drawing interventions.

The objectives of the study were:

- a) To explore in what way focused and purposive drawing exercises could serve educators as an intervention for disruptive practices in the classroom.
- b) To explore the reaction to the drawing intervention of four educators at different educational institutions.
- c) To explore which drawing intervention worked best for the educators in their learning contexts.

1.4 Overview of the research methodology

This was a qualitative interpretive study. The research employed a case study design (Creswell, 2005). The research methodology involved non-probability sampled (Mouton 2001:100) case studies, which provided for empirical data collection. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, interviews and workshops were conducted online with four educators from different schools in the Western Cape to explore in what way focused and purposive drawing exercises could serve as an intervention for disruptive behaviour in the classroom. Educational institutions were selected according to my past and current relationships with the institutions and educators associated with the institutions. The sample consisted of educators from different racial and cultural backgrounds: one black, one coloured¹¹ and two white teachers. The process involved three online video sessions during which each educator tested the exercises themselves and gave feedback based on their perceptions and experiences of how the drawings could work in their classrooms.

¹¹ In some countries the term 'coloured' is offensive. In South Africa, the term is a neutral description that refers to a heterogeneous ethnic group.

The aim remained the prevention of or reaction to disruptive practices in the classroom which interrupt concentration.

I designed semi-structured interviews, which were completed with each participant individually at a time they considered suitable. The interviews were based on asking specific questions, which were recorded, and answers transcribed verbatim. See Appendices one and two for examples of the content of the workshop and questions. The sequence I followed was, firstly, a semi-structured interview to gain background information on the educator's past behavioural experiences with learners, and previous dealings with drawing, interventions, and training. Secondly, the workshop was organised with each educator to build a sense of familiarity with the intended drawing exercises. Each exercise in the series of drawings, were under ten minutes. Lastly, a final semi-structured interview followed. This dealt with the educator's feelings and reflections on the workshop drawings. Photographs of the drawings are presented in Chapter 5.

The data were analysed using inductive content analysis (Creswell 2005). The purpose of inductive content analysis was to arrive at meaning by analysing the data qualitatively, and to examine how the participants saw and understood the intervention. After the data were analysed, the educators had to approve whether their opinions and views were accurately represented in the research (Janesick 2000:393) to ensure honest reflection of conclusions in the writing in the thesis (Ali & Kelly 2012). The data of the study are covered in greater depth in Chapter 4.

1.5 Boundaries and limitations of the study

The focus of this study entailed drawing as a possible restorative device in mitigating the disruptive practices of learners in a teaching and learning environment. I realise that drawing alone cannot address all teaching and learning problems in the classroom, but I aimed to establish what kinds of drawing exercises could assist in calming a disruptive situation in the classroom. As the study entailed a mini-thesis, I could not research these aspects in depth, but it could encourage further studies to develop a set of appropriate and effective interventions that could serve schools in South Africa.

The case study was limited to the responses and insights of four educators, all of whom responded very positively to the exercises. Although their input was very perceptive, it does not prove that all educators in South Africa would be willing to make use of drawing as an intervention in their classrooms, or that all learners will benefit from a drawing intervention. More so, neither does this study prove that drawing improves cognition.

Apart from this, the study had to be conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, which held its own set of challenges. As I could not be physically present during the workshops and interviews because these were entirely conducted online, I believe certain cues and information had potentially been lost, specifically during the drawing exercises. In general, educational institutions were overwhelmed with having to adapt to online teaching, and it was difficult to make contact with many educators and their seniors. During the time of this study, many institutions were still operating remotely, and learners were in the process of having to return to their classrooms gradually. I thus relied primarily on the data collected from the interviews to formulate my conclusions.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 presents a general introduction to and foundation for the study. This chapter includes the problem statement, research questions, aims and motivations which drove the initial arguments for the investigation. A short description of the methodologies used to conduct the research is included in this chapter, which is further discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature. Pedagogy such as compassionate teaching and responsiveness served as the basis of the theoretical perspectives of the study. The enactionist learning perspective forms part of this chapter to drive conclusions on drawing. Concepts such as critical pedagogy, learner-centeredness and body-mind-environment were included to strengthen the theoretical perspectives.

Chapter 3 elaborates on drawing as an intervention. A discussion on gesture as supported by concepts of authors Betti and Sale (1986) is included. The chapter continues to discuss

South African and American educational institutions and policies, as the philosophies of compassionate teaching and curriculum responsiveness originated from these two countries.

Chapter 4 illustrates the research methodology utilised during the study. The research design is discussed in more detail and details of the data are systematically revealed in this chapter in support of drawing as an intervention.

Chapter 5 serves as an extension of Chapter 4. As such, the theoretical framework of Chapters 2, and 3 serves as a soundboard against which I pose the data that I have drawn from the interviews, workshop activities, and reflections. The data gathered from interviews, workshop activities, and reflections are based on responses from four participant educators.

Chapter 6 presents conclusions. In this chapter, the thesis statement is revised to formulate an answer. Specific examples from the thesis are included to summarise the main points of the practical research and to summarise and reflect on the findings of the research. Additionally, recommendations are suggestions for future research on interventions in education.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 Introduction

Educators occasionally need to go beyond academics to help learners address the physical, emotional, and social barriers that affect their learning. Therefore, it is vital to determine which tools would deal with problem behaviour stemming from adverse experiences that affect learners. In this chapter, compassionate pedagogy is discussed, with reference to the book *“The Heart of Learning and Teaching: Compassion, Resiliency and Academic Success”*, written by Ray Wolpaw, Mona M. Johnson, Ron Hertel and Susan O. Kincaid (2011).

The philosophies adopted by compassionate schools which are based on creating a learning environment of trust, safety, respect, and resilience, are indistinguishable from what is informally known as trauma-informed schools. Furthermore, compassionate teaching is here related to conceptions of critical theorists Maxine Greene and Paulo Freire. Following this, Ian Moll’s curriculum responsiveness, which is directed at the South African learning environment, is evaluated in comparison with compassionate teaching. Moll’s assertions are comparable with John Dewey, Carl Rogers and H. Jerome Freiberg’s theories. In turn, Dewey paved the way for the enactionist¹² learning perspective, on which I further elaborate after discussing curriculum responsiveness.

Together, the enactionist arguments of Elizabeth Gunter, Pierre Bourdieu, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Francisco Varela acknowledge the interconnectedness between the educator and learner. Their assertions indicate that drawing as an embodied performance involves creative cognition which draws from the body-mind-environment and includes a

¹² Enactionist theory is also described in literature as ‘enactivist theory’. In the context of this thesis, enactionist was preferred as was originally described by Francisco Varela. According to Varela, the enactionist approach consists of two main arguments. Firstly, he describes perception as perceptually guided in action and he, secondly, believes cognitive structures emerge from the recurrent sensorimotor patterns that enable action to be perceptually guided (Varela & Thompson & Rosch 1992:173).

complex network which can change constantly. As such, the sensorimotor aspect of drawing can influence behaviour as it could change identity and perception in the social environment of the classroom.

2.2 Compassionate teaching and learning perspectives

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network states that school staff, administrators and teachers can reduce the impact of stress in learners by recognising and responding to their needs and involving other professionals when necessary (Betti, Osborne, Lee, Self-Brown, Esnard & Lou Kelley 2018:586). Based on the philosophy of Getrude Morrow, the principles of compassionate teaching adopt this belief, and elaborates that stressed learners¹³ are inclined to withdraw, act aggressively, and regress to their childhood behaviour (Wolpow et al. 2011:xv).

While stress can manifest in a multitude of ways, a percentage of distressed learners does not exhibit any symptoms whatsoever (Krasnoff 2019:4). In all cases, learners will be prone to challenging behaviour, hence the necessity to approach all problem behaviour by assuming this to stem from stressful events, also called “setting events” (Chan 2015:87). Triggers function as reminders of previously experienced stressors and can range from sounds and smells, or events such as bullying or fighting (Crosby et al. 2019:585; Saxton 2019:9). More recently, researchers have been attempting to explain how setting events and problem behaviour affect learning. However, a compassionate pedagogy understands that learners struggling with problem behaviour can still build resilience by forming strong relationships with their educators. This is known to improve learning as the educator ameliorates a child’s behaviour (Krasnoff 2019:5) by removing the trigger whenever possible (Wolpow et al. 2011:87).

Wolpow et al. (2011:88) suggest learners should be provided with choices for a compassionate response to triggers. The authors list classroom interventions such as

¹³ According to compassionate school approaches, “stress” is understood as any physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension. Although stress is a normal part of life, continuous stress can overwhelm the learner, causing trauma which can lead to problem behaviour (Wolpow et al. 2011:9).

songs, special passes, walks and 'safe spaces' for learners to retreat to as a positive response to problem behaviour (Wolpow et al. 2011:88). As with the 'Monarch Room' used at the flagship school mentioned in Chapter 1, learners can go to these safe spaces voluntarily when they experience overwhelming feelings. Once in the safe space, learners can choose from numerous interventions, such as listening to calming music using headphones, engaging in scrapbooking, writing, and taking part in physical exercises (Wolpow et al. 2011:100; Saxton 2019:9). Wolpow et al. list a set of interventions different to the trauma-informed school discussed in the study by Crosby et al. (2019). From this, I propose the assumption that the only prerequisites for an intervention would entail the procurement of stronger relationships and safe places to offer healthy ways for working through stress. 'Compassion' in educators is therefore holistic, and is understood as actively alleviating the suffering of learners (Wolpow et al. 2011:xvi).

As a compassionate school tends to the learner as a whole, a paradigm shift at all levels is imperative to reshape the institution's culture, practices, and policies (Krasnoff 2019:6). Discipline is to be enforced in a non-threatening manner with an emphasis on positive behavioural support and intervention plans (Krasnoff 2019:7). Disciplinary actions can lead to judgments and feelings of isolation or rejection, which can trigger the learner's response. Therefore, educators should be better equipped for responding to learners to improve their learning and problem behaviour (Saxton 2019:8). Learners who are prone to problem behaviour are the most at risk of becoming unemployed or homeless during adulthood, as they tend to fail and drop out of school more often than learners who do not struggle with such behaviour (Crosby et al. 2019:585). Research has proven that removing learners from their classrooms as a disciplinary tool does not improve behaviour and is thus considered counterproductive (Saxton 2019:9). Due to practices such as expulsion and detention that can re-traumatise a learner, responses to problem behaviour should focus on de-escalating and redirecting the behaviour instead (Krasnoff 2019:8; Wolpow et al. 2011:xvi).

Neurologically, stress affects different parts of the brain, which causes various problem behaviours related to anxiety, hyper-arousal, and hyper-vigilance (Wolpow et al. 2011:10). Some examples are: the inability to calm down, meltdowns, over-reaction to mistakes,

increased forgetfulness, difficulty retaining academic learning, sleep disturbances, ineffective comprehension, sudden changes in behaviour, irritating others, poor judgment and impulsivity (Wolpow et al. 2011:11). While most learners recover from the effects of stress, supportive relationships and safe reliable places improve outcomes in learners who cannot recover. Secondary to this, learners who feel supported at school build resilience for better learning. It is therefore vitally important to recognise that learners should have their basic needs met before they are able to reach academic goals (Wolpow et al. 2011:17).

Social workers or counsellors must become involved when a learner is having trouble with violent behaviour or with managing emotions. However, understanding the factors that can influence a learner's behaviour, can equip educators as first responders to manage more subtle learning and behavioural problems (Saxton 2019:8). A compassionate educator should not be misunderstood for not attaining assertiveness, as academic standards, academic performance, high expectations and adherence to school routines should remain important. Difference is celebrated, and school staff members should look beyond the surface to consider any factors which might be at work in the learner's life (Wolpow et al. 2011:18).

Compassionate teaching highlights the need for an extensive list of professionals, such as teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, parents, social workers, counsellors, custodians, youth workers, and other external partners (Wolpow et al. 2011:18). In Chapter 1, I highlighted shortages of professionals and funding in schools in South Africa. It is thus questionable whether local schools can reach all the aims of compassionate teaching, hence the necessity for researchers to investigate which interventions might alleviate stress for better learning in South African classrooms. Furthermore, mentioning writing as a valuable compassionate method to enable learners to voice their emotional triggers (Wolpow et al. 2011:25) may not be applicable in a classroom where an educator is pushed for time. I believe my drawing exercises may be more convenient, as they are quick and easy to facilitate. Besides, writing and drawing share dialectical properties as both rely on a social context and active symbolism, which is discussed further in Chapters

3 and 4. Due to the relation between drawing and writing, I assume that drawing as such is not that far removed from the interventions mentioned by Wolpow et al.

Consequently, there is an interrelationship between compassionate pedagogy and critical pedagogy. Critical theory adopts a more political stance, as critical theorists tend to challenge the social constructs of society through reflection to identify power relations to further promote transformation (Lake & Kress 2017:63). Critical theorists hope to accomplish a more democratic and humane environment that nurtures different perspectives and creative outlets by means of dialogue or dialectic thought. Since critical theory points towards a non-traditional form of teaching in hope of social change (Breuning 2005:108), both critical and compassionate pedagogy acknowledge that learners should be given choices and control over their own learning.

Arguments by critical theorist Maxine Greene are greatly influenced by John Dewey (Greene 1998:13). Dewey is considered a forerunner of enactionism (Gallagher 2018:626) and will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. However, Greene integrates her reasoning on democratic teaching with the arts, which aligns with the strong sense of democracy in compassionate teaching (Aubrey & Riley 2016:7; Greene 1998:ix). The acknowledgment of writing as a creative outlet in compassionate pedagogy (Wolpow et al. 2011:25) correlates with the benefits of writing as described by Greene, such as empathy and the broadening of perspectives (Spector, Lake & Kress 2017:4). The emphasis on pluralism in critical pedagogy furthermore relates to the celebration of differences in compassionate classrooms. To continue, Greene and fellow critical theorist Paulo Freire both underline the crucial role that creativity plays in an imagined democratic and humane classroom (Shor & Freire 1987:3; Lake & Kress 2017:60). Greene claims that art making empowers the student, which relates to the empowerment of learners through offering choices and control over learning and behaviour in compassionate teaching (Darder & McKenna 2011:672; Wolpow et al. 2011:70). Freire's pedagogy moreover aligns with the compassionate teaching philosophy as both theories accept that powerless learners might be triggered and reactive (Shor & Freire 1987:18; Wolpow et al. 2011:71).

Although critical pedagogy often points toward the political while compassionate teaching does not, teacher-learner relationships nevertheless constitute a form of exercised power, especially when traditional discipline is concerned. If the learner feels threatened, misunderstood, or dominated, the power relation acknowledged by critical pedagogy forms a certain similarity with compassionate teaching. To Freire, the notion of critical consciousness promotes transformation and action toward radical hope (Lake & Kress 2017:60). Like curriculum responsive theory, compassionate teaching attempts to transform the whole school culture, which further leads to likeness with Freire's critical theory. Greene continues to explore Freire's notion of critical consciousness and radical hope, which refers to an awareness of being in the world. It draws from possibility, imagination, and social change to recognise, engage, and critique existing undemocratic social practices and institutional structures that promote inequalities and oppressive social identities and relations (Ibrahim & Rautins 2011:25). Likewise, compassionate teaching assists with self-awareness in making social change. The difference, however, lies in the fact that it is for resilience to manage stress better. More so, the educator who initiates drawing as an intervention assists the learner's own awareness and, in turn, offers an opportunity for social change.

Greene warns against teachers silencing their students when they express their awareness, while Freire proposes open dialogue as a vehicle for conscientisation (Spector et al. 2017:1; Breuning 2005:119). In compassionate teaching, learners' open dialogue and admittance of unease are encouraged. Learners can even remove themselves from the classroom to engage in interventions (Wolpow et al. 2011:74). According to Freire, such interventions deepen the awareness of the learner, which lines up with compassionate teaching (Ibrahim & Rautins 2011:26). Compassionate teaching assists learners to form an awareness of reactions in their bodies and from their environment irrespective of their behaviour (Wolpow et al. 2011:74).

2.3 Curriculum responsiveness

The concept of curriculum responsiveness is aimed at the wider economic and social demands of South Africa, in particular, and has become a topic of discussion during the early 2000s (Moll 2004:1). This type of 'responsiveness' relates to the curriculum of the

learner, which also links with studies of compassionate teaching approaches already discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Knowledge is understood as interpretative and transformative, as the process involves an act on the part of the learner which stems from existing understandings of the self and of others (Moll 2004:3). Although curriculum responsiveness was originally aimed at higher education, this approach can take on various forms as it relies on measuring whether an education programme meets the needs of a transforming society (Moll 2004:3).

Curriculum responsiveness came to the fore after the new outcomes-based curriculum was adopted to ensure a democratically determined educational domain in South Africa (Moll 2004:3). This theory forms a strong parallel with democratic teaching as argued by critical theorists and the compassionate teaching method. While curriculum responsiveness addresses the changing needs of teaching and learning to increase economic competitiveness (Moll 2004:4), I assert that due to the unsettling statistics of the South African education system, the high dropout rates, in turn, cause an economic deficit. Educational anthropologist Clark Erickson (1987), as cited in Moll (2004:4) first used the term 'culturally responsive education' to refer to the cultural discordance between teachers and marginalised learners. Erickson's pedagogy aligns with studies describing the need to address ethnic diversity in public schools and the disparity between homogenous teaching and the increasing heterogeneity of school learners (Phuntsog 1999:97). Thus, for an institution to be responsive, critical, transformative, and effective, knowledge should be reproduced based on local needs (Moll 2004:12). Although my study does not directly attend to ethnic diversity, I believe that it remains mindful of local needs due to the drawing intervention proposed as a cost-effective intervention.

Moll's concept is based on the assumption that academic performance improves once classroom instruction becomes responsive to the cultures of learners (Phuntsog 1999:98). Educators are expected to create learning environments to maintain the integrity of all the learners in the classroom for enhanced learning (Phuntsog 1999:99). This study shares that intention, namely, to understand and accommodate the diverse needs of individual learners, which would ensure enhanced learning by all. Furthermore,

responsive educators acknowledge that learners, when they do not feel valued, are likely to suffer from low self-esteem and alienation, which further impacts learning (Phuntsog 1999:100). Motivational conditions, such as inclusivity, enhancing meaning, a positive attitude, and engendering competence are included in responsive teaching (Phuntsog 1999:104). To continue, Moll asserts that responsiveness urges encompassing insight which includes psychological understanding of the individual learner, which is incorporated into teaching (Moll 2004:7). Again, compassionate teaching acknowledges the learner as reactive to adverse experiences, which aligns with the psychological understanding of the learner in curriculum responsiveness. Incidentally, drawing, as facilitated by the educator, is used as a tool to assist in regaining concentration, which is aimed at transformation as it leads to empowering the learner.

Comparably, in compassionate teaching, curriculum responsive theory, also known as 'qua¹⁴ learning', points to classroom and school activities that promote productive learning through increasing teacher involvement and teacher training (Moll 2004:7). Moll's arguments originate from student-centred learning, generally paired with Carl Rogers and H. Jerome Freiberg's *Freedom to learn* (1969) theory which involves a similar holistic approach. Rogers and Freiberg assert that learning should be meaningful, experiential, and focused on the process (Tangney 2014:267). Their theory includes purposeful active engagement, discovery learning, creating one's own understanding, building on prior knowledge, reflection and creating harmony (Tangney 2014:268). These elements relate to the way a responsive school is organised to encourage learners to think and act according to organised experiences (Fomunyan & Teferra 2017:197). However, a primary goal of curriculum responsiveness remains the safeguarding of the local needs of the learner and the society. This goal spills over into addressing the employment and economic domains, diversity and difference in classrooms, and the approaches and pedagogies of learning and discipline (Fomunyan & Teferra 2017:197), all of which relate to compassionate teaching.

¹⁴ 'Qua' denotes a learner-centered approach which includes the consideration of a learner's unique history, nature, and circumstance to impart and embed knowledge effectively (Moll 2004:7).

Rogers and Freiberg's concepts originate from a humanist approach, which is concerned about the "freedom, dignity and potential" of the learner (Tangney 2014:267). Similar to responsive and compassionate teaching, humanists approach learning holistically, and celebrate personal growth. The learner's needs are at the top of the hierarchy, and range from physiological needs, to safety, love, belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualisation for learning to take place (Tangney 2014:267). Their student-centred approach relates to the establishment of true relationships, emphatic and unconditional acceptance, and trust, all of which align with compassionate and responsive pedagogy (Roger & Freiberg 1994, as cited in Tangney 2014:267). Problem behaviour, according to a student-centred approach, diminishes within school connectedness (McNeely et al. 2002, as cited in Freiberg & Lamb 2009:102).

In part, student-centred and responsive concepts of empowerment, awareness and growth are situated in critical theory, such as described previously in this chapter. When educators offer their learners choices or opportunities to share responsibilities, and remain open towards learners' feelings and ideas, they place themselves in "the learners' condition" and, in turn, empower their learners (Freiberg & Lamb 2009:103). Many of the views on student-centred and responsive learning originate from John Dewey's thoughts on democratic teaching. Dewey claims that learning is based on life experiences and social interactions, placing the learner at the centre of the learning process (Aubrey & Riley 2016:6). In similar fashion to Moll, Dewey argues that learning should prepare learners for society (Aubrey & Riley 2016:6). His approach remains aligned with curriculum responsiveness, as learning should not only relate to subject content, but should include the accommodation of the unique needs of every learner (Aubrey & Riley 2016:8). Interconnectedness is thus important in both theories. In support of my own arguments on the use of drawing in response to problem behaviour, I see Dewey as remaining enthusiastic about creative and active solutions (Aubrey & Riley 2016:10) and his arguments for approaching learning from a social perspective further aligns with enactionism, which will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Curriculum responsiveness assumes that each learner has different needs and abilities. If the curriculum fails to respond to the needs of the learner, learning cannot be successful

(Fomunyam & Teferra 2017:199). What Moll highlighted almost twenty years ago in terms of curriculum responsiveness has not been integrated into schools yet (Gunter 2011:67). Instead, the call for responsiveness has failed and continues to fail in addressing the needs of the learner. I further argue that most South African schools display a lack of responsiveness, which in part allows for continuous dropout that ultimately increases the unemployment bracket. However, this does not mean that an educator cannot be responsive. Moll states that curriculum responsiveness can be practised in various forms (2004:4), which means that the educator can employ what Moll envisaged during the facilitation of drawing. Perhaps the expression of the many forms that responsiveness can take, borrows from Dewey's lack of specifying the application of the theory in practice (Aubrey & Riley 2016:12). Curriculum responsiveness is therefore best understood as "doing something" (Moll 2004:3), which supports the notion of making use of drawing as a positive intervention in reaction to problem behaviour. I argue that drawing can acknowledge heritage, build meaning, engage in a variety of instructional strategies for diverse learning, and can develop self-value, all of which is necessary for responsive teaching (Moll 2004:5).

Drawing as an intervention acts as responsive mediation which keeps the learner's integrity intact, while modifying the classroom environment to meet the needs of the drafter and the rest of the group. It offers choice, which further safeguards the learner's social and cultural domains, as the learner practises the body-mind *experience*. Gunter particularises curriculum responsiveness as a fitting approach to facilitating drawing (Gunter 2011:67) as it acknowledges the individual as the centre of experience (Moll 2004). The interaction between a responsive educator and learner is all-encompassing (Gunter 2011:67). The experientiality of drawing brings about transformation, because the learner translates and transforms understanding through mark making (Gunter 2011:230) while engaging in an intensity of focus that is emotionally restorative and intellectually stimulating, thereby countering problem behaviour. Conventional disciplinary practices are rejected as they are replaced with an approach aligned with student-centredness. Following the emphasis on the individual experience of the learner in this section of the chapter, it seems natural to include enactionism; a result of Dewey's theoretical legacy.

2.4 Enactionist learning theory

Academic performance plays a central role in the high school, as the learner is being prepared either for higher education or for entering adult life. Concentration, behaviour, and learning are important benchmarks for the prevention of failing or dropping out (Wolpow et al. 2011). In taking the enactionist view, this study acknowledges that educators and learners are interconnected, and such connections are fundamental and explicit for compassionate teaching. Drawing as an embodied construct may act as a restorative device to build resilience and facilitating better concentration and learning, as drawing combines sensory, somatic, intellectual, and psychological performance (Gunter 2011:1). Creative cognition is understood primarily from a bodily knowledge and stems from historicity in which the environment is perceived from a constantly adjusting biological and historical configuration (Benevides & Gomes 2018:125). Sensorimotor coordination and autonomic aspects of the whole body drive cognitive functions, whereas complex cognitive functions such as reflective thinking or contemplation are manifested in actions (Gallagher 2018:628). As memory and imagination are integrated with perception and action (Gallagher 2018:629), the imagination becomes engaged by an action such as drawing.

Enactionist theory is not based on the brain, body, and environment only, but on the body-brain-environment; firstly, as a conceptually fused entity, and secondly, as paired with gestalt¹⁵. The brain does not present itself as elevated above these elements, but rather as merged with the body and environment. In education, this perspective implies that an intervention can take place in any part of this system to get results (Gallagher 2018:625). The enactionist perspective therefore suggests that an intervention (such as drawing) initiated by the educator at any point (such as when a learner shows problem behaviour), may generate positive results in facilitating learning. Accordingly, an intervention directed at the body or environment simultaneously incurs intervention in the brain. When changes

¹⁵ Viktor von Weizsäcker applies a metaphor of the gestalt-circle to demonstrate that the brain functions as one element on the circumference of radial instructions, along with the body and environment (Gallagher 2018:630). In education, this idea suggests that an intervention at any point on the *circle* will generate successful results. However, this leaves room for speculation about the most promising intervention point on the circle. Studies suggest improvements in cognitive enhancement, such as children struggling with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders. Yet few studies suggest clear improvements in learning (Gallagher 2018:631).

in the bodily habits or the experienced environment shift, plastic changes in the brain occur simultaneously (Gallagher 2018:631). Traditionally, educators would regulate learners to neutralise the environment by making them follow a strict protocol, such as sitting quietly or leaving the classroom to blow off steam. Gallagher contends the importance of a positive arrangement of bodily and environmental elements and highlights that such interactions should become more active and creative (Gallagher 2018:635), which further deploys my argument for the use of drawing.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Dewey is considered a forerunner of enactionism. He argues that learning is a social construct that arises from the functionality of society (Douglas 2015:402). Social and cultural difficulties should be addressed by the educator to modify classroom conditions to meet the needs of the learner. Enactionists believe the world is experienced in an action-oriented manner (Gallagher 2018:626). Drawing from the many ideas of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology and the general cognition theory of Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela (Reid 1996:203), enactionism understands learning as fluid. This ability of learning allows the learner to function non-dualistically as an individual in a medium (Reid 1996:204). While some educators would argue for the importance of teaching subject content and not social skills, the need for a transformative approach such as suggested by Dennis Sumara and Brent Davis (1997:106) is accentuated by enactionism. Learners act on occurrences in their immediate home and school environment and can often not control their bodily reactions such as in 'acting out'. Educators engaging with learners who have experienced adverse events should consider the whole system of which they are part of. As it is possible to include epistemic objects in research on human cognition (Barrett 2019:809), drawing as facilitated by the educator supports the enactionist idea that the human mind contains a system of adaptations that can be utilised in response to recurrent problems. The educator specifically uses this opportunity to enact learning by responding to learner behaviour to readjust the class environment.

The environment that educators employ in learning is intertwined with pedagogy, beliefs, cultural backgrounds and so forth (Li 2018:1345). Such an environment co-evolves with

educators and learners during the drawing process through which a response on behaviour occurs. Dualism between mind and body, self, and the world, and thinking and action is thus rejected (Li 2018:1341), as reality is situated in neither the world nor the mind. According to Varela (1991:100-101), cognition is not the representation of a fixed world elaborated on by a fixed mind, but instead involves the performance of a world and a mind based on a history of the multiple actions being executed in the world. Cognition is therefore understood as correspondence between the subjective and objective in the world (Sumara & Davis 1997:107). Varela further asserts that sensorimotor capacities are lodged within the biological, psychological, and cultural context of the drafter. His concept of cognition refers to the inward production of enaction, which emerges from the sensorimotor patterns that enable action to be perceptually controlled (Varela et al. 1992:173; Gunter 2011:18). Likewise, drawing allows for the development of a complex network, which accommodates the figuring out of the perceived world.

As a form of personal dialogue, drawing inspires the ability to view the world critically (Gunter 2016:109) and therefore it can assist in the behavioural adjustment of the learner. Pierre Bourdieu advocates that any form of engagement between human and life-world, including engagement via creative actions, constitute the “internalisation of externality and the externalisation of internality” (Bourdieu 1977:72, as cited in Gunter 2016:109). During drawing (a creative act), the body is considered a living structure going through experiences in the setting of cognition, which is called embodiment (Li 2018:1342). The biological perspective provides the notion of co-emergence that accepts the interdependence of the learner, the environment, and the interaction between the two. In short, the interaction is structurally coupled and co-emerges (Li 2018:1342). Bourdieu explains how habitus engulfs the embodiment of the self and the drafter’s enactions (Bourdieu 1990:190, as cited in van Grunsven 2018:135; Gunter 2016:110). He argues that the *self* along with embodied dispositions, continuously shape trait together with perception (Gunter 2016:110). These dispositions emerge from early life experiences and continuous social interactions that appoint the nervous system (Bourdieu 1990:190, as cited in van Grunsven 2018:115) and manifest in behavioural, cognitive, physical and mental practices (Nash 1999:176, as cited in Gunter 2016:109).

As the learner engages in exchanges of symbolic power with others, such as with educators and classmates, habitus allows for a change of identity in which the learner grows. Bourdieu argues that due to a change in perception the power to affect the learner in relation to others is initialised (Bourdieu 1990:190, as cited in Van Grunsven 2018:119). Varela's concept of disposition engulfs embodiment, which he relates to enaction. Both theorists agree that habitus and enaction employ the unconscious, and not the conscious (Varela, Thompson & Rosch 1992:173). Embodiment and enaction thus explain the unconscious as the origin of drawing, the place from where its characteristic appearances evolve. Varela's concept of interactivity proposes a correlation between two entities, which simultaneously takes place during the activity of drawing. He adds that enaction as a perceptually motivated performance, constitutes cognitive structures which emerge from continuous sensorimotor cycles that allow enaction to be guided perceptually (Varela et al. 1992:173; Gunter 2016:110).

Merleau-Ponty similarly explores embodiment in the nature of habit. He asserts that conscience should be understood as pre-reflexive intentionality, which, in turn, is linked with corporeality. Merleau-Ponty detaches from notions of the restriction of consciousness (Benevides & Gomes 2018:120), which relates to Varela's conception of enaction. Furthermore, Merleau-Ponty's arguments on language relate to Bourdieu's concept of fields of practice such as art and education, which constantly adapt due to their social positions. Merleau-Ponty describes conversational relationships as 'coupling' (1962, as cited in Fenwick 2001:47). Merleau-Ponty argues that dialogue enables consensus during which thinking and acting are not subjective. Learners adapt and learn as they are influenced by symbols and actions which affect learner behaviour and their contexts (Fenwick 2001:47). Structural coupling aligns with the concept of unpacking interconnectedness, as argued by Varela (1987, as cited in Fenwick 2001:47). Structural coupling further refers to 'co-emergence' or 'mutual specification', which results in a "commingling of consciousness" of cognitive abilities and actions arising from dialogue (Sumara & Davis 1997:110). In teaching, this perception encourages the acknowledgment of understanding actions as ecological and not 'monological' (Sumara & Davis 1997:112).

Learning, being reliant on teaching, cannot be determined by it (Sumara & Davis 1997:115), because understanding is a complex interconnected network of experiences (Fenwick 2001:47). Teaching and learning are therefore recognised as occurring in the relations between the learner, the class, the accepted truth, the new emerging truth, the actual, and the possible (Sumara & Davis 1997:119). Teaching, similar to the facilitation of drawing, is a cultural practice, which occurs within and among complex systems from multiple phenomenal domains. An awareness that such domains exist simultaneously and the manner in which fractions of those domains co-emerge and inform each other is vital for the transformative and reproductive systems associated with teaching (Sumara & Davis 1997:120). Learning is therefore a constant invention and exploration which is generated by the relationship between the consciousness, identity, action, interaction, objects and structural dynamics of complex systems, whereas behaviour relies on an awareness invented through interacting with complex systems (Fenwick 2001:48).

Drawing presents an opportunity for the learner to adjust his or her identity. As a 'visible text' drawing functions as an individuating process (Gunter 2011:2) which can address problem behaviour. Part of this process is the experience of drawing, which transcends into perception as it can alter perception, identity, and behaviour. The facilitation of drawing as an intervention is best theorised through an enactionist approach, as it combines the idea of drawing as a mind-body-environment performance.

2.5 Synthesis

Investing energy into dealing with emotions and behaviour in the classroom can engender resilience to improve academic performance and self-worth. By making use of compassionate teaching pedagogy, which cannot be differentiated from trauma-informed or curriculum responsive practices, learners may be liberated from the struggles related to their adverse experiences. Educators play an especially important role as first responders when they offer a safe and predictable environment for learners. Compassionate teaching requires the implementation of various interventions to defuse problem behaviour. Problem behaviour often arises when a learner is unable to react healthily to symptoms of stress. The whole school, community and many professionals

should work together to support learners and aid in connectedness. Traditional forms of discipline are thus replaced with positive interventions.

Curriculum responsiveness, which reflects student-centred arguments, suggests compassionate teaching for the specific South African educational domain. As with compassionate teaching, the learner's needs are placed at the centre of the approach. When local learners' cultural needs are met, the economic and employment markets could be positively influenced. A cost-effective drawing intervention offers the educator an opportunity to be responsive to problem behaviour while remaining faithful to the unique local classroom context.

For enactionist theorists, cognition forms part of a complex network existing between the learner and the environment. Together with gestalt, an intervention during any time of the process of learning provokes a change in perception. An activity such as a drawing exercise combines the bodily, cognitive, and environmental shifts needed for a change in perception. Bourdieu, Varela and Merleau-Ponty's concepts of embodiment best explain how the nature of habit, symbolic power and dialectic exchanges in drawing, together with the educator and other classmates, encourage a change in identity which, in turn, drives the ability to make plastic changes in the brain for behavioural changes.

CHAPTER 3

Contextualising the Study

3.1 Introduction

In recent years, more attention has been focused on the value of educator-based research. The relevance of educator-based research acts as a starting point in this chapter. Since the study was focused on drawing as an intervention which was based on drawing exercises designed by me, as an art educator, the discussion leads towards the pertinence of drawing. I have noticed how learners tend to quiet down during drawing exercises and wanted to explore the possible effects of drawing as an intervention on learners and how that could assist educators in their classroom contexts. There are many different routes that an educator can follow during the facilitation of drawing. In this study, distinct emphasis was placed on gesture drawing as such drawings offer many benefits to the drafter. These will be discussed in more detail in this chapter, with frequent reference to Claudia Betti and Teele Sale's *"Drawing, a Contemporary Approach"* (1986).

A discussion based on the educational institutions and systems affiliated with the four participant educators follow below. These teachers were from different educational institutions in the Western Cape Province. For the sake of anonymity, the educational institutions consulted in this study are not named, and only the most relevant information associated with each educator is included.

Collectively, the educational institutions associated with the educators offer the same National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level four¹⁶, which coincides with grade twelve. The institutions are large players in the South African education domain and accommodate many of the unique educational needs of the country. The discussions were completed in accordance with the chronological order according to which the study was conducted. Due to a strong perceived link between American literature on

¹⁶ In this study, grade twelve includes all qualifications with the same NQF Level four as grade twelve.

compassionate teaching theory and consideration for the South African education environment, this chapter includes brief comparisons between the USA and South Africa.

3.2 Gesture drawing as an arts-based intervention

Exclusionary discipline practices have been proven to negatively impact the psychosocial well-being of the learner and have been associated with an increase in dropout rates in high schools (Crosby, Day, Baroni, Somers & Pennefather 2020:156). Much literature¹⁷ shows that disciplinary practices should address problem behaviour with sensitivity and respect (Crosby et al. 2020:158). In this study, I aimed at determining whether particular drawing activities designed by me could be used as an intervention by an educator in South Africa for the purpose of responding to problem behaviour to improve concentration.

It is well accepted that drawing has a therapeutic effect and encompasses intellectual benefits (Betti & Sale 1986:23). Since it promotes deep engagement and lasting impressions, it could possess unmatched potential in education (Leavy 2018:3). Since many international studies support the conviction that drawing can be used as a positive intervention¹⁸ in education, I acknowledge that sensory techniques used in a series of drawing activities in a safe and supportive environment may assist the educator to help increase learners' awareness of states such as cognition, emotion, and behaviour (Crosby et al. 2020:159). Betti and Sale explain this by asserting that art assists with realising individuality and involves the making of self, while developing a personal style (1986:23). I already argued in Chapter 2 that cognition is directed at seeing and looking in a manner that absorbs perception without reserve while drawing (Gunter 2011:75). This perception is part of the phenomenological experience, where the gestural in drawing forms a relation between the movement of the body and the self (Gunter 2011:109).

¹⁷ One such example is that of the Monarch Room for which sensory integration was studied as an alternative to exclusionary discipline to assist learners in regaining their concentration (Crosby et al. 2019:589).

¹⁸ Jenna Ward and Harriet Shortt (2012:436) found that offering students a space to synergise emotion and cognition led to the affective response during drawing being positive because it allowed an uninterrupted and self-directed voice away from the educator's critique (Shortt & Ward 2012).

A follow-up study on the Monarch Room¹⁹ was conducted in 2020. It was determined that educators will make use of alternative disciplinary practices when given the opportunity to do so (Crosby et al. 2020:165). As this particular study focused on American teachers, I could not presume that South African educators would feel the same. Based on the findings of the follow-up study and the four participant educators, on which I elaborate in Chapter 6, I surmise that many other local educators would be willing to make use of a drawing intervention in their teaching. The large classes²⁰ in South African public schools, together with a lack of specialists and school psychologists, were factors that I considered during this study. Furthermore, teachers entering the workforce often report feeling unprepared and unsupported in the attempt to address the behavioural needs of learners, resulting in many teachers leaving the workforce (Chan 2015:57). This matter admittedly was mentioned by a participant educator in this study and is elaborated on in Chapter 5. I, in turn, anticipate that teachers, if presented with options to choose from for interventions to address disrupted learning, such as a drawing intervention, might remain at their schools for longer.

Relative to behaviour, educators know their learners and can observe when a child is behaving differently. Educators who have developed an awareness of problematic behaviours occurring in their classrooms can begin to do research and develop interventions of their own to maximise learning in their classrooms (Chan 2015:88). I argued in Chapter 2 that compassionate theory and curriculum responsiveness²¹ best suit the current climate in South African classrooms. Learners start on a course toward

¹⁹ As mentioned in Chapter 1, the study involved testing several interventions which were offered to high-risk learners as opposed to traditional forms of discipline. The participating scientists determined that the interventions were successful and promoted the well-being of the learners (Crosby et al. 2019).

²⁰ Class sizes in poorer communities comprise between fifty and eighty learners, making it difficult for educators to manage their classrooms (Pooley 2016:648).

²¹ In Chapter 2 I discussed how compassionate teaching and curriculum responsiveness can assist educators' response to problem behaviour to improve concentration. South African learners face many challenges, resulting in high dropout rates, which may add to the country's unemployment figures. Traditional forms of discipline, which wastes valuable learning time and causes adverse responses in learners, are therefore counterproductive.

dropping out between grades seven and nine; long before their final year of education (Samel, Sondergeld, Fischer & Patterson 2011:97). The value of interventions, especially school-based interventions, to promote social and emotional health in learners is being appreciated increasingly in education (Cortina & Fazel 2015:35). I therefore trust that educators possess the ability to develop successful interventions to redirect the concentration of learners towards better learning.

There are various examples of educators being successfully involved in school-based art interventions. I found it fitting to mention two such studies: An American school that offered an arts-based intervention twice per week to a selected group of learners suffering from behavioural and emotional problems reported a large reduction in disruptive behaviour (Cortina & Fazel 2015:36) and a music teacher in Canada who used a drawing activity during recess to mediate disruptive behaviour at a primary school also noted a significant improvement in behaviour (Morand 2013:243).

The teacher was not a therapist, the school was not a place of therapy, and none of the actors in the activities could be understood as able to establish a diagnosis or align interpretations of the drawings with the potentially aberrant behavioural issues of learners. The behaviour of the learners was primarily addressed from her role as music teacher (Morand 2013:244). I would like to stress that this study adopted a comparable role. The research remained in the visual arts domain of knowledge and in the field of art education. I am not a therapist, and I have not made any diagnosis. As an arts-based study, the potential of drawing was considered from a philosophical understanding “of the body” as it engages in art making as a way of knowing (Leavy 2018:5). Because I am a visual arts educator and have witnessed the benefits of drawing in my learners, I explored gesture drawings, which involved scribbling, contour, and mass drawing, with elements such as line, texture, and symmetry.

The intention of gesture drawing exercises is to invoke the essence of swift, non-measured movement (Roberts & Riley 2012:65). The drafter consequently employs a physical process without the pressure of creating a formally completed artwork. This

physical process can be observed in the traces of the produced drawing (Roberts & Riley 2012:65). Kimon Nicolaïdes originally designed the principles of gesture drawing through his cross-contour and modelling exercises aimed at fostering a tactile connection which emerges from touch, movement, and vision (Cooper 2018:122). Betti and Sale, whose writing on gesture drawing relates to that of Nicolaïdes, motivated my decision to utilize such drawing in this study.

Betti and Sale connect the kinetic effect of a gestural approach to the gaining of concentration (1986:26), which supports a primary goal of this thesis. Their assertion correlates with the findings of various researchers. In 2009, researcher Jackie Andrade reported better concentration following doodling (Singh & Kashyap 2015:7). Andrade's study additionally found that doodling by itself, not the amount of doodling, improved concentration (Singh & Kashyap 2015:9). Furthermore, brain researcher Srinii Pillay affirmed that spontaneous drawing strengthens memory, relieves stress, and improves focus (Pillay 2018:1). He explains how time-limited drawing can activate your brain to allow focus when an individual finds it difficult to concentrate, feels stuck or have moments of insecurity (Pillay 2018:1). The drawing exercises that I used were likewise time limited²². I align gesture drawing with doodling and spontaneous drawing, as the gesture exercises that the educators completed in this study involve mark-making which mimics the kinetic effect mentioned by Betti and Sale.

One of the gesture drawing exercises used in this study, required the application of contours, which required the drafter to concentrate on surfaces, edges, and shapes as the lines and marks were meant to trace features. Another drawing exercise that formed part of this study closely relates to mass drawing. Mass drawing is understood to act in a similar fashion as contour drawing. The difference is that mass drawing mainly adopts a sculptural approach, reflecting the drafter's understanding of the mass, density, or weight of shapes, and the drafter needs to focus on observing shapes and volumes to build up mass on the surface of the paper (Cooper 2018:122). Both drawing exercises incorporated an objective

²² Each drawing exercise should be completed within ten minutes to revert attention back to schoolwork quickly once the educator had granted the distracted learner the opportunity to draw. The learner can choose one exercise from a series of eight drawing exercises.

element, which, according to Betti and Sale, employs the conveyance of information (1986:4).

I have already hypothesised in Chapter 2 that a process of drawing, such as gesture drawing, is generally understood as a cognitive experience. Besides the inclusion of a cognitive experience, drawing additionally involves durational experiencing in and through drawing, which are irretrievably part of the irruption of marks on paper (Gunter 2011:37). Betti and Sale interpret this idea by drawing a parallel between time, presence, and movement within the process of drawing (1986:31). Betti and Sale identify a secondary involvement of time assigned to the time response of eye movements that progress back and forth across the room and objects (Gunter 2011:112). Thirdly, gesture and contour drawings are explicitly mentioned to involve time in an opposing way. Gesture, which employs quick movement, is associated with direct thought, while contour examines more carefully and steadily (Betti & Sale 1986:24). Moreover, a list of alternative benefits is assigned to gesture drawing, such as the exploration of unexpected abilities, the recording of energy, visual connection, empathy, vitality, and immediacy (Betti & Sale 1986:48). However, a prime advantage of gesture drawing is that it allows what is known and felt intuitively by the drafter to be moved into the conscious self (1986:48). This advantage prompts my position to argue that the educator, by making use of gesture drawing exercises in an intervention, will assist a learner to increase their awareness of different states of cognition, emotions and behaviour, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (Crosby et al. 2020:159).

Scribbling, which is associated with two of the gesture exercises in this study, can be compared to a 'graphical monologue' (Longobardi, Quaglia & Iotti 2015:8). With the line becoming an extension of the hand, it expresses the same affective meanings and intentions (Longobardi et al. 2015:4). Many researchers of embodied cognition advocate a link between hand gestures and spatial imagination (Cooper 2018:125). This refers to an imitation which is understood to stem from previous experiences that brings forth the coupling of creation and enactment (Cooper 2018:129). The line use associated with these exercises carry the drafter's intent, or they can stand alone (Betti & Sale 1986:101). The

quality of the line determines the drafter's personality as it corresponds with content and mood, in the same manner as handwriting (Betti & Sale 1986:101). As such, drawing exercises used in this study are subjective drawings, they are therefore understood to express emotions and psychological truths (Betti & Sale 1986:4).

In line with the ability of line to express moods and truths, those moods and truths are subject to change during an intervention, as suggested by the enactionist²³ perspective. It would be natural to propose that scribbling and line exercises that express affective meaning and intentions are fluid and incomplete, as these experienced feelings can be influenced and are intended to be influenced. Art historian Norman Bryson elaborates on Betti and Sale's arguments concerning line. In his "*A Walk for a Walk's Sake*" (De Zegher 2003:149, as cited in Fay 2013:20) Bryson proposes that drawing poses a divergence that exists in the present. He mentions that drawing "in the time of unfolding" carries a continuous incompleteness. In other words, Bryson describes the temporal act of drawing as a state of becoming, which refers to drawing as possessing a future-orientated status (Fay 2013:20).

Bryson continues to relate the status of viewing to drawing. Viewing is constricted to the present which does not necessarily end. He contends that the possibility to see more in an artwork exists continuously (De Zegher 2003:150, as cited in Gunter 2011:138). Many theorists argue the importance of the viewer. The set of drawing exercises that I designed are intended to be completed by the learner while facilitated by the educator. An external audience is not of main importance as the drawing exercises are intended to support the well-being of the learner who is engaging with the exercises. According to Betti and Sale, drawings created for the *self* do not affect the enjoyment which can still be gained from the act of drawing (1986:13). Thusly, the educator will not necessarily be considered a viewer. I would like to align texture with Bryson's notion of viewing as an endless continuation of seeing. Like line, texture is one of the elements of art (Betti &

²³ The enactionist perspective suggests that an intervention initiated by the educator at any point during the learning process may generate positive changes in habits, as interventions lead to plastic changes in the brain (Gallagher 2018:631). By applying an enactionist perspective, I contended that an intervention such as drawing could assist in a change of behaviour that may improve concentration.

Sale 1986:126), but is associated with the experience of a surface. It plays an important part in what the body can experience through the sense of touch and, in turn, can influence perceptions and conceptions of the world (Cranny-Francis 2011:591), which relates to Bryson's endless seeing (of the world).

One of the final drawing exercises used in this study included texture to invite a sense of the tactile by using specific positions of the marks to convey information. Betti and Sale describe various kinds of textures in their literature, such as actual, simulated, and invented texture (1986:126). Many marks can be invented by the drafter to translate the surface of an object. Texture, which is considered one of the most important qualities of an artwork (Betti & Sale 1986:126), establishes a physical relationship with the object that invites the drafter to follow folds, curves, rhythms, and differences discovered in the quality of a surface. The drafter visually and proprioceptively feels a way across the object with the eyes, while constantly negotiating with the body (Cranny-Francis 2011:598). As the surface is mapped out by the drafter during the process of conveying texture, an embodied engagement within the process comes to light (Cranny-Francis 2011:599).

It can be argued that the symmetry drawing exercise included in this study does not belong entirely to the gestural branch of drawing. However, the exercise was designed in a way that includes many of the components of gesture drawing covered in this chapter. Symmetry translates to the mirroring of an idea that sets up a natural internal dialogue in the created shapes (Du Sautoy 2008:15), which, in my opinion, is much like scribbling. The mind automatically searches to find meaning in symmetry since the natural world has programmed us to be attracted to it (Du Sautoy 2008:279). In the past, scientists like Hermann Rorschach developed a symmetrical ink blotch test to unlock his patients' unconscious mind. He argued that a response to a symmetrical shape reveals psychological truths (Du Sautoy 2008:276). This is in a state of agreement with Betti and Sale's conception of gestural line. Carl Jung likewise used the symbolism contained in mandalas to study the human condition (Du Sautoy 2008:276). The symmetry drawing alternatively works with modes of memory, which is situated within Betti and Sale's notion of time. This mode of memory delves into the unconscious, as the drafter's response to the shapes is intuitive (Du Sautoy 2008:278).

In Chapter 2, I discussed the enactionist perspective to interpret drawing as an embodied language; the practicing of which can instill positive changes in learners' behaviour. The designed drawing exercises used in this study can thus be understood as the combination of the external and internal in a visual-material-visceral sense which is enacted by the movement of the body (Schneckloth 2008:279). In *"Migrations of Gesture"*, Carrie Noland (2008, as cited in Schneckloth 2008:280) highlights that gesture drawing notably transmits codified meaning, which further aligns with the arguments of Merleau-Ponty, Varela, and Bourdieu²⁴. Noland further expands on the enactionist perspective, asserting that drawing can simultaneously convey an energetic charge which she names a 'vitality affect'. Vitality affects flood the meaning which is transferred into gesture drawing (Schneckloth 2008:280). Bryson (1983:122, as cited in Gunter 2011:141) correspondingly relates visual constructs as functioning in the same paradigm as Noland's view on codified meaning. Bryson collates the visual schemata produced by drawing marks as "topographical" and related to language (1983:122, as cited in Gunter 2011:140). Gunter attests Bryson and Noland's arguments. She asserts that gesture lingers in language in the same way gestural drawing entangles itself with gestural behaviour (2011:116). The perception, experiences, differences, and existence of the drafter and the mark lie within drawn marks (Gunter 2011:113). Like a personal voice in language, gestural marks possess a personal voice that entails enaction of embodiment (Gunter 2011:116). The personal voice of gesture drawing is better understood as a primordial form of communication with a symbolic "pre-verbality" (Bryson 1983:122, as cited in Gunter 2011:118). Moreover, gesture drawing, in accordance with speech, retrieves information from the mental lexicon (Butterworth & Hadar 1989, as cited in Morsella & Krauss 2005:416).

²⁴ Varela asserts that cognition involves the inward production of enaction, which emerges from sensorimotor capacities which are lodged within the biological, psychological, and cultural contexts of an individual. Action is therefore perceptually controlled. Bourdieu built on this concept by arguing that the self is embodied with dispositions which manifests in behavioural, cognitive, physical, and mental practices. As an individual converses with others, identity can change habitus, which in turn changes the individual's perception. Both Varela and Bourdieu adopt the view that habitus and enaction involves the unconscious. Merleau-Ponty states that dialogue employs cognition and actions as ecological (Gunter 2011:18).

While many theorists argue that language evolved from gestural communication, the silent articulation of gesture in drawing remains faithful to a complex system of semiotic meaning found in language. Socio-linguist Michael Halliday (1987:183, as cited in Roberts & Riley 2012:67) links the drafter and the drawing to a complex dialectic in which the drawing actively symbolises the social context (Roberts & Riley 2012:67). His social semiotic theory complements Noland and Bryson's perspectives while drawing from the enactionist notion to pair the body-brain-environment with gestalt. More so, Halliday relies on three variables: field, tenor, and mode (Roberts & Riley 2012:68).

Firstly, field refers to the social mediation that occurs during the drawing process and on which the drawing process draws, while tenor is understood as the role of the social relationships between the drafter, subject matter, views, and the impact of the variations in these relationships²⁵. Finally, mode refers to the symbolic interaction which describes how the drawing is constructed (Roberts & Riley 2012:68). Drawing therefore in part represents experiences of the world (Roberts & Riley 2012:68). As an example, field can refer to the educator and the classroom environment, tenor is the learner having to complete drawing exercises, and the mode is the interaction between the series of drawing exercises, the pencil, paper and the desk where the learner is sat. While the drafter engages in bodily movement during gesture drawing, an additional narrative is added to the construction. In other words, marks, pressure, and the speed of movement demonstrate the potential of gesture drawing as a means of exploring social relations (Roberts & Riley 2012:72). It can therefore be assumed that drawing (such as gesture drawing) has the potential to store solutions, which recognises conflicts and possibilities (Akin 1978, as cited in Bilda, Gero & Purcell 2006:588).

The social relations are explored from the learner's cultural legacy that is brought into the classroom. This poses an opportunity for responsive teaching as argued by Moll (2004, as cited in Gunter 2011:228). Because the educator encourages behavioural changes compassionately instead of using conventional discipline, the gestural drawing

²⁵ The variations in relationships of tenor are found in various aspects such as the balance between the drafter, viewer, culture, subjectivity, and subject matter. I am using the theory to propose drawing as having similar abilities as language and do not resolve field, tenor and mode entirely, as this is a mini thesis.

intervention can both influence and convey the cultural and social perceptions of the learner. Gunter argues that drawing facilitation encourages each learner to use their abilities in a way whereby the reflexive habitus theory ensures influencing the drafter, while developing and transforming the body of knowledge (Gunter 2011:290).

By offering the learner a choice of different gesture exercises, the educator allows the learner to feel empowered by his or her own abilities and thus gently guides the learner towards transformation. In using drawing instead of conventional discipline, the drawing intervention aligns with the philosophy of compassionate teaching. Gunter reminds that, for drawing facilitation to be deemed responsive, diverse interest should be incorporated into the facilitation (Gunter 2011:230). In giving the learner an opportunity to choose between various exercises and their subject matter (Gunter 2011:230), I would argue that, while the drawing exercises I designed for the most part remained faithful to Moll and Gunter's arguments concerning responsiveness, a range of different low-cost interventions such as drawing, physical exercise, music and so forth would be necessary. Drawing as a low-cost solution to effect intervention does not demand exorbitant funding like the interventions of international schools do. The simplicity of the instructions comprising the drawing exercises can easily be understood by the educator, easing the task of clearly and effectively conveying such instructions to the learner. These elements would suit the current classroom environments of South Africa. I elaborate on the classroom environments in the next part of this chapter.

3.3 Contextualising South African and American schools

The educational backgrounds of South Africa and the USA differ in terms of policies, timelines and various complexities associated with segregation. Like South Africa, the USA has also struggled with racial challenges. Learners in the USA were segregated²⁶ racially, as Native American, African American, and Mexican American learners were isolated from white learners in the USA (Powers 2014:30). In turn, the South African Apartheid system unequally divided and funded racial groups such as African, Indian, Coloured and

²⁶ African American segregation originally was legally recognised in the USA, while Mexican American segregation was not. Yet, Mexican American learners did not have access to equal benefits with white privileged learners (Powers 2014:30).

White learners (Chrisholm 2012:85). Apart from this, language²⁷ was used as a tool for segregation in the USA, comparable to education enforcing Afrikaans in addition to English in schools during Apartheid (Beukes 2012:128). While both countries have implemented many policies in education in the attempt to secure equal education, the white populations continue to be at the top of a racial hierarchy, shaped by discriminatory histories (Powers 2014).

When the African National Congress won the first democratic election in 1994, ending Apartheid, South Africa declared full universal education²⁸ for all South Africans (Chrisholm 2012:85). As schools had formerly been used as sites²⁹ of the Struggle³⁰, it was necessary to rebuild the education sector, because discipline and the quality of education had diminished. South African initiatives for the transformation of education included redressing equity, democracy and quality aimed at international credibility. A serious challenge involved imperatives for social reconstructivism and economic instrumentalism (Shafer & Wilmot 2012:42). In education the injustice of the previous curricula had to be corrected. Values of social justice, equity and development were added to foster values of human rights, anti-racism, and anti-sexism (Shafer & Wilmot 2012:43).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges in South Africa are integral to the policies of the new government. UNESCO furthermore highlighted the importance of TVET colleges for economic development and the reduction of poverty (Lamb 2011:60). The first educational institution (SOT1³¹) associated with a participant teacher in this study, is a TVET college. This college, which is located in Cape Town, seeks to close the gap between the social and economic divide South Africa currently faces. It

²⁷ Language is used as an example but was not the only tool used to enforce racial segregation.

²⁸ Universal education refers to equal basic education to all learners without discrimination.

²⁹ During Apartheid schools were used for protests such as go-slows, marches, and strikes by teachers and learners.

³⁰ The Struggle is an informal term which refers to the fight for freedom during the Apartheid regime.

³¹ As previously stated, the details of the educational institutions consulted in the study were preserved to protect the identities of the participant educators. Therefore, codes were used for each institution, such as SOT1 which stands for School of Teacher 1.

attempts to raise the levels of skills in the workforce and improve access to education and training to previously disadvantaged learners in and around Cape Town (Lamb 2011:60). Thus, an important role that this TVET College plays in learning is in the democratisation of the education system.

The TVET-system is designed to provide learners with the foundational skills required by higher education and assists in the transition from school to the workforce (World TVET Database South Africa 2014:6). TVET colleges offer NQF Levels two to four, with NQF four considered as equivalent to grade twelve. After the completion of grade nine, the learner can choose to remain in high school to complete grade twelve, find employment, or pursue a National Certificate Vocational (NCV) certificate at a TVET college. After reaching this level of education, the learner can attain further higher college education (World TVET Database South Africa 2014:8-9). SOT1 offers a range of National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (NATED) programmes, with some falling within the creative sector.

I compare Career and Technical Education (CTE) in the USA with TVET colleges in South Africa. CTE courses are understood to be an essential part of the American education system (Blowe & Price 2012:1). CTE courses mostly are offered at high schools, which ties in with the South African TVET Levels. Unlike TVET colleges in South Africa, CTE courses seem to be undervalued, as no mention of them was made during the No Child Left Behind era, which in effect lasted for more than a decade in the USA (Blowe & Price 2012:2). I will revisit this Act at a later stage, but literature highlights that this Act placed further pressure on CTE courses due to the Act's narrowing effect on curricula (Amrein & Breiner 2002, as cited in Blowe & Price 2012:2). During the 1940s, most Americans did not complete their schooling (Rumberger 1987, as cited in Gottfried & Plasman 2018:325). To address the high dropout rates, the federal government introduced the Smith-Hughes Act to fund training of vocational education teachers and programmes (Gottfried & Plasman 2018:326). As time progressed, vocational education became firmly integrated into high schools and has more recently been rebranded and expanded into CTE courses (Gottfried & Plasman 2018:326). These courses, which are comparable to school-level TVET programmes, are aligned with career opportunities and hands-on, job-

related skills. CTE-courses further resemble TVET colleges because the learner is able to move on to two-year vocational college programmes after completion (American Institutes for Research, 2013 as cited in Gottfried & Plasman 2018:328).

While TVET and CTE courses attempt to address gaps between rich and poor communities, the inequality of educational opportunities among learners has continued to exist even though Apartheid was abolished in South Africa. The government not only attempted to bridge the divide using TVET colleges, but also applied Quintile categorisation to public schools (Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:106). Quintile categorisation is based on the socioeconomic status of the community in which the schools are located. Five Quintile categories are used for the purpose of allocating financial resources to address the issues of socioeconomic status and disparity in access to education. Quintile one schools are understood to be the most economically disadvantaged, while Quintile five schools are considered the wealthiest (Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:106).

The second educational institution associated with this study (SOT2) is a Quintile five dual medium Afrikaans and English high school in the Northern suburbs of Cape Town. Based on its location, it can be assumed that this school could be related to what was formerly known as a Model C school. Model C schools historically were white public schools (Battersby 2004:280). Generally, these schools were considered to have high quality teaching, better discipline, safety, and a chance for improved opportunities, all at a considerable cost (Battersby 2004:281). The Western Cape reportedly possesses more fee-paying public schools than most of the other provinces in South Africa (Van der Berg & Gustafsson 2019:77). As a science and mathematics-focused academic fee-paying Quintile five school, the school fees are relatable to the ten percent of schools in the Western Cape with the highest tuition fees per annum (Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:113). Learners in Quintile four and five schools have on average been found to outperform the other Quintile schools (Reddy et al. 2012, as cited in Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:107). This is due to fee-paying schools supplementing government funding with school fees which enable the schools to employ additional teachers to keep classes smaller, while the rest of the funds are used for other teaching and learning resources (Mestry & Ndhlovu 2014, as cited in Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:113). The learners at SOT2 are obliged to take

mathematics until grade twelve and cannot take creative arts subjects above grade nine. I suspect this is due to the recent past and present curriculum policies³² of the country.

South Africa introduced an Outcomes-based education (OBE) curriculum in the late 1990s to counter the legacy of Apartheid in education (Maddock & Maroun 2018:192). Although the OBE curriculum was a sophisticated student-centred system, it introduced an overload of challenges³³. The government reviewed its philosophies and the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) system was published in 2012 and initiated into high schools between 2012 and 2014 (Pooley 2016:644; Department of Basic Education 2014). SOT2 employs the CAPS system which only expects creative arts to be offered until grade nine because it is a public high school. Due to its focus on excellence and subject knowledge, the curriculum expects high academic performance, mandating educators to spend more time on literacy, mathematics, and science education (Pooley 2016:648). Unfortunately, this further threatens the creative arts (Pooley 2016:648).

The CAPS system has been criticised for not remediating the difficulties associated with the OBE system. In light of this criticism, it can be assumed that the lowered status of the arts derived from the OBE system simply affirmed its low status by the time the country phased in the CAPS system (Maddock & Maroun 2018:192). Art education therefore remained of low priority, with the CAPS system allowing generalist educators without adequate expertise to teach these subjects, which resulted in the continuous “dumbing down” of art education (Westraadt 2011:160; Herbst, De Wet & Rijksdijk 2005:261, as cited in Pooley 2016:643).

³² During the 1990s, South Africa implemented an Outcomes-based education (OBE) curriculum which was replaced by the Curriculum Policy Statements (CAPS) system between 2012 and 2014. OBE resulted in the grouping of all creative subjects into ‘creative arts’ which led to a downgrade of the status of art subjects. This status was ultimately inherited by the more recent CAPS system.

³³ OBE aimed at teaching mechanical skills and democratic principles to build the nation according to the outlines of the Constitution of 1996 (Pooley 2016:642). Unfortunately, the massification of this policy overburdened educators, resulted in poor performance, and ignored processes due to complex achievement outcomes (Pooley 2016:642). In an attempt to offer solutions, The White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage of 1996 was reviewed in the early 2000s and all arts were grouped within the Arts and Culture learning area, which is still in use today (Pooley 2016:642).

Compared to the Quintile categorisation of South African public schools, all public schools in the USA are free. I compare the systems used in South African public schools with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) of 2001 and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, as these policies were implemented at the same approximate time as the South African OBE and CAPS systems (Taylor, Brouillette & Farkas 2018:266). George Bush's NCLBA supported a standards-based educational reform on the premise of improving academic outcomes. Standards-based education sets high and measurable goals (Neel 2018:8). Schools are penalised³⁴ if they do not meet the required standards or make sufficient progress (Taylor et al. 2018:265). By 2014, at least 94 percent of learners would attain proficient and above scores in mathematics and literacy (Taylor et al. 2018:264). While this deserves merit, the strong emphasis that standard-based education places on mathematics, science, and literacy of the NCLBA correlates with the CAPS system. Similar to the CAPS system, the NCLBA led to an alarming decline in art education at schools (Taylor et al. 2018:265). Poor communities were the most affected by this phenomenon, as schools prioritised other subjects above the arts (Taylor et al. 2018:266).

Barack Obama signed the ESSA to redirect decision-making from the federal to the state level (Neel 2018:8). Although academic standards were to remain, decisions regarding education goals and evaluations were not subjected to the debated standards-based education any longer (Peet & Vercelletto 2016:2). ESSA education meant that states could delegate funding for arts education at the state and local level (Neel 2018:8). Although arts education is acknowledged in the policy as being part of a well-rounded education, many schools continue to enrol underachieving learners for remedial classes in other subjects, resulting in less available time for the arts (Dunstan 2016:27). It appears that the transition from the NCLBA to the ESSA, like the change from OBE to CAPS in South African schools, has not had much influence on attitudes towards science, mathematics and literacy or arts education.

Apart from difficulties involving art education, the impact of policy reforms and broad spending of national funds in South Africa resulted in poor service delivery, inefficiency,

³⁴ Schools failing to make sufficient progress were penalised by cuts in funding, while continuous failures in progress placed schools in danger of being closed (Taylor et al. 2018:263).

corruption, and limited skills in government. Poverty continues to limit learners' access to quality education at all levels (Pooley 2016:641). Many learners are struggling with limited resources with many schools lacking basic services such as electricity or running water (Pooley 2016:641). In many situations, South Africa responds to the needs of communities through the collective action of stakeholders such as the government, community-based institutions, public and private training providers, and NGOs. These partnerships ensure that necessary needs are met nationally and locally (World TVET Database South Africa 2014:6).

The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) is one of the three major training authorities in South Africa (World TVET Database South Africa 2014:13). Together with partnerships with stakeholders, the QCTO warrants credible standards in training (World TVET Database South Africa 2014:10). The third educational institution (SOT3) in this study, which is located in the Southern coastal region of the Western Cape, is one such stakeholder. The training offered by this semi-self-sustainable NGO aims to achieve community development objectives while attracting income from the tourism industry (Biggs, Turpie, Fabricius & Spenceley 2011:1). Overall, these projects have delivered mixed results in local economic development in South Africa (Kiss 2004, as cited in Biggs et al. 2011:2), but SOT3 has been a top performer in the country, having earned a number of international and local awards³⁵.

Partnerships with existing stakeholders in the private sector, such as SOT3, enable smaller organisations of upfront funding, which leads to sustainable long-term job creation and skills development (Biggs et al. 2011:6). Because these organisations are already well-established, they easily absorb marketing costs and have an existing client base to network with (Biggs et al. 2011:6). SOT3 uplifts the struggling communities surrounding the area by offering QCTO accredited skills development programmes to thousands of youths. Their skills development programmes are in accordance with NQF levels and prepare learners for employment by improving their levels of literacy and numeracy skills alongside occupational skills development (QCTO Council of South Africa 2020).

³⁵ I cannot list the awards as it would compromise the ethical agreements with the organisation and participant educator.

Not much literature is available to enable matching SOT3 with a direct American equivalent. I speculate that the reason rests on the fact that the USA is a high-income country, whereas South Africa is a developing country, having been downgraded recently to junk status. Hence, American organisations are more likely to engage in humanitarian work elsewhere rather than in the USA. However, I compare SOT3 with an education-reform organisation in the USA called Teach for America (TFA). This organisation is known for placing many well-performing graduates in schools that are struggling to staff schools (Maier 2012:10). TFA differs from the South African SOT3, as SOT3 uses their own venues and educators. However, since TFA does placements in low-status schools to improve the quality of teaching and academic performance of learners in struggling schools, and SOT3 works with some of the poorest communities in the country, both organisations share the same philosophy (Maier 2012:11). Both SOT3 and TFA rely on philanthropic donations and emphasise upliftment (Ahmari 2017:29). As TFA was hailed as an effective teaching strategy for achieving high academic goals in the USA (Harding 2012:61) it further correlates with SOT3 as both organisations³⁶ have thus been celebrated for doing successful work.

The fourth educational institution (SOT4) provides formal art education to at-risk learners at a high school on the Atlantic seaboard. As a low Quintile school, SOT4 offers free education and receives more funding per learner from the government than those in Quintile four and five schools (Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:106). Reddy et al. (2012, as cited in Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:107) highlighted that grade nine learners in lower Quintile schools are susceptible to lower academic achievement in mathematics, while grade twelve learners tend to achieve lower scores in general, and suffer higher dropout rates (Mpofu 2015, as cited in Ogbonnaya & Awuah 2019:107). Thus, lower Quintile schools deserve all the assistance they can find. Case studies investigating at-risk learners in poor communities have found that test scores improved in schools that enrolled learners in art courses (Kratochvil 2009, Rabkin & Redmond 2003, Strickland 2008, as cited in Dunstan 2016:28). The school principal of SOT4 has since made the organisation's

³⁶ TFA and SOT3 were too far removed from arts education to include such a discussion. The other educational institutions do include such short discussions on arts education.

formal art programmes compulsory for all grade eight and nine learners during school time, while the higher-grade learners can choose art as an elective.

As SOT4 has a partnership office in the USA, they make use of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) model. MEL aims at promoting critical thinking and learning and engages in assumptions of how change takes place (Stein & Valter 2012:11). Ideas and solutions are generated to develop a thorough grasp of the need revealed by the problem, its causes, and how it affects the involved community. Next, a project is designed, activities are planned, and the outcomes are finally evaluated (Scotland's International Development Alliance 2020:7). At the end of the process, ideas for improvement are reflected upon (Scotland's International Development Alliance 2020:7). The organisation combines their MEL-processes with the 'Theory of Change', which originates from the USA.

Theory of change is a project-specific evaluation usually associated with grants and funding agencies (Reinholz & Andrews 2020:1). Carol Weiss developed this theory during the 1990s in the USA, where it gained popularity as an approach to development planning and MEL (Reinholz & Andrews 2020:2; Stein & Valter 2012:6). A theory of change is a specific approach for clarifying underlying assumptions and using outcomes of a project as a tool for planning, implementation and evaluation of an intervention which is used to achieve long-term goals (Reinholz & Andrews 2020:3). In other words, it is a theory to show how and why an initiative works (Stein & Valter 2012:9). It can therefore be noted that existing American pedagogy may be adapted for successful learning in South Africa. This further suggests that comparing two diverse countries might still offer solutions to educational difficulties.

3.4 Synthesis

Applying conventional forms of discipline to improve concentration are not effective. When given the option, educators are willing to apply alternative methods in their classrooms. Furthermore, educators are ideally positioned to effectively solve problems in the classrooms appropriately. Due to the cognitive, behavioural, and emotional effect of drawing, as Betti and Sale have argued, the potential of drawing as a tool to address

problem behaviour in education is unlimited. Gesture drawing exercises offer numerous benefits that, as an intervention, can help learners to regain concentration. As the process of gesture drawing engages and negotiates with the body, it forms an inner dialogue with codified meaning and an energetic charge that allows for the potential to change one's perception. Although a series of gesture drawing exercises aligns with compassionate teaching methods, different forms of cost-effective interventions such as dance or physical exercise are needed to be entirely responsive.

Both South Africa and the USA have struggled to counter the effects of their earlier policies of segregation. Many schools still do not offer quality teaching and inequalities still mark the educational systems. In many instances, the status of art has suffered. TVET colleges are much in line with CTE programmes, as both offer skills and vocational development courses aimed at reducing dropout rates. The Quintile system of South Africa helps the government to allocate funding to schools. Quintile four and five schools are fee-paying, whereas Quintile one to three are free. All American public schools are free. Both the OBE and CAPS systems of South Africa the NCLBA and ESSA in the USA favour literacy, mathematics, and science. Organisations outside of schools have been used in both countries to uplift learners in the poorest communities of the countries. Together with funding and established business plans, the South African QCTO and the American TFA organisation share the same philosophy, as both strive to improve the academic performance of learners and enhance the quality of teaching. Apart from different schools and organisations, the South African education system can adapt methods from the USA, such as the no-fee-paying school which successfully implemented the American theory of change.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This study was designed to evaluate the perspectives and insights of educators to determine whether drawing as an intervention could assist learners to regain lost concentration. Educators are aware of their work environments and best understand from experience the dynamics of their classrooms and the various kinds of problematic behaviour typical of learners. The insight and understanding that educators gain in finding solutions for such learner behaviour drove and supported my endeavours to explore gesture drawing processes as potentially effective interventions that would improve the concentration of such learners. This study was therefore designed to link to empirical research, as it was based on the experiences and observations of educators. The idea for this study originated from my experiences in classrooms over the course of ten years. The educators who participated in this study originated from a range of typical South African educational environments³⁷. In the following chapter the methodology followed for the study is discussed in more detail to clarify how the research was planned, approached, and executed.

4.1.1 Research approach and paradigm

An inductive approach was developed to test the theory of drawing as a compassionate and responsive intervention (Babbie 2010:24). The outcome of the inductive approach generated the need for additional theory (Bryman 2016:711), as further research on learners and other interventions designed by educators became necessary to develop thorough evidence to support or contradict the use of low-cost interventions to improve the concentration of disruptive learners in South African classrooms. General and

³⁷ SOT1 is a TVET college, SOT2 is a Quintile five mathematics and science school, SOT3 is a QCTO-based organisation, and SOT4 is a low Quintile non-fee-paying school utilising an external organisation for creative arts education.

probable conclusions were drawn from the evidence, which, as relativist ontology³⁸, relied on observations based on the way educators understood their environments (Bryman 2012:71).

An interpretive paradigm closely related to the specifics of the observations dictated how the research was to be conducted and interpreted (Bryman 2012:71). Methodologies such as interviews and participant workshops³⁹ were conducted during this study. As part of the interpretive paradigm, the interviews and workshops allowed for reflection based on the distinctiveness of the educators' insights against the natural order of their classrooms and educational experiences (Bryman 2012:28). Furthermore, the participation of the educators allowed for dynamic action research. The effectiveness of the drawing intervention was thus assessed from the point of mutual ownership, as both the educators' and my own thoughts drove the study (Bryman 2012).

4.2 Research design

This research was based on phenomena observed and measured during this study, which refers to a qualitative interpretive investigation (Creswell 2005). Qualitative research best supported the analyses of the non-numerical data gathered from the participant educators during this study. To employ the phenomena, a case study was used as a research design to find meanings, opinions, and experiences from participant educators.

Case studies are influenced by constructivist claims that truth is relative and dependent on perspective. This means that, as a research design, the collaboration between the participants and the researcher remained close, which enabled the participants to share their opinions (Baxter & Jack 2008:545). Case studies thus allowed for detail and greater depth during data collection (Denzin & Lincoln 2018:342).

³⁸ Social constructions may enter the way social research questions are formulated or carried out (Bryman 2012:32). Relativist ontology therefore accepts the existence of multiple truths since reality is not distinguishable from the subjective experience. In other words, reality is bound by the human experience and vice versa (Levers 2013:2).

³⁹ None of the educators requested data or materials, but I had a process in place to supply each participant with a 2Gig data bundle and a delivery of standard stationery if needed. The exercises could be done on any paper and with any medium.

4.3 Sample selection and data collection

In qualitative research, sample sizes tend to be small. Overall, ten educators were invited to participate in the research, but four non-responses and two declines were reported, as many educators were working from home, making arrangements to return to work, were overwhelmed by their new workloads, or under pressure due to the impact of COVID-19. The sampling size consisted of four educators, each from a different educational institution, cultural background, and ethnicity⁴⁰ typical of the Western Cape population. I focused on a smaller size, as the study involved a mini-thesis and a small group of four educators would ensure a better relationship during the process, as compared with larger groups (Marshall & Rossman 2016:44). The sample selection I employed fell under general non-probability sampling (Mouton 2001:100). The fact that the educator sample reflected populations of the Western Cape leans towards non-probability sampling belonging to quota sampling (Bryman 2012:203). As a group, the educators were employed by various educational institutions⁴¹ in the Western Cape, had experienced problem behaviour in learners, high-risk learners, and a variety of teaching contexts.

For the case studies, I employed a workshop and two semi-structured interviews⁴² with each participant. These interviews were carefully scripted and conducted in a specific sequence for the collection of empirical data. The list of questions covered specific topics, and I made use of an interview guide (Bryman 2012:471). The educators mostly had much leeway in how to reply to the questions (Bryman 2012:471). Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the workshop and interviews were completed individually online, which meant that I had to make use of a form of 'multi-site' cases (Marshall & Rossman 2016:150). During the interviews, I asked follow-up questions not specified in the interview guide, to obtain further clarity. The workshop was structured, as each participant completed an identical

⁴⁰ In this study, one educator was black, another coloured, and two were white. The educators differed in age, ranging from twenties to sixties.

⁴¹ The participant educators have all worked with similar age groups and academic levels, and at various high schools and educational institutions.

⁴² See Appendices one and two for the interview questions and drawing exercises.

series of ten-minute gesture drawing exercises⁴³ which began with an orientation drawing and ended with an identical drawing to wrap up the workshop (Bryman 2012:277). The sequence of the study commenced with an interview, then the workshop drawings were completed, to be followed by the second interview. Each session was conducted separately, at convenient times suggested by the participants. In total, the first interview took approximately fifty minutes, the drawing exercises an hour and a half, and the final interview thirty minutes.

4.4 Capturing data and ethical considerations

All the empirical research was done online, with a combination of using Zoom video calls and WhatsApp. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The drawings were photographed by the participants and sent to me digitally, in accordance with COVID-19 regulations. The recordings, photographs and transcriptions were saved on my personal computer, which was password protected, and backed up on an external hard drive which I shall keep in my safe for the next five years⁴⁴. I assigned codes to each participant and kept both the educational institutions and the identities of the educators confidential and anonymous.

Before the research was conducted, various ethical clearance processes were followed. The Western Cape Education department and the principals or heads of departments of the educational institutions where the educators worked were approached as gatekeepers. The ethical committee of the University of Stellenbosch, my supervisor and my co-supervisor were involved throughout the process to guide and advise me. Once I had received permission from the gatekeepers, I contacted educators and sent consent forms to the four educators who were willing to participate.

The four educators were informed of all the details of the study and understood beforehand that they were not obliged to participate or could choose to withdraw at any stage during the research without penalty. The educators furthermore granted

⁴³ The ten-minute-long drawing exercises were meant to reflect a timeframe similar to that of the compassionate flagship school discussed in Chapter 1.

⁴⁴ I intend to destroy the empirical data after five years.

permission for the photographs of their drawings to be used, and they knew that data from the study would be published. As research participants could be placed at varying degrees of risk during a drawing process due to its expressive qualities⁴⁵ (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole 2013:28) I requested permission from a therapist who was willing to assist in the event of a participant feeling triggered in any way. However, the educators reported that the drawing exercises were pleasant and the therapist was not contacted. The participants did not receive cash for participating, but I did send each participant a surprise gift voucher to show my appreciation a week after the data were collected.

4.5 Data analysis

The data were analysed using inductive content analysis (Creswell 2005). The purpose of inductive content analysis was to arrive at meaning by analysing the data qualitatively, and to determine how the participants saw and understood the drawing intervention. I systematically searched for meaning to communicate my findings in the study. I specifically looked for patterns, themes, explanations, interpretations, and generated theories during the analysis. After the data were analysed, the educators were given an opportunity to indicate whether they were satisfied with the results and whether their opinions and views were accurately represented in the research (Janesick 2000:393).

4.6 Validity and trustworthiness

To avoid deception, the data remained unchanged (Bryman 2012:134). I tried to reveal the data as truthfully and honestly as possible and kept promises such as confidentiality (Bryman 2012:134). I attempted to counter subjectivity by not influencing the thoughts of the educators with my own opinions beforehand or during the interviews. During the interviews and workshops, the educators were given ample time to convey their unique perspectives. I did not select answers to manipulate findings, and instead included conflicting opinions, such as included in Chapter 5.

⁴⁵ I admit that recalling previous memories could trigger the participant. However, none of the questions were directed at experiences related to the educator's personal lives. Instead, questions directed at the educators asked them to recall previous incidents involving problematic behaviour and experiences with learners. In the event of a participant expressing discomfort, a therapist would have been contacted immediately. No such discomfort was expressed by any of the participant educators.

4.7 Synthesis

Data collection for this study was completed by means of qualitative methods such as in case study design. Methods such as semi-structured interviews and workshops were utilised to gather meaning from the four participants. During the planning of the research, the sample size of the population, as well as the way in which data were collected, analysed, and stored were considered. Ethical clearance processes served to protect the institutions, researcher, and participants against harm.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTING THE DATA AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

This thesis investigated drawing as an intervention to assist with improving concentration in high-school-aged learners. I proposed that educators were to facilitate the intervention which consisted of a series of drawing exercises in a compassionate⁴⁶ and responsive⁴⁷ reaction to disruptive behaviour. I was motivated to conduct the research and further motivated by shocking statistics when I realised that many learners in South Africa face various forms of stress at school, in their communities and their home lives due to adverse experiences⁴⁸ to which they are exposed. To avoid further academic difficulties⁴⁹, learners overwhelmed by problems should receive adequate, appropriate, and effective support from educators instead of traditional forms of punishment.

This chapter presents data collected from four educators from different educational institutions⁵⁰ in the Western Cape. The research focused on the insights, reactions, and experiences of the educators investigated by means of two interviews and a drawing

⁴⁶ Based on the arguments of Getrude Morrow, compassionate teaching thus attempts to help learners build resilience to obtain optimal learning by offering learners support, as problem behaviour is linked to stress. (Wolpow et al. 2011:xv).

⁴⁷ Curriculum responsiveness is aimed at the unique South African educational environment as directed at the wider economic and social demands of the country. Theoretically it aligns with concepts of compassionate teaching as it adopts the notion of learning to be holistic, interpretive, transformative (Moll 2004:4).

⁴⁸ Learners in South Africa are at a high risk of being exposed to adverse experiences caused by high crime rates, bullying, violence, poverty, and negligence (Shung-King et al. 2019).

⁴⁹ Besides lost learning time once a learner is removed from a classroom, the learner may feel isolated and rejected. Studies have shown that learners may give up on their academic performance and are at risk of dropping out or failing (Krasnoff 2019:7).

⁵⁰ I discussed the four educational institutions in Chapter 3. In short, the four educational institutions were a TVET college, a Quintile 5 school, an QCTO-organisation and a private organisation which places trained educators in low Quintile schools in at-risk areas.

workshop⁵¹ During the study I explored *how* drawing exercises could serve as an intervention in the learning contexts of the educators, and which drawings were deemed most suitable, since I could not assume that educators would be able to imagine a drawing intervention based on the positive experiences I have had with my learners in the past. It was important to ascertain the educators' attitudes towards such an intervention. The first semi-structured interview, which I discuss in the first part of the chapter, explored the background and classroom experiences of the educators. My intention was to determine whether other educators observed similar behavioural and academic difficulties to what I have. The second part of this chapter showcases most of the drawing exercises completed by the educators, including general observations, and further comments by the educators. Feedback on the drawings during the second interview follows the workshop discussion, which incorporates their reflections on the drawing exercises and photographs of the drawings that the educators discussed during the final interview.

5.2 The participants

The educators collectively represented some of the diverse populations found in the Western Cape and their experience stretched across four decades⁵².

BMT1⁵³ has been teaching since 2005 and currently lives in Khayelitsha, Cape Town. After working at centres, prisons, and jails, he became a high school teacher and shortly thereafter joined a TVET college⁵⁴ (SOT1) where he has been teaching Business Economics, Entrepreneurial Business Management and Design subjects for over a decade.

⁵¹ The first interview took approximately fifty minutes. Following the first interview, an approximately hour-and-a-half long drawing workshop consisting of eight drawing exercises was completed. After the workshop, a final interview of approximately thirty minutes was conducted.

⁵² BMT1 was born in the 1970s and is black; WFT2 was born in the 1980s and is white; WFT3 was born in the 1960s and is white; and CMT4 was born in the 1990s and is coloured.

⁵³ BMT1 is meant to refer to Black Male Teacher One. WFT2 refers to 'White Female Teacher Two', while CMT4 represents 'Coloured Male Teacher Four'.

⁵⁴ TVET is an acronym for a Technical and Vocational Education and Training college.

WFT2 started teaching in Cape Town during 2011 and has been teaching at various primary and high schools ever since. She recently joined a mathematics- and science-oriented Quintile five high school (SOT2) in the Northern suburbs where she teaches English, Physical Education, and Life Orientation.

WFT3 settled in a rural area in the Southern coastal region of the Western Cape. She teaches at an organisation (SOT3) that offers QCTO⁵⁵-recognised subjects to previously disadvantaged youths who have a background of poor-quality education. Although she has been teaching a variety of subjects for over four decades at a number of schools and colleges, she currently teaches English, Maths Literacy and Hospitality subjects.

CMT4 is an experienced teacher who was involved in youth development in the NGO-sector, before moving on to teaching Creative Arts and Life Skills at local schools during the mid-2010s. He joined an organisation (SOT4) with international links that provides at-risk low-Quintile schools with creative arts teachers across the Atlantic seaboard.

5.3 The interviews and workshop

The following two sections reveal findings which are based on the interviews and drawing workshop conducted for this study. Direct quotes and completed drawings of the participant educators are included in these sections.

5.3.1 Presentation and discussion of findings during the first interview

During the first interview, the educators acknowledged awareness of the emotions of their learners, and a general sympathetic understanding of the daily struggles and difficulties their learners face in their personal and school environments:

BMT1: “You wouldn’t believe the stories that we hear every day. You know that most of our students come from very poor backgrounds and you find that they come and tell us that their house was burnt to the ground, and also they’re being mugged

⁵⁵ QCTO is an acronym for The Quality Council for Trades and Occupations.

on their way to the college. And most of the time they don't even come early to the college, because they can't go out in the morning around five or six o'clock because they are afraid of being mugged ... So, you have a lot of that too."

WFT2: "Learners either aren't following the class, or they're distracted in the sense that they are unhappy."

WFT3 "I think that poor self-image has caused a lot of disruptive behaviour, but it all comes back to abuse and socio-economic influence. Socio-economic influence has had a major impact on the area."

CMT4 "Right now, I work for an organisation that works specifically with high-risk schools in high-risk areas. It's abuse, it is neglect, it is substance abuse. It's everything. I would guess it's about ninety percent of them."

It was confirmed that problem behaviour has had an impact on learning in the educators' classrooms, which supports my conviction that extra tools are needed to respond effectively to such behaviour. The educators additionally included many of the difficulties, such as violence, bullying, and stress which have been linked to problematic behaviour (Shung-King et al. 2019:45; Crosby et al. 2019:585):

BMT1 "There was one point where a particular student was mocking another student's work. So, what he did, he went outside. He punched the window, and the glass cut his fist. He stayed home for about a week after that before he came back ... "

WFT2 "There is constant disruptive behaviour ... I find that a lot of learners who are disruptive ... tend to want to turn the entire class around to shift the learning ... "

WFT3 "Recently, I have had students that have been involved with home abuse ... I have had some students that often came to class under the influence of drugs, causing chaos in the classroom. The students are acting up half of the time, sometimes its

hunger too. It's hard for an unemployed or poor student to fit into the organisation. They try to show off. We are a five, even above five-star organisation, and you get these kids from the poor areas of the Eastern Cape⁵⁶ who are not used to these environments."

CMT4 "It ranges from talking to fights to being generally disruptive. It's funny because I thought when I started at the specific school - There was one kid that was severely bullied. He always came to my class, just to sit ... Obviously just to be safe, and I allowed him. You won't even guess why he was being bullied ... He was being bullied because of where he lived. His dad worked in a rich area, on one of the properties there. And so, they were allowed to live there, him and his dad. So obviously poverty and all those things affect all of them. It's almost like everything is heightened."

One sub-theme that emerged while the educators recalled disruptive incidents with learners, was the inclusion of their own adverse experiences at their places of work. This could have been a stimulus for the empathy the educators expressed towards their learners, as they could identify with certain stressful experiences that their learners encountered:

BMT1 " ... There was a new project. We took people, maybe from the townships, and we had to do a three months course with them. Within a week, when I started teaching them, my laptop was stolen. When I went to work during the morning, I was once mugged, and they took my phone and they took my bag with all the textbooks and notes. Sometimes it's a little bit of a risky business."

WFT2 "Children were slightly violent, and I had to control classes that I wasn't really prepared for. This was circa 2012. Basically, it was student on teacher violence ... I have felt threatened in that sense, as well as threatened inappropriately at that same school."

⁵⁶ Most public schools in the Eastern Cape are in a high academic crisis, faced with overcrowding, and lack of water and sanitation.

WFT3 “We’ve also had students trying to assault other students and teachers in the class. One student had a tick, and we also had to remove him. He broke into the computer room during the lockdown⁵⁷, and we actually recognised him by his tick on the security footage.”

CMT4 “For sure stressful events happened at work. It affected my work performance, definitely, *ja*.”

A prominent shortcoming in teacher support and training which emerged during the interview correlated with UNESCO statements and other reports that emphasised feelings of unpreparedness, lack of support, and being overwhelmed reported by teachers (Chan 2015:57; Maphalala & Mpofu 2019; Shung-King 2019:112). Educators are thus expected to manage problematic situations in isolation, which was further affirmed by the educators as they agreed that they needed positive interventions:

BMT1 “We need interventions. But also, there was a student who had an operation who came to class for a due date. While she was there, she had pain and was screaming and crying. So, I feel I needed someone with medical knowledge. I had to call her an ambulance. Other places have nurses ... We need a professional in the building. We have some teachers who have completed emergency courses, but they need to do it again because it was all many years ago. Very long ago.”

WFT2 “Schools generally need more constructive intervention strategies. Disruptive learners are often ignored, to minimise backlash ... Having to adapt to teaching in an under-resourced school was difficult, in the sense that I did not have a lot of support ... You only deal with it once it becomes a disruptive element in your class. The silent victims need help as well ... But if I had a class with fifteen to

⁵⁷ During March 2020 South Africa announced a national lockdown to flatten the curve of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. At the time of this thesis, educational institutions were mostly still closed. COVID-19 is the scientific acronym of a novel coronavirus which has caused an international health crisis in 2020.

twenty kids in it, I might have had the time to sit and talk to them. But you don't ..."

WFT3 "We have had incidents, so an intervention would be a good idea. Most definitely."

CMT4 "My classes are between thirty to forty-five. For sure, we need interventions, but I have two minds about that. Teacher class management along with school training. I think it's both the teacher and the school's responsibility."

The educators had counsellors at their current institutions and followed similar⁵⁸ routes and procedures to involve them. Since many educational institutions do not necessarily have counsellors; adequate funding for counsellors (Shung-King et al. 2019:112); or counsellors and social workers who are too overburdened (Pooley 2016:648), it was no surprise that the educators for the most part did not have access to counsellors throughout their teaching careers:

BMT1 "The college has a counsellor ... My previous schools that I taught at didn't have a counsellor. I'd be lying if I tell you I know of any counsellor in those schools. Because there's a lot of students, in the current situation, I don't think that the counsellor copes, because it's only one person who has about ... one thousand two hundred students. So, I don't think that there are a lot of things that can be done to help our students."

WFT2 "This is the first time that I've been with a school that actually has a formal counsellor. She started last year, part-time. And this year she is full-time ... Previous children at previous schools, there was no access to that whatsoever,

⁵⁸ Once an educator has identified that a learner is in need of professional assistance, the educator will refer the learner to a counsellor, or a learner can choose to make an appointment. Occasionally institutions expect a written report from the educator, or involve the learner's parents. Information between the learner and counsellor remains confidential. WFT3 added that her organisation supplies translators to bridge the language barrier, while CMT4 noted that his organisation occasionally offers their learners transport to professionals.

and almost as a teacher, because you had such an overwhelming workload, you almost didn't have time to even acknowledge their traumas, because there's nothing you can really do about it."

WFT3 "Some... At my previous job, and where I am at the moment, there is a counsellor. No, not the others."

CMT4 " ... And at the school, we don't have a dedicated counsellor as part of our staff, but we have outsourced relationships with either social workers or other healthcare professionals."

The participant educators involuntarily recalled recent incidents which revealed what they perceived as signs that a learner needed professional counselling:

BMT1 "I referred students a number of times to a counsellor. Recently, that's the recent one, a student told me that they're going through a bad patch in their life. And the students in the class were playing music. And it disturbed her in some form. Apparently, whatever experience she had back at home, had to do with loud music. So, I had to let her see a counsellor for some help."

WFT2 "At my current school, because we have a full-time counsellor, you're very much aware of anything, because you can now actively refer any child immediately to the counsellor. One girl, I noticed she started cutting herself. The other one, I've noticed a large change in her behaviour. She became extremely aggressive towards me and the others, which normally, she was never an aggressive person. Her behavioural change was very noticeable. And I spoke to her, asked her if everything was okay, and suggested that she maybe needs to see the counsellor. She did. I don't know what happened after that."

WFT3 "I have referred to a counsellor on many occasions in my teaching experience. They were mainly for all three of these: behaviour, confession and gut feeling."

WFT4 “I’ve referred some students. This kid was super crazy talented for a grade eleven. He was a very dedicated after-school kid. And he just stopped attending. I made some follow-up phone calls and sent WhatsApp messages. I called his guardian at the time and she confirmed something is not okay with him. I spoke to all of his teachers to find out what his behaviour was like in class. And they said he was very aggressive lately, he’s not doing his work, even doesn’t go to class, and when he does, then he just sits there. Different stuff like that. His homeroom teacher said she was thinking about going to a social worker. So, I said, the two of us can actually then go. And then, the social worker tested him, and he tested positive⁵⁹ and then I had from my previous job, a partnership relationship with one of the rehabs. They were more than willing to help him. He attended that for about three months.”

Three⁶⁰ of the educators reported that school counsellors did indeed make a noticeable difference at their institutions. However, the educators admitted that learners were somewhat hesitant to seek help from a counsellor or would need time to adjust to a counsellor, as they tend to trust their educators more at first. The educators thus remained central to the matter. The answers of the educators supported my assumption that not all learners who are referred to a counsellor end up seeking such assistance:

BMT1 “As much as she didn’t want to, I advised her to go to the counsellor for some help.”

WFT2 “It took the school’s learners a while to actually warm up to her.”

WFT3 “I had to break the ice, and then called the counsellor and we had to talk to her mother and stepfather. The student wanted me to do all the talking.”

⁵⁹ The student tested positive for drugs.

⁶⁰ The educators were WFT2, WFT3 and CMT4.

CMT4 “But what I have personally experienced is that a lot of the times, especially earlier on, in this particular organisation, because you’re building trust with the learner, and you’re building that almost relationship with the learner - The moment you do that, and it happened twice already, recently, where the child just completely backtracks. So, I’ve written a report, I’ve let the parents know, we set up a meeting, and then the child says, ‘Nothing happened, it’s fine, I’m fine’. They close up completely ... Especially when whatever is happening to them has happened in their own homes, cause they still have to go back to that house after everything. So, it happens...”

It appeared that current and past educational institutions associated with the participant educators may have been training educators sporadically, with many not having received training in classroom management. I assume that this is due to the various educational curricula and policies⁶¹ that the country has adopted over the last thirty years. Although the participant educators were experienced teachers, teacher WFT2’s explanation concerning new teachers not having any particular awareness of how to manage disruptive behaviour carries validity. Furthermore, professional teacher development training focusing on disruptive behaviour might be amiss in South Africa. While formal teacher training courses do not necessarily address disruptive behaviour in a practical manner either, unaware educators might miss specific signs revealing learners’ need of assistance and support beyond facilitating the curriculum:

BMT1 “The college hasn’t given me any form of training in regard to disruptiveness or bad incidents. I mean, that chap who punched the window, was a very tall chap. Even taller than me. I had no training, for example, of what to do in such cases. You use your own knowledge. The picture of incidents can stay with you, and we need to understand the behaviour of students we don’t understand. We are only trained in delivering classes and teaching.”

⁶¹ The South African education system was revised three times between the mid-1990s and 2015. The OBE system overwhelmed educators, which resulted in a revised draft to address the difficulties caused by having to adapt to new curricula. I suspect this to be the reason for training in classroom management or disruptive learners not receiving priority in schools, as pressure was directed at implementing new curricula instead.

WFT2 “This is something that I always thought of [as] lacking in schools. It’s quite unfortunate, because new teachers come into the classrooms and never actually had training on the basics. I also want to say that one of the classic ones is to isolate them. But the kind of training that you have heard of, is kind of the typical WCED⁶²-officials who say, ‘Don’t embarrass the child in front of peers, you must take him aside calmly’. But they never take the context into consideration. Like, what about when the kids are shouting at the same time? You don’t actually have time to isolate each child. Those practical things... You never get training on that. As a student, I’ve never had any course in discipline management. It’s always theoretical, theoretical. You were only taught through experience. A course on it would be very valuable.”

WFT3 “I was only once trained, and that was at a school in Johannesburg in the late 1980s. We were working with different psychologists and we did do a couple of courses. Over and above that; I have received training in human behaviourism in the 1990s ... and it covered classroom management. This school has not done training in disruptive incidents.”

CMT4 “Not in the schools, but I’ve received training at the organisation, yes. It’s compulsory.”

Mostly, as was clear from the educators’ previous answers, teachers are expected to learn through experience that is gained in a variety of ways⁶³ that enables them to manage their learners:

⁶² The acronym WCED stands for the Western Cape Education Department.

⁶³ I acknowledge that educators can successfully manage disruptive behaviour. The argument rather revolves around educators neither having specific training courses concerning different strategies that are deemed successful in the literature during formal teaching, nor in general recalling receiving constructive personal development courses aimed at alleviating such pressures.

BMT1 “I either give him or her extra work or let them help others who are struggling with the work.”

WFT2 “What I do, not very often; there are times when I’ll say, ‘Stand up, go sit outside my classroom door and just take a breath’.”

WFT3 “We used to send them out of the classroom into the nursery, and they have to propagate plants. We have a system where past graduates supervise the kids and handle the discipline once they are sent to the nursery. I had a very disruptive group two years ago, and one girl went hysterical. So, we kicked her out and sent her to the school gate ... And it’s quite a far walk.”

CMT4 “So, there are a few things I do. There is a points system. Their groups lose points, so they’ll make sure that that person behaves. I have a traffic light system for the lower grades eight and nine. Red light is a trip to the principal, a call to the parents and a meeting with all of them. I’d also let them clean up and pack away material, their artwork, et cetera. Or let them sit out an activity. I assign them the responsibility of helping me, or being responsible for their groups, but it rarely gets to that point.”

Two of the participant educators admitted that they had previously received training aligned with compassionate teaching at their educational institutions. WFT2 disclosed that she received training at her school, and CMT4 added that the organisation he is affiliated with is aligned with American educational developments that have such a course in development:

WFT2 “Our school is very open to workshops. We did a workshop on trauma. I can’t remember what it’s called. That was a very interesting workshop. They basically try to focus on how we as educators, tend to see a child on the outside; the shell... almost as the disruptive learner: A child that you want to classify immediately as a bad child. But actually, the types of situations that many children now grow up in has a certain effect on them on so many different levels.

It's not only the discipline issue. Because they are lashing out in that sense, even the most intelligent child's concentration or the issues that they are literally trying to get away from will make them daydream and they will almost transport themselves to a different world where they're not part of your classroom. It's not like they don't want to learn, it's for self-preservation."

CMT4 "The organisation is also developing a 'trauma curriculum' which is coming along and will become a teacher training workshop."

Overall, the educators reacted positively towards the concept of drawing as an intervention to improve concentration. This finding supports the American study which determined that educators are likely to apply alternative forms of disciplinary practices when they are offered the option of such practices (Crosby et al. 2020). The educators continued to relate their experiences with drawing as a tool in their personal lives and teaching and could easily imagine how drawing as an intervention would fit into their classrooms:

BMT1 "I think drawing works as a sort of tool for students. I think it can give a little bit more focus. A little bit of thinking on their part. I think I have many times used drawing to help students focus in class ... So, yes, I think drawing can help."

WFT2 "So normally when I sit them outside my door, I don't give them anything to do. But maybe if I had something on hand, maybe a clipboard and make them draw something from basic instructions – print out the instruction, make them read it, draw for the next few minutes, while they cool down, that might be very useful. It's a calming thing, and rather than sitting outside doing nothing, doing that is more constructive ... Because all that is usually planned, is, 'Here, take your textbook, write this out', or whatever. I would actually give it a trial run. I used to draw a lot. It's never kind of occurred to me having to do that, not even with primary school children ... So, I think drawing can work in that sense to just, calm them - definitely. So yes, I think especially for Life Orientation it would be a very good tool to actually use."

WFT3 “Drawing works most definitely. I have used it as a tool, and continuously use it as a tool at the moment in various subjects that I teach. I think it is a very expressive form of the students becoming enabled to show what the problem is. When I teach English, often the topics that are given for the essay writing is about some actual life situation. And because I like cartooning, I encourage the students to draw before they actually start to do their research and to start writing what they are going to use in their essay. I teach ninety percent of the time in cartoon-form because of the language-barrier⁶⁴, and the students enjoy it so much, because they could also first draw out their feelings and what they were thinking about. I think it was very successful. Using drawing will most definitely help in many of the schools, especially in the rural areas and the urban overpopulated areas where sometimes students get overlooked by their teachers. At the moment we are working on using art as a stress relief during the COVID-pandemic. It’s really amazing.”

CMT4 “I have seen the benefits of drawing in myself, and in the students. We have a little curriculum called ‘The Art of Doodling’. So, I do that with them. And also, we meditate before every class. So, its meditation and then ‘The Art of Doodling’ to get them to draw and do line and mark making and everything. Just to get things out. And they enjoy that. Throw some music in there, and let it rip ... A few partner schools have adopted the *doodle curriculum*. They love it. It’s being used in Life Orientation and a few English teachers use it too. But it’s only where the programme has been rolled out by the organisation.”

5.3.2 Presentation and discussion of findings during the drawing workshop

The second part of the data collection procedure took the form of a drawing workshop⁶⁵. During the workshop, eight gestural drawing exercises⁶⁶ were tested with the first three

⁶⁴ Most of the learners WFT3 teaches do not speak English as a first language. English is considered one of the primary instruction languages in South Africa.

⁶⁵ Due to the workshop being offered online, I shared examples of the drawing exercises in the form of WhatsApp images and explained the instructions verbally. Both Zoom and WhatsApp were used during this process.

educators, and six with the fourth educator. The first drawing exercise⁶⁷, which was meant as an ice breaker was to be repeated at the end of the workshop, but it proved problematic. For example, BMT1 struggled to find his heartrate (Fig. 5.1):

BMT1 “I’m trying to register my pulse, but it’s difficult. I must be the coldest person I know.”

Similarly, WFT2 commenced the exercise (Fig. 5.2), but explained that it was a little challenging. Both WFT2⁶⁸ and WFT3⁶⁹ preferred reading their heartbeats on their Fitbits⁷⁰ instead:

WFT2 “I have a very low heartrate. Let me check my Fitbit...”

WFT3 “My Fitbit says 75, so I’m ready for the next drawing exercise.”

⁶⁶ Find Appendix One for the drawing exercises, or alternatively Chapter 3, for technical details of each exercise.

⁶⁷ This heartbeat exercise expected the educator to take their pulse and record each heartbeat by making dots, lines or tiny scribbles. The scribbles would need to be counted afterwards.

⁶⁸ WFT2’s heartrate went down by four beats by the time she completed the exercises. Whether this is a sign that the exercises had a physical effect on her is inconclusive, as I am not a doctor and neither did a doctor confirm her heartrate, as she relied on the reading on her Fitbit.

⁶⁹ WFT3’s heartrate remained unchanged. Whether this drawing intervention can induce a physical effect on a participant drafters’ heartrate might provoke further studies, as I could not pursue this matter.

⁷⁰ A Fitbit is a health device which is worn on the wrist like a watch. It can read your pulse, daily steps, burnt calories and blood pressure.

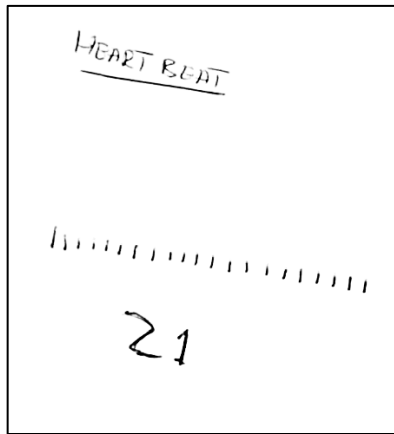


Figure 5.1: (Left) BMT1, *Heartbeat Exercise One* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

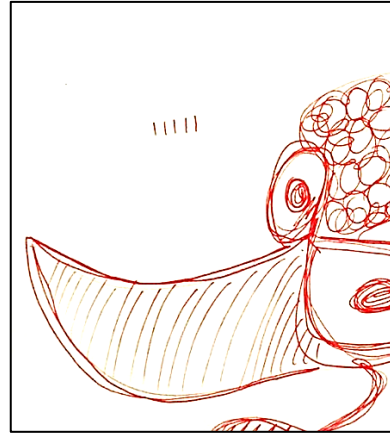


Figure 5.2: (Right) WFT2, *Heartbeat Exercise One* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

Accordingly, the two heartbeat exercises were deemed unnecessary, and were omitted from the study, resulting in CMT4 not being requested to complete the heartbeat exercises at all. During the final interview, the six remaining drawing exercises therefore were reflected on as potential exercises to be used in a drawing intervention. While drawing, the educators often laughed about their drawings and expressed a general sense of enjoyment. The second drawing exercise (Fig. 5.2 – Fig. 5.7), which began from a scribble that needed to be developed into a representation of a recognisable image evoked the most laughter.



Figure 5.3: (Left) BMT1, *Scribble Exercise Two* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

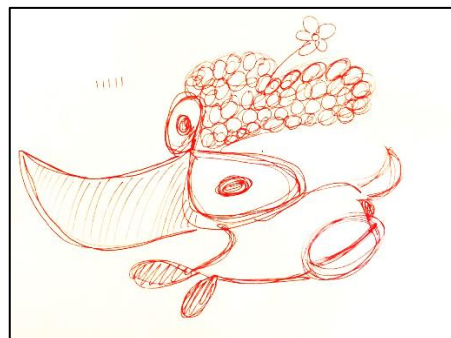


Figure 5.4: (Right) WFT2, *Scribble Exercise Two* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

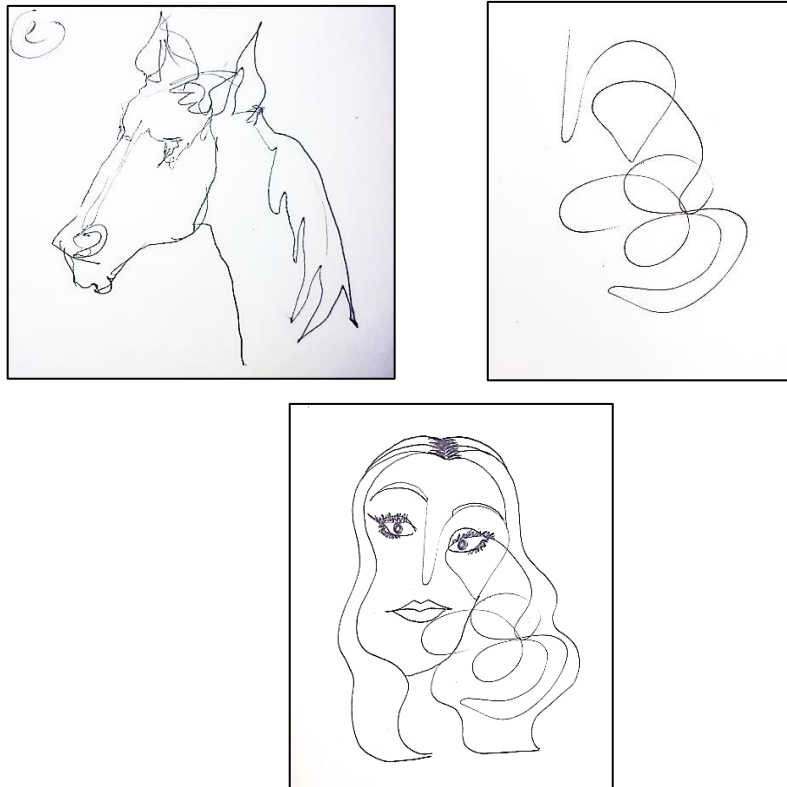


Figure 5.5: (Top, left) WFT3, *Scribble Exercise Two* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

Figure 5.6: (Top, right) CMT4, *Scribble Exercise Two: Scribble* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

Figure 5.7: (Below) CMT4, *Scribble Exercise Two: Changed Scribble* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

During the drawing workshop, the participant educators quietened down, which resulted in little talking. Additionally, their speech slowed down and became much softer, and their gazes were automatically directed away from the camera. I tried not to interrupt them unnecessarily, as they appeared to be concentrating on completing each drawing exercise within the ten-minute timeframe. When the educators spoke during a drawing exercise, they for the most part would reflect, revisit, or elaborate on some of their answers from the first interview. CMT4 shared more details from his life and addressed an awareness of the benefits of a creative outlet:

CMT2 “I grew up in a small little town ... It’s a very small town in that it’s a very segregated town still. Resources were allocated basically according to class ... So, there was quite a big disparity between the schools and obviously the types of education. Because I went to what was then a model C school ... I had access to

extra art and extra music, and blah, blah, blah, but some of my friends didn't, you know? I could see the benefits in myself, I found my outlets in art, and expressing myself. It's therapeutic in that way. And I could see its effect in myself, and I could see my friends going through similar things, but not having that escape and making choices that weren't beneficial for them. And that's what sparked my passion for youth work, basically."

While working on the third exercise which related to contour drawing (Fig. 5.8 – Fig. 5.10), WFT2 remarked that the drawing exercises which she, like CMT4, described as 'therapeutic' were beginning to affect her. She added that it may impact her learners likewise:

WFT2 "Whether you are good, artistic, or not, it's something that is pleasurable to do, therapeutic in that sense ... But because of its therapeutic effect on them, without realising it, their attention will still be directed towards refocusing."

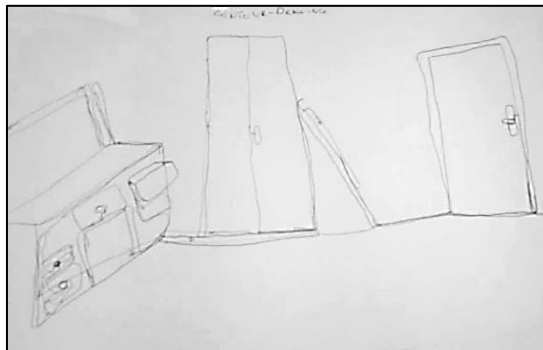


Figure 5.8: BMT1, *Contour Exercise Three* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

By mentioning the positive results gained from the drawing exercises, WFT2 and CMT4 implied an enactionist argument, which I have discussed in Chapter 2. The enactionist perspective suggests that the body or environment has the potential to incur an intervention in the brain at any point, which can change bodily habits alongside plastic changes in the mind (Gallagher 2018). These benefits further align with the instructional arguments offered by Betti and Sale (1986). They argue that sensory techniques such as

gestural drawing may encourage an awareness of cognitions, emotions, and behaviour (Betti & Sale 1986; Crosby et al. 2020).



Figure 5.9: (Left) WFT3, *Contour Exercise Three* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

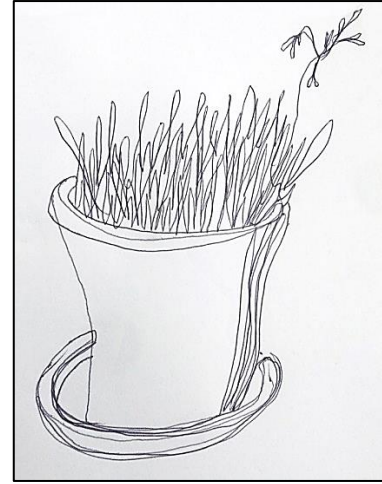


Figure 5.10: (Right) CMT4, *Contour Exercise Three* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

After each exercise, the educators would show their drawings (Fig. 5.11 – Fig. 5.15) and spontaneously describe them or share their feelings about the completed exercise, before sending a photo of it to me via WhatsApp. This behaviour could be explained by Betti and Sale's (1986:23) argument that drawing employs the making of the self, which is affirmed by Gunter's (2011:110) phenomenological argument that understands drawing as directing cognition towards seeing and looking which absorbs perception without reserve due to the relation between movements of the body and the self (Gunter 2011:109). Thus, as the educators were encountering different thoughts, feelings, and realisations privately in their minds, they included me by sharing their experiences verbally:

BMT1 "I hope this is clear. Do you think this is good? I enjoyed this one. Ha-ha-ha!"

WFT2 "Whoo-hoo! I drew a tin and a feather! This one... I really don't want to keep this one. It's like a monkey's hand. It was so difficult. Ha-ha-ha!"

WFT3 “Could you see where my dog is laying, and I’m sitting in a room with a mirror? I have a very relaxing view here on the farm. Ha-ha-ha!”

CMT4 “Oooooo Child! I’m just finishing up. Good luck to you! I tried to draw the view. It’s mainly just trees.”

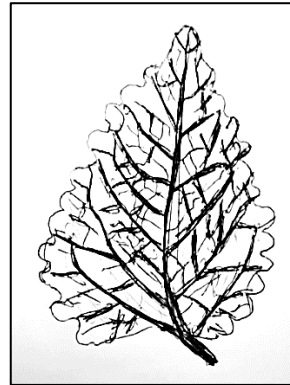
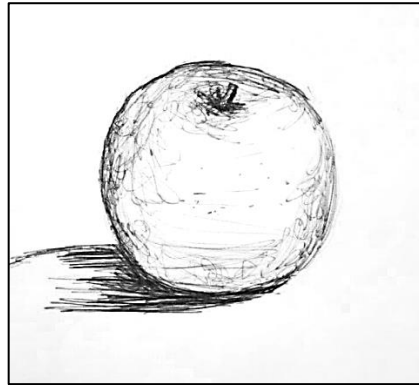


Figure 5.11: (Left) BMT1, *Texture Exercise Seven Part One* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

Figure 5.12: (Right) BMT1, *Texture Exercise Seven Part Two* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

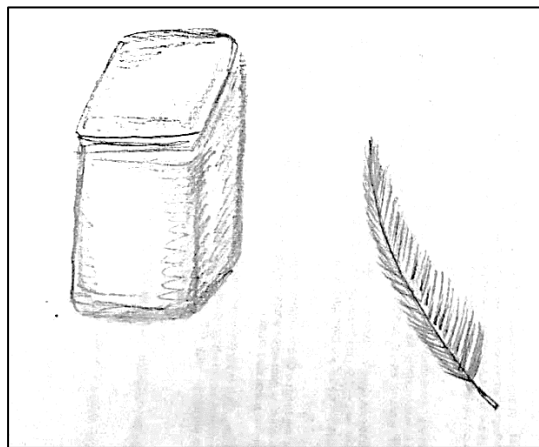


Figure 5.13: WFT2, *Texture Exercise Seven* (2020). Pencil on paper. 21 x 29.7.



Figure 5.14: (Left) WFT3, *Mass Exercise Four* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

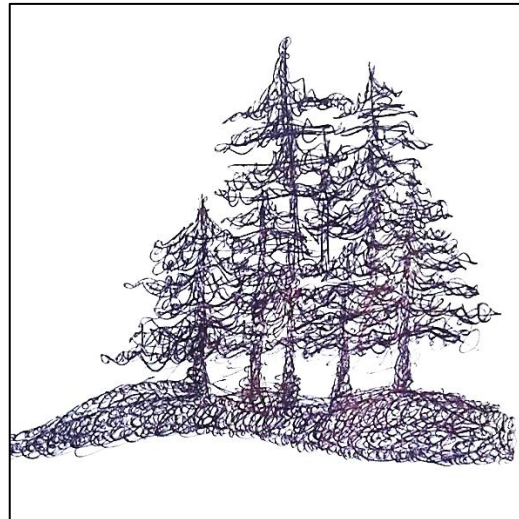


Figure 5.15: (Right) CMT4, *Mass Exercise Four* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

The educators used a variety of symbols, lines, imagery and text during the fifth exercise (Fig. 5.16 – Fig. 5.18), which required drawing a timeline⁷¹ of their day. They used hand gestures to mimic their drawn lines as they explained the drawing exercise. The ease with which the educators attributed semiotic meaning to their drawing exercises and their physical movements resonated with the primordial form of communication addressed in Chapter 3, which explains that gesture drawing shares similarities with thinking and speech (Gunter 2011:116). Gesture furthermore is believed to serve the origin of modern complex language systems (Roberts & Riley 2012):

WFT2 “Look! Here is my stressful Zoom class. * *Sharp upwards and downwards finger movements* * My normal routine goes smoothly. Here I am playing more – I’m working, but I’m also not working. * *Smoother rhythmic hand gestures* * Then I decided to give up, because nothing is happening, and then I decided my day is over. * *Throwing hand in the air* *”

⁷¹ Although BMT1 completed the timeline exercise, the photograph is not included, as it unfortunately was too blurred for editing.

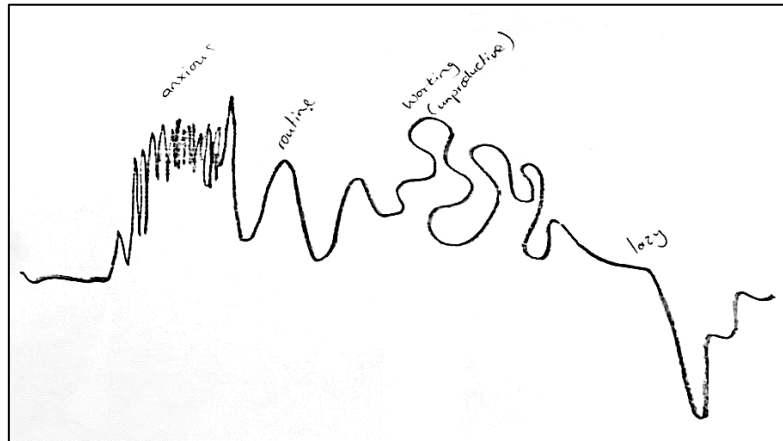


Figure 5.16: WFT2, *Timeline Exercise Five* (2020). Pencil on paper. 21 x 29.7.

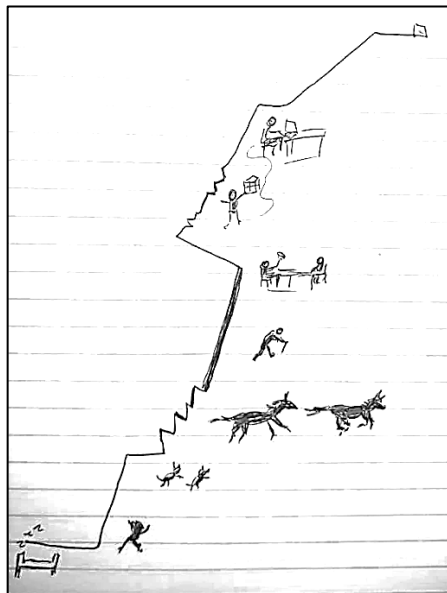


Figure 5.17: (Left) WFT3, *Timeline Exercise Five* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

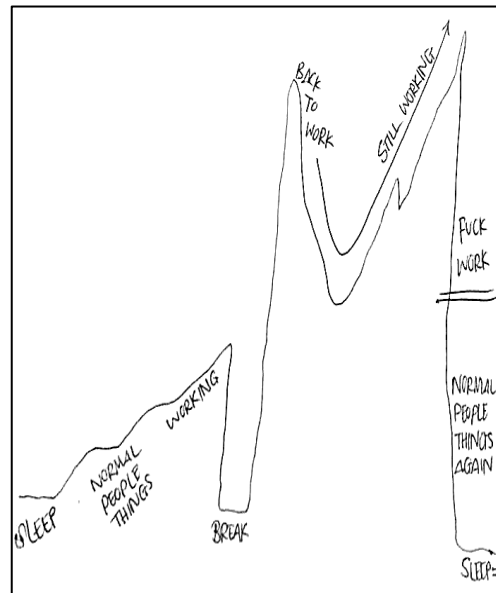


Figure 5.18: (Right) CMT4, *Timeline Exercise Five* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

While WFT2 worked on the symmetry exercise (Fig. 5.19), the sixth drawing, she reflected more on the training workshop she mentioned during the first interview:

WFT2 “We do a lot of training. And that particular workshop was really very useful ... And it really made me much more aware of how you perceive naughty children. The problem children have that manner in which their eyes glaze over, and they’re totally removed from what is happening in the class. And the moment

you dare address it, they react strongly, because they would prefer to be left alone.”

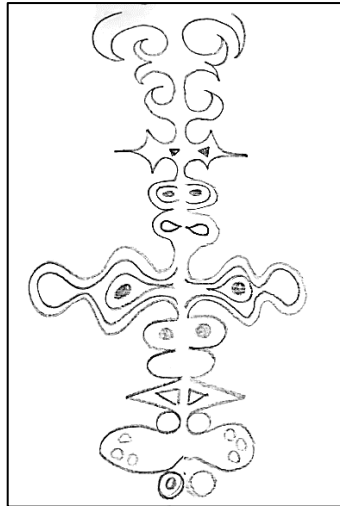


Figure 5.19: WFT2, *Symmetry Exercise Six* (2020). Pencil on paper. 21 x 29.7.

5.3.3 Presentation and discussion of findings during the final interview

During the second interview, the questions that were directed attempted to identify which drawing exercise had been the most enjoyable. It appeared that providing the learner with a choice of exercises remains valid. The answers of the educators were diverse: BMT1 and WFT2 preferred the mass drawing exercise (Fig. 5.20 and Fig. 5.21); WFT3 chose the texture exercise (Fig. 5.22); whereas CMT4 opted for the symmetry exercise (Fig. 5.23):

BMT1 “Ok, I think I did enjoy the mass drawing the most. I did enjoy that one. The fact that you draw any gesture with using lots of lines, and it also gives you some more freedom at the same time.”

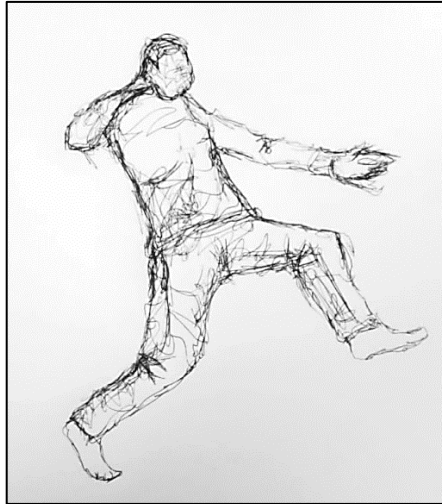


Figure 5.20: BMT1, *Mass Exercise Four* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

WFT2 “The mass drawing. This drawing was wild, and you don’t have to worry about how perfect it is. Because you just draw and draw and then add a bit. It was so much fun.”



Figure 5.21: WFT2, *Mass Exercise Four* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

WFT3 “The texture exercise. I loved drawing the dragonfly.”

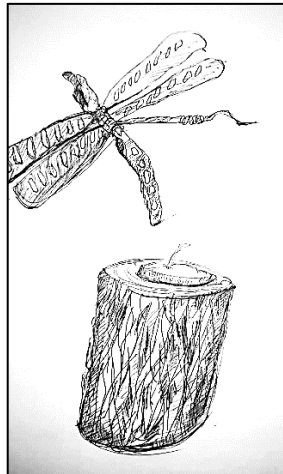


Figure 5.22: WFT3, *Texture Exercise Seven* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

CMT4 “I enjoyed all of them. But obviously that’s not a good enough answer. But I really liked the symmetry exercise. I loved it. Learners stop drawing, sometimes in grade three already, and then suddenly have to start again in grade eight. So, it’s a confidence thing. And I tell them to go crazy, create marks... go abstract. Just to build confidence, and I think including something like this, the symmetry exercise, would build that confidence even more, because it’s gonna train them, you know?”

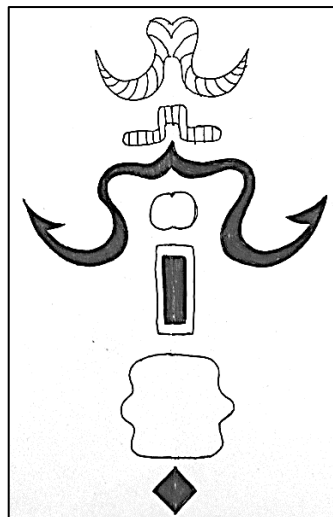


Figure 5.23: CMT4, *Symmetry Exercise Six* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

Again, the educators for the most part differed on which exercise they deemed would be the least successful during feedback: BMT1 and WFT3 chose the symmetry exercise (Fig.

5.24 and Fig. 5.26); WFT2 opted for the contour exercise (Fig. 5.25); and CMT4 explained that the texture exercise (Fig. 5.27) would be the most challenging for his learners:

BMT1 “The mirror shape drawing. It was a little bit difficult to draw the other side. I think it was a little bit difficult. You need more time and focus because you need to understand all the shapes and curves.”

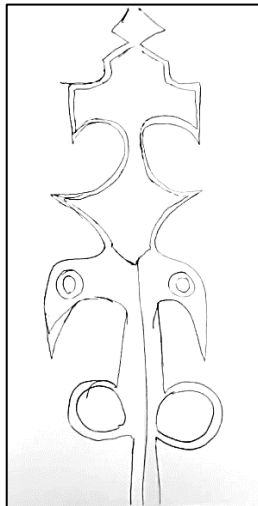


Figure 5.24: BMT1, *Symmetry Exercise Six* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

WFT2 “The contour drawing. It’s not about the result. I was far more stressed about having to actually copy something realistically and not having it work. For the mass one, I didn’t have to worry about the realism, for some reason. It was just like, I’m scribbling. I’m scribbling already, so I’m already not doing something perfect. But then it became better looking than what I thought it would from when I started. This one is like the actual line, it’s a single line, and I need to copy something, so whatever line I’m doing I’m messing up.”

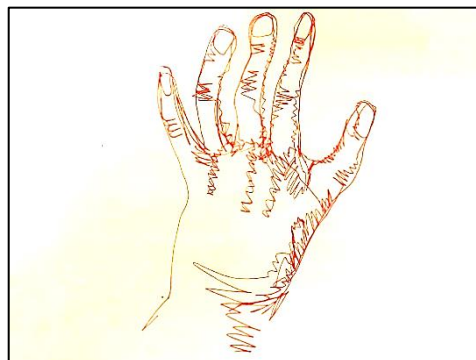


Figure 5.25: WFT2, *Contour Exercise Three* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

WFT3 “The patterns. I did not like to do the mirror images.”

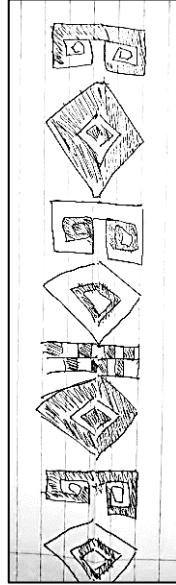


Figure 5.26: WFT3, *Symmetry Exercise Six* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

CMT4 “The least favourite was texture. Because I know that if it’s that way for me, then I know a lot of kids struggle with texture. I hate teaching texture.”

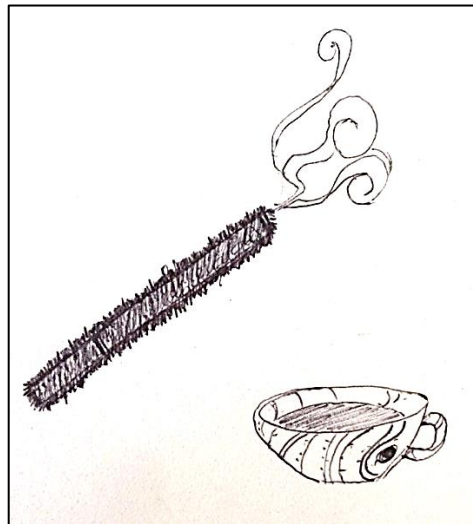


Figure 5.27: CMT4, *Texture Exercise Seven* (2020). Pen on paper. 21 x 29.7.

After the workshop, the educators, having been familiarised with the drawing exercises, were asked if they would use the drawings in an intervention in their classrooms. All four answered positively, again, with two educators adding their own positive experiences with drawing. The answers of BMT1, WFT2 and CMT4 hinted at drawing being complex, as, according to them, the exercises involved ‘focus’, ‘escape’, ‘something that you can’t describe’, and ‘throwing in everything that you’re going through’. More so, WFT3 previously described drawing as a ‘tool’ for ‘feelings’, while CMT4 used the term ‘benefits’, which he connected with the drawing exercises. Collectively, the perceptions of the educators align with Pierre Bourdieu’s assertion that any form of embodied engagement between the human and life-world during the act of drawing engages experiences which are set in cognition (Bourdieu 1977, as cited in Gunter 2016; Li 2018):

BMT1 “For me, I think [these] short exercises give you time to focus. Because they are very quick and fun to complete, I think these can work as well if you want the exercises to help students.”

WFT2 “Yes. I’m thinking that for specifically high school, especially the aggression element of high school kids, you pick up a lot of rebellion in especially grade 8 and 9. And they will either shut down, or completely ignore you, or boast this extreme aggression by lashing out. And I think that art is such a good medium to actually use for them, because it’s suddenly something they don’t have to impress you with in a way. It’s already a kind of escape from something that you can’t describe for them.”

WFT3 “Yes, I do use drawing already. I think this is a very good idea. It’s brilliant.”

CMT4 “Yes. They don’t always know what they’re feeling, so they don’t know how to put them into words. And it comes out in actions, and frustrations, you know, fighting and swearing. And I’ve seen these types of exercises help them focus and quiet down. They focus all of that energy into creating something, whether it has an outcome that is, you know, artistically correct, or if it’s just something that

they rip apart afterwards and throw away. Drawing definitely does have the... it's almost like you're throwing everything that you're going through onto the paper. And that's where it lives."

The educators' opinions about whether a drawing intervention would work successfully for all learners were divided:

BMT1 "I don't think that all students can benefit from these exercises or intervention. Because people are different. There are those who are very artistic. And those who are very content driven students. So, for different students, you need different approaches."

WFT2 "No, not necessarily. Because you have linear thinkers as well ... I have this one grade ten learner in mind. He's never interested in doing PE⁷², nothing physical, nothing academic, but I kinda get that. If I put a piece of paper in front of him, and say, however, 'Use that'. He wouldn't want to talk to me, but it could actually be an intervention for him ... Sport is not always for everyone, but obviously not art either, but it could definitely work for somebody."

WFT3 "Yes, every student can benefit from a drawing intervention. Definitely."

CMT4 "Absolutely, 'cause I have seen it. In some form or another."

The educators were asked how they would adapt any of the drawings to suit their classrooms:

BMT1 "The symmetry one. You need more concentration and more focus. It didn't give me much freedom. I think you need more time or have to make it smaller. Yes."

⁷² PE is an acronym for Physical Exercise.

WFT2 “The symmetry mirror activity, break it up into two phases. First tell the learner to draw on the one side without explaining where the exercise would go. Once the learner has finished, then tell them to open the piece of paper and draw the other side. Because then the student will concentrate harder.”

WFT3 “I would use the pattern exercise in maths, to show how it is repeated and how different forms can be used together to form a set. In other words, not everything has to be the same to form a whole.”

CMT4 “All of them were fine. The mass drawing for instance, is such a nice way of drilling form into them. Because they can start when they are drawing with little exercises. They can start getting better by drawing from the inside. I wouldn’t say that it needs an improvement, but it has the potential to become a big lesson. Weeks of exercises maybe.”

Except for BMT1, the other three educators were convinced that their current educational institutions would welcome a drawing intervention:

BMT1 “I think in order for let’s say, for my current workplace to adopt this type of intervention, I think they will need some convincing.”

WFT2 “Possibly. They are very open towards alternative... especially if it’s something like this that is not going to break the budget. It is low cost. So, yes.”

WFT3 “Present employer, most definitely. They won’t have a problem. They see how we actually work with it at the moment. Previous employers, I actually don’t think it would be a problem.”

CMT4 “Yes, because of that little *doodle curriculum*.”

The four participant educators were keen to receive the drawing exercises once my research was completed:

BMT1 “I would love the adapted version in my class. I won’t mind. I think it will be fun. And I think it will make the students more open to possibilities.”

WFT2 “If you can send me basic examples, and instructions, I can use a clipboard and get them to do it. I would appreciate that. What I especially think is useful for my school is... we are maths and science focused school. We have no art platform at all. So, I think as an intervention, this is a good opportunity for them to get out of this constant almost linear thinking. I think there are a lot of learners at our school that crave this creative outlet. Even little exercises like this. I think it will be very valuable, *ja*.”

WFT3 “Yes, thank you so much. I would really appreciate that.”

CMT4 “Yes, please.”

CHAPTER 6:

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The research conducted for this thesis was aimed at investigating the plausibility of a drawing intervention for improving a learner's concentration in the classroom. This study was initially driven by my experiences as an art educator. I have witnessed troubled learners losing concentration and engaging in disruptive behaviour during class time on numerous occasions. Upon noticing how learners in the art class tended to become quieter during drawing lessons, I became interested in investigating whether an educator could reduce the loss of concentration by making use of drawing exercises as a response to disruptive behaviour.

Although a former study determined that American educators tend to react positively towards having the option of using alternative forms of discipline (Crosby et al. 2020:165), I could not assume that South African educators would necessarily exhibit similar attitudes. Hence, I additionally wanted to ascertain whether a group of local educators would accept the concept of a drawing intervention and which drawing exercises might best suit a drawing intervention in local classroom contexts.

The research design followed an inductive approach while an interpretive paradigm was adopted to dictate how the data were to be interpreted. Four case studies were undertaken with a group of diverse educators from the Western Cape. Each educator represented a different educational institution typical of the South African education domain. All four were teaching high-school-aged learners. The case studies comprised two semi-structured interviews and a structured drawing workshop. At the time of this thesis, the country was under lockdown due to a pandemic, and all research had to be completed online. The unique circumstances paired with limitations such as educational institutions being under pressure resulted in the research being completed in uncharted

waters. Educators were primarily teaching remotely at the time of the research and the country's learners were gradually being phased back into classrooms.

6.2 Conclusions and Implications

The following sections of the chapter present a final summary of the general conclusions of this study. Besides the main findings, the chapter includes recommendations, overall suggestions, limitations, and a critique of the research. Furthermore, conclusions relating to compassionate teaching and curriculum responsiveness are discussed as a point of departure. Following this, links between South African and American findings are included. In addition, final conclusions drawn from the reflections and feedback of the educators are incorporated.

6.2.1 Conceptual conclusions and implications

Compassionate teaching pedagogy, which originates from America, links problems involving concentration and behaviour in learners with adverse experiences (Wolpow et al. 2011:9), while curriculum responsiveness involves an understanding of the diverse needs of the South African learner and their society (Moll 2004:3). The theories align with each other as they are democratically driven; acknowledge the importance of a holistic approach to teaching; and highlight the need for an educator that is receptive to the environment of the learner (Moll 2004:4; Krasnoff 2019:7).

In this thesis, there was a thread linking data from the United States of America, such as the findings of an American compassionate flagship school, and suggestions formulated in South African curriculum responsive theory (Crosby et al. 2019:585; Moll 2004:3). In both countries racial segregation policies were developed in the past and language was used as a method to further differentiate racial populations from one another (Chrisholm 2012:85; Beukes 2012:128). When both countries transformed into democracies, more inclusive curricular systems were adopted to address challenges such as the large gaps between rich and poor learners and the lower quality of education that poor communities were subjected to (Taylor, Brouillette & Farkas 2018:266; Shafer & Wilmot 2012: 43). However, these two countries are vastly different from one another as the United States is a first-world country, whereas South Africa is not. Moreover, during the

interviews, another thread linking American and South African education was revealed. A participant educator acknowledged that her school had provided training that reflected similarities with compassionate teaching pedagogy. She shared her impression of how it changed her perception of learners who presented problematic behaviour. Another educator was associated with an organisation that made use of American teaching models as they were in partnership with offices in the United States of America. From these findings, I conclude that American educational theory such as compassionate teaching pedagogy can be compatible with the South African education system.

Furthermore, teachers of South African learners grapple with a list of difficulties such as high dropout rates; large class sizes (Pooley 2016:648), a lack of counsellors or social workers, insufficient funding of schools (Shung-King et al. 2019: 112) and socio-economic challenges such as poverty and neglect (Weybright 2017:1353; Shung-King et al. 2019:52). Such difficulties can impact the learner's behaviour and learning experience. The participant educators collectively acknowledged that many of their learners were indeed exhibiting problematic behaviour. Motivated by this, I conclude that educators might benefit from implementing pedagogy which includes compassionate and curriculum responsive approaches in their teaching. Additionally, I would suggest that educational institutions, professional teaching courses or professional development courses at educational institutions include such approaches. Educators that gain knowledge of such approaches might feel better supported and would better understand the behavioural patterns of their learners. In addition, all but one educator did not receive any training in classroom management at the educational institutions at which they were working. I surmise that this gap, which could have resulted from the different policies the educational domain had implemented over the last thirty years, could be breached with training in teaching pedagogy driven by compassionate and curriculum responsive teaching approaches. Such approaches could additionally alleviate some of the stress learners have to manage and assist them by developing better resilience for improved learning.

6.2.2 Factual and interpretive conclusions and implications

The participant educators expressed their conviction that learners would benefit from interventions aimed at improving their focus. I further judge that a drawing intervention would reflect the creative classroom interventions described in compassionate theory, similar to what writing and music interventions have been shown to do (Wolpow et al. 2011:88). Such interventions do not rely on traditional forms of discipline, as these traditional practices may further influence a learner's behaviour, resulting in the escalation of continuous poor academic performance (Crosby et al. 2019:589; Krasnoff 2019:8). It was clear that educators had to learn as they encountered problems; they recalled various practices to manage their classrooms. Besides this, the educators were making use of some traditional forms of discipline, such as sending learners out of the classroom. It thus is pertinent in the current climate of financial struggling in South Africa to consider the validity of researching cost-effective classroom interventions, such as a drawing intervention, to suit local educational institutions.

Data suggest that learners between the ages of thirteen and sixteen are the most academically vulnerable (Samel, Sondergeld, Fischer & Patterson 2011:97). I further hypothesise that a classroom intervention, such as a choice between various quick, entertaining, and easy gesture drawing exercises might offer high-school-aged learners an opportunity to work through their emotions in a healthy manner. Three out of the four participant educators were confident that their educational institutions would permit the use of a drawing intervention. I would like to suggest that schools allow their educators to experiment with my proposed strategy. By offering the learner a choice between various drawing exercises, the intervention would reflect a compassionate teaching and curriculum responsive attitude (Freiberg & Lamb 2009:103). Furthermore, the enactionist perspective strengthens the potential of drawing as an embodied construct which may improve concentration. This theory further proposes that, while the brain works in combination with the body and the environment, an intervention such as drawing exercises during any time of the learning experience results in plastic changes in the brain that may generate positive behavioural outcomes (Gallagher 2018:625). In other words, it is very possible that a drawing intervention could be used as an opportunity to enact learning through responding to a learner's behaviour to readjust the class environment (Li 2018:1345).

I hand-picked a series of eight gesture drawing exercises as these drawings involve accepted benefits such as gaining concentration. The gesture drawings involved heartbeat, contour, mass, symmetry, texture, timeline, and scribble exercises. Arguments put forward by authors Betti and Sale (1983:48) combined with formal scientific findings concerning doodling having a positive effect on concentration; spontaneous drawing improving memory; and drawing generally being understood as a therapeutic aid for stress relief, strengthens my confidence in the relevance of making use of gesture drawing as a potential intervention (Singh & Kashyap 2015:7; Pillay 2018:1). Overall, six of the gesture drawing exercises were perceived positively by the educators. The heartbeat drawing exercise which was meant to be repeated was considered unnecessary and in one instance it was too difficult for the participant educator to detect his pulse. Although two educators agreed that the mass drawing exercise was the best exercise, the other two educators preferred the texture and symmetry exercises. With regard to which exercise was deemed least successful, two educators identified the symmetry exercise, another the contour exercise and the final educator indicated the texture exercise. Overall, it may be said that a drawing intervention comprising of various drawing exercises such as the six remaining exercises tested on the educators would be justified.

As there was little feedback on changes to the drawing exercises, I would like to add two precautionary measures: Firstly, as it may be difficult to complete the symmetry exercise in ten minutes, it would be advisable to inform the learner that they should refrain from working on a large scale. Secondly, the instructions for this exercise could involve two phases at the discretion of the educator for the sake of a surprise element.

While drawing and reflecting on the drawing exercises, the educators generally, expressed a sense of enjoyment. They were visibly more reserved during the act of drawing, as their speech slowed down, and they spoke much less. I would like to believe that this described behaviour was due to the drawing exercises taking up most of their concentration. They fondly recalled experiences related to drawing and noticeable benefits of drawing to themselves and could imagine drawing having similar positive

benefits in their learners. Three of the educators credited drawing with resulting in positive results in their learners as they had used drawing in their own teaching. In summary, I accept, since drawing has been reported in the literature and by the educators to produce various benefits, that a drawing intervention like the proposed gesture drawings may improve the concentration of learners.

6.3 Contribution to the field of research

While different studies on the effect of drawing are available, gesture drawing as an intervention is not widely researched. In many instances, drawing is approached from a philosophical understanding “of the body” in literature and in this study. Compassionate teaching pedagogy remains a new concept in South Africa and pedagogy suitable for the needs of the local education domain can still be explored. On the other hand, curriculum responsive teaching was suggested over a decade ago but remains unimplemented. The potential of interventions reflecting the aims of this theory thus remains even more unexplored. Available research comparing American educational institutions with South African education systems are hard to come by. The contribution of the data collected from the case studies lies within the attempt to find a solution to one of the many academic difficulties faced by South African learners of high school age and their educators.

6.4 Further research and critique of the research

Several limitations are associated with this study. The study does not provide unadulterated proof that a drawing intervention will curb disruptive behaviour or restore lost concentration. It would be beneficial to include a larger sample of educators from across the country in an in-depth study, as this study was limited to data collected from four educators in the Western Cape. Furthermore, it is advisable that learners should be included in future research to explore the properties of drawing as an intervention from their perspective.

Although the educators expressed confidence that a drawing intervention could improve concentration in their learners, two of the participant educators were not convinced that

the drawing exercises would work on all their disruptive learners. Since drawing cannot address all teaching and learning problems in the classroom and with the study being a mini-thesis, I could not research these aspects in depth. This thesis could thus encourage further studies towards developing a set of different interventions aimed at schools in South Africa. Considering this, an absolute commitment to compassionate and curriculum responsive teaching would mean that a variety of different cost-effective interventions would need to be explored. During the time of the study, South Africa was under the COVID-19 lockdown. Future researchers might collect more data on this topic through face-to-face workshops, instead of online workshops.

6.5 Concluding remarks

The research for this study entailed drawing as a possible restorative device for assisting disruptive practices of learners in a teaching and learning environment. The findings of this study were based on a combination of responses from four educators. The experiences and reflections of the educators were thematically paired with theoretical and philosophical concepts. Although the four participant educators expressed openness towards the possibility of making use of a drawing intervention, the outcomes of the findings often implied challenges and disparities which could be investigated further to lead to more concrete evidence in future research. Education and the well-being of learners, like the statistics and arguments presented in the literature, remain important topics in South Africa. This study, which was directed at finding a solution to loss of concentration by means of a creative classroom intervention, has potential for further studies in the future.

I conclude that, although the study may credibly suggest drawing as a **potentially** effective intervention in dealing with learners' disruptive behaviour and erratic concentration (as experienced by so many educators in South African schools), it cannot and does not claim that the specific drawing exercises guarantee improved behaviour and concentration. Driven by the enthusiasm of the educators about such an intervention and given the ease with which the strategy could be implemented and the affirmative responses of the research participants, I would confidently propose that schools should be encouraged to experiment with the strategy. To employ such a strategy in classrooms

could address the gaps in teacher training while it may alleviate the lack of counsellors at schools without adopting the roles of such professionals.

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Appendix 1

Workshop instructions

1. Heart rate drawing exercise: Take your pulse and make a line per heartbeat on your paper.
2. Scribble gesture exercise: Scribble on the paper. Create something from the scribble by adding to the lines of the scribble.
3. Contour drawing: Look around the room and draw what you see. Not allowed to lift pen. The idea is not to draw something beautiful.
4. Mass drawing: Look outside the window, draw something using the mass drawing technique or find an object in your pencil case or you can use someone's face.
5. "Timeline" line drawing: By using line, go through your day. Use the line intuitively. It can disappear, can become harder or softer; text or drawn pictures can also be included.
6. Symmetry exercise: Divide the paper in half. On the one side, draw a few shapes against the fold. Open the page and copy the shapes on the other side of the paper. Pattern and colouring in can be used, depending on time management.
7. Texture exercise: Find two objects with different textures each, such as hard and soft.
8. Wrap up: Repeat heartbeat exercise.

Appendix 2

Questions before and after the workshop

Interview 1:

Before the workshop the questions below were asked.

1. Describe your work circumstances. (Background of teaching experience, current school/college, age groups, course/subjects etc.)
2. Have you ever had to deal with disruptive incidents in your classroom? (Yes/No question.)
3. Do you believe that your school needs interventions for disruptive incidents in the classroom?
4. Does your school have a counsellor?
5. What is the route that you have to follow when you have identified a learner in need of counselling? (School policies.)
6. Have you referred a learner to a counsellor at school before?
7. Would you consider drawing as a way to prevent or react to disruptive incidents in the classroom?
8. Has your school trained you in approaches to deal with disruptive incidents in the classroom? If so, did you find it useful? If not, do you think educators can benefit from it?

Interview 2:

After the drawing workshop, the follow-up questions below were asked.

1. What did you enjoy most from the workshop?
2. What did you enjoy the least from the workshop?
3. Would you consider using drawing in your classroom to help a student focus?
4. Do you think that in the event of drawing as an intervention could benefit your learners?
5. How would you adapt some of the drawing exercises to suit your class?
6. Do you think your school could adopt drawing as an intervention?

Appendix 3**Interview guide****INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH****NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER OF RESEARCHER**

Lara Carlini

University of Stellenbosch,

Tel:

Email:

TITLE OF RESEARCH

Drawing as intervention to improve concentration in the classroom at four schools in the Western Cape

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH
The purpose of this study is to investigate how and in what way drawing can serve as an intervention to improve concentration in classrooms. Four educators will be asked to share their perceptions and reflect upon a series of drawings and their experiences of the drawing exercises, and if that could be useful in their classroom.
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH
<p>The aim of the study is to through drawing interventions prevent or react to disruptive behaviour in the classroom to enhance teaching and learning. The objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) To explore in what way focussed and purposed drawing exercises could serve as intervention for disruptive practices for teachers to use in the classroom e) To explore the reaction of four teachers at different schools to the drawing intervention f) To explore which drawing intervention worked best for the teachers in the various learning contexts
ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY
All participants will sign a consent form before any data is collected. They will

be free to withdraw from the study at any given time and they will be assured in the consent form that their information will be kept confidential. If an educator refrains from answering a question, there will be no consequences. Passwords will be used, and none of the data will be shared online or in any other form, unless the ethical committee or study advisor request access to data.

INTERVIEW: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Person/s interviewed	
Date	
Place	
Duration	

INTERVIEW CONTENT

1. Introduction

- Explain objectives of the interview and explain what topic areas will be addressed
- Clarify the potential value of the research as to how the information will be used for the benefit for communities
- Give an indication of the expected length of the interview

2. List of topics for discussion before the workshop

9. Describe your work circumstances. (Background of teaching experience, current school/college, age groups, course/subjects etc.)
10. Have you ever had to deal with disruptive incidents in your classroom? (Yes/No question.)
11. Do you believe that your school needs interventions for disruptive incidents in the classroom?
12. Does your school have a counsellor?
13. What is the route that you have to follow when you have identified a learner in need of counselling? (School policies.)
14. Have you referred a learner to a counsellor at school before?
15. Would you consider drawing as a way to prevent or react to disruptive incidents in the classroom?
16. Has your school trained you in approaches to deal with disruptive incidents in the classroom? If so, did you find it useful? If not, do you think educators can benefit from such training?

<p>3. Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise the main issues discussed • Thank participant for their time thus far • Discuss the next course of action to be taken which is to complete the drawing workshop • Inform the participant on how many drawings and how long it will take approximately to complete the drawings • Once the workshop has been completed, the objectives of the final interview will be explained • The topic areas of the final interview will be addressed • An indication of the expected length will be affirmed
<p>4. List of topics for discussion after the workshop</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. What did you enjoy most from the workshop? 8. What did you enjoy the least from the workshop? 9. Would you consider using drawing in your classroom to help a learner focus? 10. Do you think that in the event of drawing as an intervention could benefit your learners? 11. How would you adapt some of the drawing exercises to suit your class? 12. Do you think your school could adopt drawing as an intervention?
<p>5. Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise the main issues discussed • Discuss the next course of action to be taken, to send photographs of the drawings to me • Invite participants to reflect on what they have said and encourage them to contact the researcher if they want to add or adjust any of their comments made during the interview • Inform the participant that they will have access to the data analysis and may comment or add additional feedback • Thank the participant for his or her time

Appendix 4

Letter from language practitioner

HESTER HONEY

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This is to confirm that I have edited the MA thesis

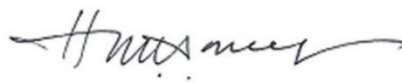
by

Lara Carlini

titled

**Drawing as intervention to improve concentration in the classroom at
four schools in the Western Cape**

and have made suggestions to be implemented by the candidate.



HM Honey

(13/10/2020)