

The **how** of 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures' as an approach to the teaching of the *Drum* short stories

ABSTRACT

This article focusses on the **how** of 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures', devised by The New London Group, as an approach to the teaching of *The Drum Decade: stories from the 1950's* edited by Michael Chapman. It will be argued that the combination of situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice advocated by the New London Group has the potential to develop the cultural, critical, visual and media literacies of learners, in accordance with principles laid down in the policy document for Language, Literacy and Communication in the senior phase of Curriculum 2005. As the focus in this pedagogical approach is on educators and learners being active participants in social change, this paper will include a discussion of some of the ways in which the short stories and journalistic exposés in *The Drum Decade* may be utilized to promote social transformation.

1. The literary text as a tool for transformation

One of the central ideas in the rationale for Language, Literacy and Communication in the senior phase of Curriculum 2005 is that language and language learning should empower people to interact and participate socially, politically, economically, culturally and spiritually. The aim of empowering learners from all backgrounds in South African classrooms requires the implementation of appropriate teaching strategies. Critical pedagogy, which is particularly suited to achieving this aim, is defined by Pennycook (1994: 303) as education grounded in a desire for social change, aimed at helping students to deal with the struggles to make sense of their lives, to find ways of changing how lives are lived within inequitable social structures and to transform the possibilities of their lives. This view is reflected in 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures' (1996) devised by Norman Fairclough, Courtney Cazden, Bill Cope, Mary Kalantzis, Jim Gee, Gunther Kress, Allan Luke, Carmen Luke, Sarah Michaels and Martin Nakata. These individuals, who form the New London Group (NLG), display their commitment to critical pedagogy by attempting to broaden the understanding of literacy and literacy teaching to include a multiplicity of discourses and by viewing the teaching and learning relationship as having the potential to ensure full and equitable social participation.

In order to choose suitable texts and to utilize critical pedagogy in the literature classroom, the

South African teacher will have to have a clear understanding of the ideology guiding the document for Language, Literacy and Communication in the senior phase of Curriculum 2005. Ideology is defined as “the ways in which what we say and believe connects with the power structures and power relations of the society we live in” (Eagleton, 1983: 14). Throughout the policy document, teachers and learners are urged to be sensitive to power relations in order to foster a respect for individuals from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds. It would seem, therefore, that the ideological basis for the literary choices of South African teachers should be a belief in the post-apartheid society, and a genuine respect for the multiplicity of cultures in our classrooms. Eagleton explains that value judgements are variable and that a literary canon is “a construct, fashioned by particular people for particular reasons at a certain time” (ibid: 10). In view of this, it would seem that the socio-political context of post-apartheid South Africa is the larger context upon which individuals should base their choice of texts, as well as their readings. Since South Africa is now a democratic country, Zulu (1996: 50) suggests that a balance should be struck between the British literary canon and African literature in English with South African literature occupying the centre position.

Specific Outcome One (SO1) in the policy document emphasizes that the ways in which context affects the meaning and understanding of texts should be identified and responded to. Context and the specific cognitive, cultural and social effects of texts are also a key focus area of ‘A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures’. A knowledge of the conditions and injustices which characterized apartheid South Africa is a prerequisite for understanding present conditions, and the stories in *The Drum Decade* allow learners to understand current political, cultural and social contexts in relation to the socio-political milieu of the fifties, when repressive apartheid legislation was tightening its grip on the majority of South Africans. In his essay accompanying this anthology, entitled “Drum and its Significance in Black South African Writing”, Michael Chapman (1989: 223) claims that, in allowing text and context to inform each other, we are setting up a dialogue between *Drum* and historicist criticism. This critical stance privileges the political and intellectual climate as background to account for the characteristic subject matter of literature at a particular time and place. Sophiatown, the setting of many of the stories in *The Drum Decade*, had a unique township culture which allowed residents to develop a sense of belonging. Text and context interacted, as the *Drum* writers not only reflected the black urban culture of this decade, but also helped to shape it by their writing. Despite celebrating the gaiety of jazz and a shebeen culture, the stories by these black writers also protest against the processes which gave rise to the suffering and daily drama in the black townships at a particular time in this country’s history. The themes explored are relevant to present-day social and cultural contexts. Problems in the workplace, the effects of crime, overcrowded public transport, educational discrepancies, generational conflicts, forbidden love affairs and escapism through excessive drinking are some of the pressing factors which govern South African life today, just as they did during the *Drum* decade.

2. ‘A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures’

The New London Group (1996) contends that the variety of text forms associated with information and media technologies as well as increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in the world today necessitate a broader view of literacy than that portrayed by traditional language-based approaches. One of the key ideas informing the New London Group’s document is the increasing complexity and inter-relationship of different modes of meaning (1996: 78). The **what** of this pedagogy therefore focusses on designs of meaning, defined as the ability to make new meanings

from available representational resources. Design involves three elements to indicate that meaning making is an active, dynamic process, namely; Available Designs, Designing and the Redesigned. Although the document includes an exposition of these designs, I agree with Pennycook's assessment that "without a clearer sense of the conditions of possibility for such creations, this remains rather a vague formulation" (1996: 169). Though brief and unelaborated, the most applicable part of this document would seem to be its pedagogical framework, the **how** of 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures', which encompasses four interrelated aspects, namely; situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice. This describes an entire learning process, requiring learners to attain the necessary personal and theoretical distance from a situation by constructively critiquing it, accounting for its cultural location, creatively extending it and applying it, and eventually innovating their own (New London Group 1996: 87).

In the literature classroom, this would imply a movement beyond a reader-centred approach which relies on personal, literary and cultural histories to shape the meanings of texts. Curriculum 2005 makes provision for this movement by its emphasis on the negotiation of meaning by all learners in the classroom, and in underlining that the "ways in which construction of meaning varies according to cultural, social and personal differences are identified and responded to" (SO1) and that the "manipulative uses of language and text are identified, analysed and responded to effectively" (SO 2). In keeping with these outcomes, and in order to avoid culturally intolerant readings of a text in educational settings in which the ideologies underlying the new constitution and curriculum have not been fully accepted, teachers will have to motivate learners to apply the principles of political criticism. Thomson (1992: 22–23) explains that political critics view the linguistic and the social as inseparable in the structure of discourse and believe that there is no such thing as an ideologically neutral text or reader. These critics claim that literature should be incorporated into the larger study of cultural practices. They also state that, in a world of inequality and struggle, learners should be given access to the powerful discourses of their culture so that they may be allowed to contribute towards changing and re-making both culture and society, instead of being passively shaped by these forces. The aims of political criticism are reflected in all four aspects of 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures'.

2.1 Situated Practice

The New London Group's approach encompasses an understanding of difference and diversity and the ability to reflect critically on texts and the world outside the classroom. According to the group, this calls for immersion in meaningful practices, taking into account the affective and socio-cultural needs of all learners. The group sees cultural and linguistic diversity as a classroom resource, in which learners' previous and current experiences, as well as their extra-school communities and discourses are recruited as an integral part of the learning experience. As with other aspects of the New London Group's document, the teacher will have to take cognisance of learners' "lifeworlds" (spaces for community life where local and specific meanings are made) in order to implement the ideas effectively (NLG, 1996: 70). Heath (1983) has pointed out that ethnographies of communication help to break down the boundaries between classroom and home, encouraging teachers and learners to try to bridge language and cultural differences and to respect the values and ways of life of particular communities. An example of the use of situated practice in the teaching of *The Drum Decade* may include the recruitment of the knowledge of learners in multicultural classrooms in regard to the customs and traditions which govern marriages in different cultures. As a starting point, a knowledge of African marriages can be harnessed in a

study of “The Lesanes of Nadia Street” by Ezekiel Mphahlele, as well as in a discussion about the traditional role of a “mabalane” (the master of ceremonies) in Casey Motsisi’s “Kid Playboy”.

The New London Group (1996: 82) contends that meanings are constituted through relationships to other texts, text types and various modes of meaning and that any text can be viewed in terms of the intertextual chains (historical series of texts) it draws upon, and in terms of the transformations it works upon them. Situated practice based on an investigation into the differences and commonalities between past editions of *Drum* magazine and the present-day *Drum* may serve to highlight a number of important social factors. In *An Index to 'Africa's Leading Magazine' 1951–1965*, Woodson (1988: 134–150) lists a total of two hundred and seventeen articles based directly on South African politics, representing a mere 11% of the total. Using these statistics as a starting point, learners can be led to a general enquiry into the amount of social and political comment incorporated into the contemporary *Drum* magazine, which continues to be aimed at a black readership. This type of research will promote an insight into the impact of censorship and market-related forces on local publications in past and present-day contexts. By (*inter alia*) comparing recent advertisements in *Drum* with the advertisements of the 50's and 60's, learners may gain some insight into why the present-day *Drum* magazine is so similar in layout and concerns to *You* (a magazine with mass appeal which targets an English White South African readership) and *Huisgenoot* (its sister magazine aimed at speakers of Afrikaans). The impact of an emerging black middle class in post-apartheid South Africa can be assessed in terms of the increasing homogenization of these magazines. The concept of using situated practice as a basis for the teaching of South African texts may thus provide the educator, as well as learners, with important information about how changing social and cultural contexts such as rapid urbanization, increasing access to electronic media, and the movement to mixed suburbs and schools have impacted on learners and learning styles.

2.2 Overt Instruction

The New London Group (1996: 86) defines overt instruction as “active interventions on the part of the teacher and other experts that scaffold learning activities within the community of learners and that allow the learner to gain explicit information at times when it can most usefully organize and guide practice, building on and recruiting what the learner already knows and has accomplished”. The group submits that this does not imply direct transmission, drills and rote memorization; supporting Vygotsky’s argument that certain forms of overt instruction are needed to supplement immersion techniques in order to allow learners to gain conscious control and awareness of what is acquired (ibid: 85). Delpit (1988: 284) has described this process as “the need to help students to establish their own voices, and to coach those voices to be heard in the larger society”. As with other aspects of the **how** of ‘A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures’, overt instruction is based on an attempt to ensure that differences of culture, language and gender are not barriers to educational success (N.L.G 1996: 61). Pennycook (1996: 170) points out that the NLG document is concerned centrally with the provision of access to power, recognizing that access and power are becoming increasingly diverse and complex. Delpit (1998) believes that, if a person is not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier. As part of an overall approach, overt instruction can be a very useful strategy in empowering learners from a variety of backgrounds, particularly in the South African situation, with its history of massive educational inequalities.

Overt instruction can be combined with situated practice and implemented in a number of ways. In an earlier article, a member of the New London Group, Sarah Michaels (1995: 20–21),

outlined ways of using learners home-based ways of speaking and reasoning to help make meaning in a text. She describes a method known as 'Reciprocal Teaching', in which learners and a teacher engage in a dialogue, collaboratively developing an interpretation of a piece of text whilst reading it as a group. Although the process of interacting with the text is made overt by modelling and scaffolding by the educator, learners are also scaffolded to adopt new roles, such as those of leader and critic as well as to practice higher-order thinking skills such as questioning and summarizing. During this collaborative interpretation, the teacher is able to monitor and evaluate emerging competence or difficulty and can push for deeper, between-the-lines comprehension of the text. In a study of *The Drum Decade*, this type of approach may prove very useful in promoting multi-layered insights which are based on the prior knowledge and backgrounds of learners.

Curriculum 2005 and 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures' encompass Gardner's (1993) belief that intelligence consists of many separate, independent systems which interact with one another and that educational programmes should take cognisance of factors such as the various intelligences which a particular culture values. Specific Outcome 3 in the senior phase of Curriculum 2005 specifies that levels of complexity and variety be obtained by using a wide range of texts. Similarly, the New London Group (1996: 64) focuses on modes of representation in which the textual is also related to the visual, the audio, the spatial, the behavioural and so on. The use of the complementary visual and verbal texts in the picture story "Baby Come Duze" by Don Mattera in *The Drum Decade* may present learners with a range of possibilities and tools for literary analysis, facilitating the use of various intelligences and individual learning styles. In 'Jewels in the crown: picture books in secondary English' Johnston (1992: 168) points out; "At different levels of literary and cultural experience, we are able to make meaning from these texts of varying sophistication and complexity". One of the most important advantages of using texts such as "Baby Come Duze" in the multicultural classroom is that these can facilitate overt instruction and a sense of fulfilment for learners for whom English is not a first language. Activities such as group discussion, project work and role play which allow learners to critically reflect on the "writers/speaker's/signer's point of view" (S.O.1), would be aided by the visual and verbal texts in "Baby Come Duze" and the consequent ease with which the story line can be followed. Cultural literacy based on the visual and verbal elements in this text could include aspects such as the storyteller's depiction of romantic relationships, the fashions of the fifties, the types of shops which existed at the time, modes of settling disputes or even of washing clothes. Situated practice and overt instruction can facilitate learners' investigations into their own commonalities and differences with the characters in *The Drum Decade*, leading to the possibility of a re-interpretation and re-making of present-day culture.

2.3 Critical Framing

According to the New London Group (1996: 85–86), "Immersion and many sorts of overt framing are notorious as socializing agents that can render learners quite uncritical and unconscious of the cultural locatedness of meanings and practices". In order to avoid this, they affirm that learning should include critical framing in relation to the historical, social, cultural, political, ideological and value-centred relations of particular systems of knowledge and social practice. Buckingham and Sefton-Greene reflect this view by claiming that, in a transformed curriculum, learners should be allowed to articulate and debate the assumptions and judgements about the value of various cultural products, as well as question the processes by which such judgements are made, including their social origins and functions (1994: 5). In allowing learners access to a broader range of

cultural and institutional resources, differences should be recognized and negotiated in such a way that they complement each other (NLG, 1996: 69).

This is reflected in Curriculum 2005, which affirms that learners should reflect critically on values and attitudes, and, at the same time, try to respond with empathy to the thoughts and emotions of others. From stories which seem to glamorize crime, such as “Crime for Sale” by Arthur Mogale and “Love Comes Deadly” by Mbokotwane Manqupu, to the depiction of the frustrations and suffering as well as the resilience and decency of ordinary township people in the “Lesane” stories by Ezekiel Mphahlele, the range of values and attitudes represented in the *Drum* stories makes these texts a rich source for an approach which incorporates critical framing. In Can Themba’s “Mob Passion”, the irony of a gentle and loving female protagonist being impelled by faction fighting to hack a close relative to death provides the reader with an insight into the reality of life in the strife-torn townships of the 50’ and 60’s. Ogun-Balogun (1991: 51) explains that irony is used by African writers to “present a balanced view of reality in its multidimensional complexity”, and Themba’s use of irony in the *Drum* stories is in keeping with this aim. In a study carried out at The University of the North, McCabe (1999: 256) established that an analysis and discussion of black protest literature helps to develop students’ critical thinking skills and to confront the morality of issues that are raised. Although the *Drum* writers were wary of direct political comment Chapman (1989: 223) clarifies that they did perform a vital social role:

The implications for retrieval and revaluation are important ones, and the basic ethical criterion becomes not what behaviour a text will prescribe, but what qualities it will make available for a variety of practical stances. On this model, works do not have to address political life directly, but elicit fundamental forms of desire, admiration and critical recognition that can motivate efforts to produce social change.

Critical framing in the literature classroom would thus serve to firmly situate the stories in *The Drum Decade* within the ambit of black protest literature. A study of stories such as “Mob Passion” has the capacity to lead to an exploration and critical assessment of the morality of certain forms of individual and community action, thereby advancing efforts to try to bring about social change through transformed practice. Eagleton (1983: 4) asserts that literature allows us to “grapple with language in a more strenuous, self-conscious way than usual, so that the world which that language contains is vividly renewed”. Critical framing of the language in the *Drum Decade* can promote critical, visual and cultural literacies in the South African classroom. One of the primary aspects of critical language awareness in Specific Outcome 2 of Curriculum 2005 is the focus on power relations between the speakers of different languages as well as varieties of the same language. The aim is to develop the learner’s ability to understand the ways in which language is used as an instrument to reflect, shape and manipulate people’s beliefs, actions and relationships. Class and race distinctions are clearly foregrounded in the final lines of “Under the Blue-Gum Trees” by Dyke H. Sentso:

*Genade raised himself to his full height... the height of a rich town councillor.
‘With me,’ he said, ‘many things are possible. You know that, don’t you?’
Moiloa knew, and he knew, too, that with white people, many things were possible...were made possible...But that did not matter at the moment. What mattered was that he would get a stand... his life’s ambition.
‘Thank you very much’, he said... and then ‘Thank You very much’ (59).*

The conversation is particularly ironical in view of the fact that Moiloa had been unconditionally forgiving after his only son had been accidentally shot dead by Genade’s son and later, when he

had been peremptorily dismissed from his job on the farm after the white man had decided to increase his own fortunes by moving to the city.

An investigation into the language of power in *The Drum Decade* also allows learners to develop an awareness of how language evolves and changes over time and place and how the *Drum* writers used this forum to reflect their changing socio-political milieu. This ranges from a formality of expression which marks the prose of Sentso, who was one of the earlier writers, to the racy, consciously colloquial style of Alex la Guma and Casey Motsisi towards the end of the decade. Sentso makes his reliance on canonical English texts, oral African texts as well as on his mission school background evident in these lyrical words in “Under the Blue Gum Trees”:

The sun had set when Moiloa reached home. The sun would never rise in Moiloa's heart (55).

Later in the decade, Alex La Guma reveals the influence of American gangster movies in ‘Battle for Honour’ by saying:

Fancy hit him low. The flabby man was down on his knees. The crowd hooted (164).

Thus, critical framing may also include a study of the appropriation and hybridization of language by the writers in *The Drum Decade*. ‘A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures’ places emphasis on the concept of hybridity, on the multiple layers of identities and on the fact that differences in culture, gender and language (including “hybrid cross-cultural discourse”) should not be seen as barriers to success. As “lifeworlds” become more divergent and their boundaries more blurred, the central fact of language becomes the multiplicity of meanings and their continual intersection (NLG, 1996: 71). Casey Motsisi’s *On the Beat* stories, which are seen as a culmination of the *Drum* style, combine American slang with distinctive African elements. In “Kid Playboy” (177–179), the comparison of the voice of the “mabalane” to that of a “constipated ostrich” helps to retain the African flavour of the story, and the statement that this master of ceremonies did not get the expected “nip of hooch” serves as an example of the American elements in Motsisi’s writing. In “Baby Come Duze”, Don Mattera provides some insight into this type of hybridization by stating, “There’s a new lingo in the townships, bright as the bright-boys, made of Afrikaans, Zulu, Sotho, English and brand-new words” (109). The explanations which appear in tandem with each piece of visual and verbal text would allow learners in present-day linguistic contexts to easily understand this “lingo”. Cultural literacy can be promoted as learners in multicultural classrooms discuss the multifaceted language which appears in the text, and compare this with current “lingo” and “tsotsi-taal”, which in some instances, may be part of students’ lifeworlds. Mphahlele points out that the language in the *Drum* magazine of the 50’s and 60’s indicated that the black writer “had found his tongue, a language, and relative freedom of expression that matched the political expression of the decade” (in Chapman, 1989: 218). Couzen attributes the shift in language to the fact that the forces which produced the “available idiom” failed to deliver on the expectations raised and disillusionment set in (ibid: 218).

Media literacy can also be promoted in the critical framing of the journalistic texts in *The Drum Decade*. As Kress (1995: 30) states, the English classroom is a site where all the modes and media of public communication can be debated, analysed and taught. A study of the media in the classroom is a requirement in Curriculum 2005 and assessment criteria 4/5/7 in Specific Outcome 4 are based on the accuracy, relevance and reliability of information as well as the learner’s ability to identify the difference between fact, fiction and bias. Critical language awareness may be useful in promoting media literacy in young learners, as they are led to discern how the use of language

by the writers/journalists in *The Drum Decade* reflects their own feelings and preoccupations and, at the same time, conveys messages about politics and society. Stories such as “Mr Drum goes to Jail” by Henry Nxumalo, (nicknamed “Mr Drum”), and “Let the People Drink!” by Can Themba, can be studied both as short story texts and as journalistic exposés. Woodson (1988: 14) says that during the 1950’s, in particular, *Drum* was not only a touchstone for relevant issues, but also served as a “talisman” of urban African journalistic style. In “Mr Drum Goes to Jail”, Nxumalo tries to be objective by adopting a matter of fact, unadorned style of writing in keeping with an accepted journalistic technique. His article begins with a preamble to establish the accuracy of the description of prison life which follows. At the end, he appends a well-researched record of the legislation pertaining to this issue and offers constructive solutions to the problems that he describes. However, despite valiant attempts at objectivity, he cannot hide his overriding dismay at the loss of humanity in an unjust system. His feelings are revealed in his depiction of the degrading “tausa” dance during which prisoners were forced to expose their rectums to prison warders for inspection, and in his use of adjectives in sentences such as:

No spoons were provided so I had my breakfast with stinking soiled hands (44).

Nxumalo’s use of language therefore conveys an underlying indictment of the ways in which apartheid robbed decent people of their dignity. His attempts at seriousness and objectivity represent an earnest attempt to bring about a change in the apartheid mind-set. Political criticism can illuminate the gross violation of human rights described by this journalist, in the context of South Africa’s new constitution and the revelations at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Chapman (1989: 197) points out, “As part of the socializing process, [therefore], *Drum* would lead its crusades at the same time as evidencing the limitations of commercial constraints, but also of forms of popular consciousness that prevailed”. In his campaign against unfair prohibition laws in “Let the People Drink!” Themba portrays himself as a sophisticated urbanite, who frequents shebeens not only with the journalistic intent of exposing the illicit liquor trade and the futility of prohibition laws, but also to demonstrate his own enjoyment of the underground culture in the townships at the time. He therefore argues for change without becoming sombre or moralistic. Chapman (ibid: 209) states that a “recognizably fictionalized texture” is part of this journalistic report. This is evident in the following extract, which learners may be encouraged to analyse in order to highlight the combination of storyteller and journalistic styles in the text:

In other words, if the illicit liquor trade were to be stopped, we could cut prosecutions and convictions very heavily. This would be cutting crime heavily!

The other day, in a shebeen, I was caught by members of the liquor squad with a nip of brandy (about a quart bottle.) At the police station I was told that I would have to pay an admission of guilt that was 5 pounds for a bottle of brandy or part thereof. The police were very friendly. They told me that a man of my standing ought to apply for a liquor licence, and not to be found drinking in shebeens.

I paid 5 pounds like thousands of other men of my standing, caught in the same circumstances (104).

Themba’s provision of light relief in a report which centres around the draconian laws governing life in the black townships at the time has the effect of enhancing his popular appeal. A study of this, and other journalistic texts in *The Drum Decade* can therefore be used by teachers to encourage learners to discern the differences between fact, fiction and bias in mass media. In highlighting the forces that had an impact on community life in black townships in the fifties, the

articles by well-known journalists may also succeed in providing learners from diverse backgrounds with the knowledge of how both individual and community action and reaction shape, as well as are shaped by, a particular time in a country's history. In keeping with the central aim of critical pedagogy, critical framing as part of 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures' should enable learners to see themselves as active designers, or makers of social futures.

2.4 Transformed Practice

A judicious combination of situated practice, overt instruction and critical framing can lead to transformed practice. In Outcomes-Based Education the attainment of knowledge is assessed in terms of application and innovation. Curriculum 2005 stresses that assessment should provide teachers with constructive and continuous information about the life-skills which have been acquired during the learning process, stating that pedagogy should be constantly reformulated on the basis of continuous assessment. This also forms one of the guiding principles of assessment in the New London Group's document, which states that all learning should culminate in innovation and transformed practice, where new insights are put to work in similar, or different contexts or cultural sites. Although the document does not provide specific information on modes of assessment, it also contains a general emphasis on the fact that evaluation should be situated, contextualized and used developmentally (NLG, 1996: 86). Continuous assessment can be based on activities such as the compilation of a portfolio of responses to particular stories in *The Drum Decade*, culminating in a self-reflective exercise which includes a consideration of the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills which have been acquired in this process.

The goal of transformed practice may also be promoted by means of cultural production in the classroom. In the form of role-playing and writing, this could include the re-invention of the short stories to reflect contemporary socio-cultural situations. Learners can also be encouraged to use literary texts such as Mattered's "Baby Come Duze", and Motsisi's "On the Beat" stories as a starting point for a discussion of issues such as the impact of Aids nowadays on the advisability of having multiple sexual partners. As the language of some of the later writing in *The Drum Decade* reflects the effects of cultural globalization, this may also lead to an interrogation by learners of the increasing hybridizations in present-day lifestyles and the social effects thereof. Transformed practice depends largely on the recognition and successful negotiation of differences in multicultural settings. The New London Group acknowledges that this type of negotiation will be a difficult and often painful process (1996: 89). Nonetheless, although differences in development and background do not allow for agreement about values and attitudes in some instances, this prepares individuals for the fact that their views will be challenged in the world outside the classroom (McGregor, 1992: 140–147).

3. Conclusion

A text such as *The Drum Decade* has the potential to help learners in present-day classrooms to situate their lives in terms of the cultural, social and political events of the past and to try to implement positive changes for a better future. Although this type of study may cover unfamiliar and potentially problematic domains in particular communities, some learners may find it easier to identify with the values and experiences explored in these short story texts, especially in view of the fact that the effects of apartheid continue to prevail in many of the inequitable social structures in South Africa's fledgling democracy. A pedagogical approach which combines situated practice,

overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice has the capacity to help learners from a wide spectrum of society to realize that although socio-cultural factors are influenced by past and present-day political realities, the new democratic process allows individuals and communities to innovate and try to implement creative and positive strategies for social transformation.

However, in the presence of multiple identities and interests, and particularly in view of the history of division and dissent between races and cultures in South Africa, it remains to be seen whether any literary text can be effectively used as a tool to promote transformation. This goal will be especially elusive and problematic in South African classrooms if the pace of educational transformation is hindered by a lack of training and a resultant lack of understanding by teachers of the principles of the new curriculum, and (in a few instances), it would seem, a total unwillingness to accept changes. Nevertheless, if the ultimate aim of literature in the classroom is to produce a knowledgeable, socially aware, open-minded and well-balanced individual, then the development of cultural, critical, visual and media literacies should become a major focus area. The selection of appropriate texts such as *The Drum Decade*, when combined with an approach such as 'A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures', has the potential to develop these literacies, thereby facilitating the realization of the specific outcomes of Language, Literacy and Communication in the senior phase of Curriculum 2005.

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