TOWARDS THE TRAINING OF PSYCHOLOGY TUTORS: AN ECOSYSTEMIC APPROACH

by

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PROMOTER: PROF C MOORE

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I declare that *Towards the training of psychology tutors: an ecosystemic approach* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the training of Psychology tutors at the University of South Africa's (UNISA) learning centres with a view to providing a paradigm shift in tutor training and contributing towards new ways of thinking about education and training in South Africa. It furthermore opens up alternative ways of thinking about the process of facilitation in general.

Although the study focuses on tutor training within the discipline of Psychology, the outcomes of the study are applicable to tutor training and tutoring in general, and make a valuable contribution in identifying the basic principles underlying tutor training in other disciplines as well. An ecosystemic approach encourages the trainer-trainee system to become aware of how they affect each other's thinking and behaviour. The basic principles underlying the process of facilitation that emerge in the study, therefore apply equally to the training of tutors and the tutoring of learners by others. These principles provide guidelines in terms of the processes involved in tutor development, as well as inform the issues and themes around which the sharing of ideas can be choreographed in the field of tutor training and tutoring.

In conclusion, the information generated in the study focuses specifically on student support in the form of face-to-face tutorials in the distance education setting, the form of tertiary education which is most accessible to many historically disadvantaged learners in South Africa today. More generally, it will make a valuable contribution in the current educational context in South Africa, where student support is of the utmost importance in striving for equality in education, and where the focus is on outcomes-based education

Key words: Tutor training, tutorial programme, distance education, open learning, face-to-face tutorials, learning centres, ecosystemic theory, outcomes-based education, facilitation.

iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER   **Page**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Only in this century has there been a greater recognition that the search for epistemological security can never succeed. This suggests that we would be better employed working to open up *new* perspectives, rather than trying to justify whatever perspectives we currently hold .... We should, perhaps, be attempting to *in*validate our own interpretations; to look for the cracks in their apparently polished surfaces ... (we should all be) ... required to spend time debunking our own perspectives, pointing out their flaws and shortcomings; documenting the anomalies and oddities that remain puzzling and unexplained, the fish that have escaped our nets. These things waken us in the small hours to a recognition that, even as psychologists, there is much about people we still can't give a name to. (Packer & Addison, 1989, p.291)

The University of South Africa (UNISA) has commonly been referred to as a university that educates its learners at a distance. Teaching and learning by correspondence is the origin of what is today called distance education (Bell & Tight, 1993). Open education or learning on the other hand, is taken to refer to distance education institutions that make structural changes so as to provide their students and staff members with as much access, choice and control as possible over content, strategies and learning opportunities (Carr, 1990). One such strategy, in the context of this study, is the provision of decentralised learning centres, where the students of UNISA are afforded the opportunity to meet with tutors once a week in order to discuss and generate ideas

about their course content or syllabus. This study addresses its concern for the tutor in the tutorial programme. In particular, the approach to training tutors comes under view.

The notion of training was once defined as "any specific instructional programme or set of procedures designed to yield (as an end product) a trainee capable of making some specific response, or engaging in some complex skilled activity" (Reber, 1985, p.782). Since then, many definitions of training have sprung up like the proverbial hydra's many protrusions. Some authors (in the context of distance and open education) adhere to the linear notion that an expert (the trainer) can directly influence the trainee, while other authors have made the shift from a linear perspective to a circular one, where the trainee is seen to be part of a larger system (Zeleny, 1998). In circular epistemology the trainee is only part of the system and is seen to be recursively linked (and in interaction with) other parts of the system, such as their students, fellow trainees and lecturers. It is in this sense that a circular epistemology leads to the awareness that no 'man' or action is an island, as all actions are parts of organised interaction (Zeleny, 1998). What is called for in this study is exactly this kind of orthogonal interaction, since it is only through creating new realities with others or debunking our own perspectives through our conversations with others, that new meaning (around training) might emerge.

This study contends that prospective tutor trainees should be trained to tutor such that new meanings around and about training may emerge (as opposed to encouraging the enactment and re-enactment of old meanings where training is nothing more than a repetitive act) so that tutors may have the opportunity to construct a whole host of realities, both new *and* old.

In approaches to training, where the emphasis is on the individual trainee, there is the tendency to bear the trainee solely responsible for cooperating and learning from the trainer.

With the advent of family therapy and research, the focus shifted from the individual to the family system as a whole. The approach in this study takes the shift further, and includes

tenets from general systems theory, cybernetics and ecology. This is the ecosystemic approach (Hoffman, 1985). The author is propagating an ecosystemic approach, where the focus is on context (the ecology of ideas that will emerge during the training process) and on patterns that connect (the training system as a whole). The author will furthermore attempt, at all times, to encompass a vision which will enable her to see both the autonomy of whole systems, as well the connection of discrete parts of the system.

The ecoystemic approach to training calls for a different world view and moves away from the position that locates the author or researcher as an outside agent. In this sense, students, tutors, trainers, lecturers and the author can be said to be co-constructing realities or sharing meanings. These shared meanings cannot be just anything. They need to fit with the ideas of the author and the participants, which have been informed by the ideas from the training context (Zeleny, 1998).

The assumption here is that the author, as well as the tutors and the lecturers at UNISA, have their own way of viewing and making sense of the world of training. The author will therefore attempt to try and understand the participants' worlds, gleaned from their comments. In interaction with and through conversation with other significant role players, the author will also offer her meanings and interpretations. This is an exciting prospect, for if meaning is constructed in language, it can also be deconstructed and a new meaning can emerge. Since we can never attain complete epistemological security (without making a blundering epistemological error) searching for new meaning is not a worthless pursuit. In fact, it gives us an appreciation for the perspective of another. Is this not similar to the notion of empathy and positive regard, and are empathy and positive regard (arguably) not the bedrock on which psychotherapy rests? Discovering new meaning in interaction with others, then, may also be the bedrock on which qualitative research rests (Doherty, 1991).

Aim and Rationale of the Study

As will be made apparent in subsequent chapters, where literature surveys are provided, there is a wealth of information on open learning support services, yet very little information is available on tutor training approaches or support services within the departments of psychology at major distance or open education universities. UNISA is no exception. The aim of the study is to suggest and provide *an* approach to tutor training, based on ecosystemic ideas, that will inform the thinking of those lecturers at the department of psychology, who are planning to put together a tutor training package in order to help to guide all UNISA learning centre tutors in their work. This thesis will therefore be making a positive contribution towards the project in question.

In addition, the study addresses ecosystemic formulations on tutor training in an attempt to create a context for dialogue between a variety of role players so that all participants can consider themselves stakeholders. All contributions will be deemed important. No one contribution will be deemed better or more worthy than another. Collaboration among and contributions from all the participants lends the study credibility in that it focuses on recursiveness in the interaction between parts of the system, and helps the author-researcher hypothesise about holistic patterns. This is crucial to the emergence of new information, as communication events are triggered by similarity and difference in interaction with others. This new information may be passed on to the next sequence or part in the circuit. All will have (and continue to have) their say, ad infinitum.

It is hoped that this study will make a valuable contribution to research in the field of psychology and tutor training. More generally, it is hoped that the study will contribute towards new ways of thinking about education and training in South Africa.

Design of the Study

This study will attempt to look at the world of tutor training from the point of view of all the participants mentioned because they are in a good position to describe and comment on their observations and experiences (Zeleny, 1998).

In light of the above sentiments, it is deemed appropriate to use a qualitative research approach, where rich commentary on ideas pertaining to tutor training is likely to emerge.

Research of this nature can lead to personal growth in the author, as well as in the participants, in that each is encountering and sharing ideas around each other's constructions of meaning. The author and the participants cannot but be affected by the encounter.

This approach is also a modest one. It acknowledges that the author is merely a co-learner, who can only be aware of the segment of the training system with which she is interacting. She will only ever have an incomplete view. Any attempt to know everything, in any event, goes against the belief in this study. It (the study) was designed to generate ideas on tutor training, and not to capture anything absolute, including 'truth'.

Sampling and Selection

In this study, sampling was largely purposive. All the participants that were used were selected on the basis of convenience, in that they were part of UNISA's tutorial programme in one or other way and could thus provide rich comments (from their perspective) on the subject of tutor training. The initial sample comprised three tutors, who demonstrated and critiqued their work on video. In addition, written comments from their students were collected. Finally, video and audio-recorded comments from fellow tutors, lecturers in psychology, as well as staff

members at UNISA, were recorded.

Data Collection

The video demonstrations, and the host of comments that were recorded either on paper, video or audio cassette, were the methods used to generate information.

Data Analysis

An ecosystemic frame of reference, which emphasises the discovery of new meaning, will be used to analyse and discuss the data. The following sequence will be followed in the execution of the study:

– First, three tutors will be asked to demonstrate their work on video. The demonstrations will be recorded on videotape.

– Second, these tutors will review their own work and then commit their comments on videotape.

– Thereafter, their students will be approached to offer their comments in writing.

– Fellow tutors, lecturers and staff members at the UNISA will then be approached to offer their comments on video or audio tape.

– All the information generated will be transcribed and will be documented in the appendix of this study.

– The data will be analysed in such a way that ideas and guiding principles relating to the subject of tutor training might emerge. An ecosystemic frame of reference will be employed.

− This will be followed by a discussion in an attempt to integrate all the findings.

− Finally, the conclusion will attempt to evaluate the study and to make relevant recommendations.

Format of the Study

This study will comprise both an aesthetic (literature survey) as well as a pragmatic component.

The literature survey will present a dialectic around the existing body of knowledge in the field of education, in order to orient the reader in terms of the research available in the field of education in general.

The purpose of the practical component will be to give tutors an opportunity to demonstrate their ideas about tutoring, as well as to afford them the chance to voice those ideas by means of commentary.

The study will comprise 11 chapters. Imagine, if you will, that these chapters can be structurally depicted as a set of concentric circles, each representing a chapter within the overall system of the thesis. Each chapter forms a boundary that is useful for understanding the entire body of work. The body of work can be said to start from the most general point and systematically veers towards its specific area of interest:

Chapter 2 begins with the outermost circle and can be called the 'environment' of the thesis, in that it addresses the surrounding or *context* of education and training in general. In particular, traditional, distance and open education will be defined. Thereafter, aspects of open education, namely face-to-face tutorials and tutor training, will be addressed.

Chapter 3 represents the next concentric circle and takes the reader from the context of

education in general, to the *specific* context of education and educational support services at UNISA.

Chapter 4 (the next level) qualifies which aspect of the support service is of interest to this study, namely the tutor in the tutorial programme, as well as how the tutor can be supported adequately enough by means of training endeavours.

Chapter 5 returns to the next extra-individual concentric circle or level, and offers the reader the author's epistemological stance, namely ecosystemic theory. In particular, the notions of ecologies of meaning and human systems as linguistic systems predominate the discussion.

Chapter 6 is the pragmatic complement to the aesthetic side of Chapter 5. It concerns itself with the nuts-and-bolts of the research. The qualitative research paradigm, the role of the author-researcher, and the research procedure are covered in depth.

Chapter 7, 8, and 9 will contain the author's (largely ecosystemic) analysis of the participants' demonstrations and comments. Insights and guiding principles relating to tutoring and tutor training will be discussed.

Chapter 10 will contain a discussion on the findings in Chapter(s) 7, 8, and 9.

Chapter 11 will be the concluding chapter. The study will be evaluated and recommendations on the subject of training will be made.

Conclusion

The study can be described as an evolutionary journey towards an alternative way of thinking, in which the author has chosen tutor training as her vehicle of choice. It is a journey which (at this point) has taken up a decade in the author's life, and is likely to continue for countless more years. The reader can thus only be invited to join the *theoretical* starting line.

Epistemological mazes and a few unsuspected surprises lie ahead. Mostly, though, it is a journey of psychological discovery, where new meaning and ideas will serve as a contribution *towards* the notion of tutor training, as well as offer the reader a possible place for some respite and repose. After all, journeys (of whatever nature) are usually exciting, but can also be tiring. The journey in this study is likely to be no different.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPT DEFINITIONS

Introduction

Grenville Rumble (1989) calls for accurate concept definitions. He argues that the way

in which concepts (basic to this study) such as 'distance education' and 'open education' are

defined, has resulted in the misuse of language. He points out, for example, that distance

education is often described as a closed system by virtue of the fact that it limits contact between

student and lecturer. He maintains that we are in danger of having the wool pulled over our eyes

if we fail to see that distance education systems, by their very nature, tend to liberate students

from the need to study in a set place and at a set time. In this sense they are open systems.

However, this physical and temporal openness may lead to a closed system if undue emphasis

is placed on equipment and facilities such as telephones, computers, E-mail and the Internet.

Some students, especially those in so-called third world countries, will be unable to gain access

to these facilities without incurring great expenses or inconvenience (Rumble, 1989).

Furthermore, the term 'open education' is sometimes used to describe forms of provisions which

are anything but open in the sense that they are 'closed' by various barriers -- entrance

requirements, time constraints, financial demands and geographical distances, to mention a few.

Rumble (1989) feels that when adjectives such as 'open' and 'closed' are employed, one

needs to define the adjectives clearly and debate the fact that education may be either closed or

open OR open and closed, depending on the criteria employed. He calls (once again) for accurate

definitions and through conscientious effort, reaches the conclusion that distance education is a

method of and a means by which education is achieved, whereas open education or learning

describes the *nature, objectives and character* of the education offered either contiguously or at

a distance.

Meighan (1994) suggests that language is not only misapplied, but it can also serve as a

ploy. She proposes that there are 'ideologies of education' held by competing agents where the

explicit aim is to promote a particular set of ideas or beliefs. The common approach of such

agents of ideology has been to contrast two polarised types of education with the implication that

one approach is superior, more open or less closed than the other. This is often referred to as a

dichotomous or dualistic approach. Such approaches define terms such as 'traditional',

'distance' and 'open' education loosely and imprecisely in order to understate the inter-

relationship of part-whole systems of education.

Meighan's (1994) solution to the problem of different conceptual levels appears to be

twofold:

–   To regard ideologies as networked, that is, there are links between various ideologies so

    that we can begin to refer to 'ideologies of education systems' instead of separate

    approaches with competing ideological 'realities'.

-   No one ideology is superior to another. This implies that when ideologies do contradict

    each other, they can be said to be saying something different, as opposed to something

    better.

Authors such as Keegan (1986), Holmberg (1989) and Thorpe (1988), call for greater

clarity of thought and expression and believe that it can be achieved by making careful

distinctions between concepts -- distinctions that address both the use or misuse of language and

the ideology of the agents concerned. Bateson (1972) suggested that distinctions cannot be

avoided due to the nature of occidental language, but that there are 'better' and 'worse' ways of

splitting the universe into nameable parts. One way is to subject the way one frames or defines

things to a dialectic, where one continually unravels and challenges varying definitions. This

notion is similar to the one in postmodern thinking which emphasises that, whatever definition

one is using (from the literature) at any given point, there is an *acknowledgement* that there is a

discussion going on between authors on the subject in question (Doan, 1997). Authors are thus

at liberty to deconstruct the constructs of other authors by means of meta-narratives. They also

recognise that there are multiple ways of constructing ideas, and thus there must be a multitude

of truths as well (Koetting, 1994). In this way, no one author is credited for having captured the

'truth' as there will always be another author who adds to the debate or rivals the opinion of a

previous author (Doherty, 1991).

Definition of Terms

Seen against the preceding Batesonian and postmodern frame of reference, the following

key concepts (which form an essential backdrop to and foundation for further chapters in the

thesis) need to be discussed and defined:

'Traditional Education'

Traditional education is taken to refer to a residential, campus-based type of higher

education where students and lecturers meet face to face. Kaye and Rumble (1979) hold the term

to mean formal classroom-based instruction in a school, college or university where teacher and

students are physically present at the same time and at the same place. Keegan (1980, p.19)

concurs and words his definition as follows: "In traditional education a teacher teaches. The teacher is present in the lecture room and his success often depends on the rapport he can build up with the students; personalities and even idiosyncrasies may be central".

These aspects, namely, face-to-face teaching and campus-based education, were often regarded as the 'normal' form of education provision. Moore (1973) objected to the hundreds of references to the word 'normal' that he found to refer to the educational activity which takes place during teaching and within the lecture room setting. Since Moore's time, many attempts have been made to phrase matters differently. The terms 'face-to-face', 'conventional', 'oral', 'classroom' and 'group-based' education have all been used as synonyms for traditional education in an attempt to neutralise the effects created by the word 'normal' (Keegan, 1980). Rumble (1989) points out that these synonyms are in themselves problematic. If all these concepts fall under the rubric of 'traditional education', how does one then define 'non-traditional' without implying that what is *NOT* traditional is unorthodox? With further debate, most recent authors agree that, to use the word traditional, is more indicative of an *attitude* than a system of education and can thus never be defined except tangentially (Holmberg, 1986; Pastoll, 1992; Thorpe, 1988).

The tendency in the 1980's and early 1990's was to speak of contact or contiguous teaching (Keegan, 1980; Pastoll, 1992). This holds that learning is supposed to take place only when teaching takes place and at the same time. This seems to imply that learning is a much more labourious process for the distance student by virtue of the fact that teaching and learning do not take place at the same time. Most authors have attempted to transcend the 'war of words' between distance education and contact teaching by pointing out that they are not rival concepts. They are merely stating something different. Contact teaching is associated with full-time study and usually attracts the school leaver, whereas distance education is associated with part-time

14

study and would be a more attractive option for the adult learner who has additional

commitments, such as a job or a family to take care of (Holmberg, 1989; Meighan,1994; Pastoll, 1992).

In addition, contact teachers acknowledge that distance educators embrace outcomes-based education, which focuses on aiding students to develop practical, applied, foundational and reflexive competencies (Killen, 1999). Practical competence refers to *knowing how to* make decisions. Applied competence refers to putting the *knowledge* accrued *into practice.* Foundational competence refers to knowing and understanding *what one knows.* Finally, reflexive competence refers to the ability to learn and adapt through *self-reflection* and to apply the knowledge appropriately and responsibly. Outcomes-based education thus acknowledges the importance of experiential learning (Smith & Castle, 1996). In an undereducated nation such as South Africa, this distance mode of learning can be deemed appropriate as many students live far from educational centres, and educational resources are scarce and costly. Outcomes-based education suggests that learners, wherever they may find themselves, can *first* learn to learn from their own practical experience and in time, and through self-reflection, be helped to frame their experiences intellectually or theoretically, rather than acquiring knowledge first and then applying it to everyday life (Kolb & Lewis, 1997). Research findings suggest that ideas and theories formed through direct experience are stronger than the kind borrowed from others or from books (Fazio & Zanna, 1991). One practical message in such a finding is clear: Ideas resulting from direct experience tend to be stronger, and in the absence of such experiences, the ideas of students will probably only be pale reflections of textbooks or the more passionate views of someone else (Wu & Shaffer, 1997).

Distance Education

The last two decades have witnessed an international upsurge of research in distance education, with both theoretical work, for example, Perraton (1987), and comparative analyses being forwarded (Ancis, 1999; Guerrero & Miller, 1997; Kaye & Rumble, 1981; Rumble, 1986; Rumble & Harry, 1982).

As part of this process, a number of authors -- notably Moore (1973), Peters (1973), Wedemeyer (1977), Bååth (1981), Holmberg (1986; 1989), Keegan (1986), Kapp (1987), Van den Bogaerde (1987), Booyse (1987), Garrison (1989), Garrison and Baynton (1989), Shale (1990), Verduin and Clark (1991), Hansen and Gladfelter (1997) and Bourdeau and Bates (1997) -- have attempted (through the decades) to define distance education and suggest areas for further study within this field of education.

The preceding authors accede that teaching and learning by correspondence is the origin of what is today called distance education. It is thus a term that brought together the teaching and learning elements of this field of education, but acknowledged at the same time, that the teaching acts were separated in time and place from the learning acts.

Moore (1973) viewed distance education as the family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviours were executed apart from the learning behaviours. Peters (1973) defined distance education more narrowly as an *industrialised* form of teaching and learning in that extensive use is made of technical media, and the possibility to instruct great numbers of students (at the same time wherever they live), is made possible. Wedemeyer (1977), viewed by distance educators as the godfather of distance education, held the view that distance education (in Europe) had a usage somewhat comparable to that of independent study in the United States. It was an *omnibus* term used to include all learning and teaching arrangements that were not held

face to face (Kapp, 1987). Keegan (1986, p.31), for one, recognised that a wide range of different concepts and practices have been drawn together under the banner of distance education and articulated his thoughts as follows:

> Distance education is a generic term that includes the range of teaching/learning strategies referred to as 'correspondence education' or 'correspondence study' in the United Kingdom; as 'home study' and 'independent study' in the United States; as 'external studies' in Australia; and as 'distance teaching' or 'teaching at a distance' by the Open University of the United Kingdom.

Having reviewed research in this field, Keegan (1986) worked towards a synthesis and brought together seven characteristics of distance education:

- The quasi-permanent separation of teacher and learner throughout the length of the learning process.

  This distinguishes it from face to face education

- The influence of an educational institution both in the planning and preparation of learning materials and in the provision of student support services.

  This distinguishes it from private study or teach-yourself programmes

- The use of technical media, such as print, audio, video and information technology to unite teacher and learner.

- The provision of two-way communication, such as the telephone, so that the learner may benefit from a dialogue between him and his teacher.

  This distinguishes it from other uses of technology in education

- The possibility of occasional meetings between learners and between teachers and learners for didactic, discussion and socialisation purposes.

- The presence of more industrialised features than in conventional oral education.

- The privatisation of institutional learning.

The publication of this definition led to extensive citation and feedback. In some cases Keegan's definition was adopted without question (Ancis, 1999; Perraton, 1987; Store, 1987). In other cases Keegan (1986) was criticised for portraying distance education as impersonal by adopting some of Peters' (1973) ideas regarding distance education as an industrialised form of education. Bååth (1981) took matters in a different direction and examined the applicability of the teaching models of Skinner's behaviour control model, Egan's model for structural communication and Rogers' model for facilitation of learning (to mention a few), to correspondence education, which he regarded as a subset of distance education (Guerrero & Miller, 1997; Holmberg, 1989). Bååth (1981) found all the models he investigated applicable to distance education. His theoretical investigation led him to place two-way communication as central to the distance education process. When writing correspondence course materials, Bååth was struck by the idea that some kind of two-way communication within the material was possible by means of exercises, self-check tests and questions. Bååth has greatly furthered understanding of two-way communication, but has been criticised for not explaining *how* two-way communication would fit in an overview of the field of correspondence education.

Holmberg (1989) worked on the concept of distance education and took it to refer to the various forms of study which are not under the continuous and immediate supervision of lecturers present with their students in lecture halls or on the same premises.

Holmberg (p.2) expanded on Bååth's (1981) definition of two-way communication and offered the following definition:

> Distance education comprises one-way traffic by means of printed, broadcast and/or recorded presentations of learning matter and two-way traffic between students and their supporting organisation. The one-way presentation of learning matter occurs either through self-contained courses or through study guides to prescribed or recommended reading. Most of the two-way traffic usually occurs in writing, on the telephone or by other media and, usually only secondarily or as a supplement to face to face.

Other authors have taken the notion of two-way communication to describe a guided didactic conversation. Distance education is seen as a guided didactic conversation when there is a kind of two-way conversational traffic taking place through the written and telephone interaction between student and institution (Booyse, 1987; Bourdeau & Bates, 1997; Garrison, 1989; Garrison & Baynton, 1989; Van den Bogaerde, 1987).

Whereas didactic conversation *advises* students on 'how to' tackle problems and connect items of knowledge, *guided* didactic conversation offers *suggestions* to the student as to what to do (Hansen & Gladfelter, 1997). This idea of guided conversation is (as will become apparent) the bedrock on which this thesis lies. An invitation is extended to the student to exchange his views with the teacher. If courses are prepared following these principles, it is believed that they will be attractive to students, in the sense of encouraging them to study, motivating them, as well as helping to facilitate learning (Hansen & Gladfelter, 1997; Shale, 1990).

While the theorists above have tried to define distance education in terms of key characteristics, other writers have injected a note of much needed *realism* into these debates by

arguing that distance education is education at a distance and simply just one form of education (Ancis, 1999; Bourdeau & Bates, 1997). This suggests that, in reality, there is a continuous spectrum between face-to-face and distance forms of education, along which there are no absolute dividing lines (Bell & Tight, 1993). Practically defined, distance education can be seen as a form of education in which distance teaching techniques may predominate, but not to the exclusion of other methods (Verduin & Clark, 1991). The Draft Report on Integrated Learner Support at UNISA described it as a form of organised learning which seeks to overcome the physical separation of learners and those (other than the learners themselves) involved in the organisation of their learning (UNISA, 1997).

This separation applies to the whole learning process or only to certain stages or elements of it. Some face-to-face contact may occur, but its function will be to supplement or reinforce the predominantly distant interaction (Bell & Tight, 1993). Distance education thus offers one set of methods for opening up education to those who are unable or unwilling to regularly attend educational institutions.

On the other hand, Hodgson, Mann and Snell (1999) describe the means of instruction in distance education as being centralised and depersonalised. Centralisation of the control of knowledge and depersonalisation of the teaching role make it potentially more difficult for individual learners to question the value given to knowledge in order to gain some power over it. Hodgson et al. feel it is a paradox to say that an increase in access to educational opportunity may result in a reduction of dialogue and questioning. These authors argue that education is not neutral. Its purpose can be either to domesticate or to liberate the learner.

Education *domesticates* when knowledge is deposited into the passively receiving learners and *liberates* when it engages learners in creative efforts such as dialogue and critique with each other. Boot and Hodgson (1985) (as will be seen shortly) refer to the former as the dissemination

orientation and the latter as the development orientation. Holmberg (1989) demonstrated how factors such as dialogue and critique come to influence the personal development of a student. From his attempts to identify the system of distance education, some of the following parts emerged as essential components:

- Planning and developing the correspondence material.

- Catering for instructive communication, dialogue and critique.

- Counselling students with study and personal problems.

- Administering course developments, distributing material.

- Creating an organisational structure for distance education.

- Evaluating the functioning of the system.

In line with general systems thinking, it is to be expected that these components should influence one another and a change in one will affect the other. The above approach is not necessarily a step-by-step process. Analysis, synthesis and evaluation are recurring stages repeated throughout the process (Holmberg, 1989).

Definitions of distance education are myriad and one can suppose it is because authors are divided as to whether to define the concept in terms of key characteristics, elemental components or as a system of education. Distance education as a concept is indeed intricate. Whilst it does have to do with the absence of formal, personal teacher-lecturer contact, it also provides educational opportunities to students who would otherwise not be able to receive an education due to constraints of time, finance or locality (Rumble, 1986; Rumble & Harry, 1982).

Open Education

Various attempts at arriving at a definition of open education have revolved around the notion of freedom from constraints on the learning process. Escotet (1980, p.144), who was writing from a Latin American background, defined open education as follows:

Open education is particularly characterised by the removal of restrictions, exclusions and privileges; by the accreditation of students' previous experiences; by the flexibility of the management of the time variable; and by substantial changes in the traditional relationship between professors and students.

Escotet (1980) and Coffey (1977) group constraints as *administrative* (time, space) and *educational* (objectives, entry qualifications, etc). In response to Escotet (1980), Keegan and Rumble (1981) argue that the above definition better describes 'distance teaching' than open education or open learning as it is referred to today.

For Keegan and Rumble (1981) open learning conveys the kind of learning that can be carried out under both face to face and also distance conditions. (This is similar to what is being done at the UNISA, which is largely a distance education university, but which also provides students with the opportunity to attend face-to-face tutorials). Open learning's best-known characteristic has been its open admissions policy, but it has also come to mean more than this. Writers such as Coffey (1977), Lewis and Spencer, (1986), Hodgson (1998), Rumble (1989), Johnson (1990), Kember and Murphy (1990), Freeman (1990), and Carr (1990) have contributed to the debate in the following ways:

Open learning is not synonymous with distance education; nor is distance education a sub-set of open learning (Johnson, 1990). Distance education is a *mode* of learning and delivery, whereas open learning is a *state of mind*, an approach taken to the planning, design, preparation and presentation of courses and outcomes-based programmes by educators (Carr, 1990; Freeman, 1990; Killen, 1999). It emphasises:

- The removal of barriers to participation which are inherent in the traditional education system -- such as the timing and location of delivery, pace of study and entry requirements.

- The giving of greater responsibility to learners to determine where and when they study, but also, what they learn, how they learn and how they are assessed.

- Designing outcomes-based programmes that describe the real life contexts and purpose of the envisaged programme, as well as the life roles expected of the learner. One then works backwards to come up with the culminating exit outcomes which would lead to success in those life roles. Finally, one needs to indicate how learners show evidence of their learning. Assessment criteria thus serve as a reference point for judgement which would indicate effective learning and an effective programme.

The Draft Report on Integrated Learner Support at UNISA refers to this as a learner-centred model where learner needs are reflected (UNISA, 1997). It thus involves a positive commitment to the widening of access to education and to the promotion of learner autonomy, but open learning defined in this way is a relative concept (Snell, 1999).

In practice, there will always be degrees of restriction on particular aspects of open learning programmes. Snell (1999) has asserted that open learning is a set of ideals, and the

attainment will never be absolute. MacKenzie, Postgate and Scupham (1973) attested, in the 1970's, to the fact that open learning is an imprecise phrase to which a range of meanings can be, and is, attached. However, its very imprecision enables it to accommodate many different ideals and aims, and has recently been thought of in terms of a philosophy of education (Bell & Tight, 1993). Of the many attempted definitions, the following is not atypical (Lewis & Spencer, 1986, p.10):

> Open learning is a term used to describe courses flexibly designed to meet individual requirements. It is often applied to provision which tries to remove barriers that prevent attendances at more traditional courses, but it also suggests a learner-centred philosophy. Open learning courses may be offered in a learning centre of some kind.

Open learning is thus seen to be merely one of the most recent manifestations of a gradual trend towards the democratisation of education (Lewis & Spencer, 1986; UNISA, 1998). The use of the term 'open' admits that education and learning have been 'closed' by various barriers, such as entrance requirements or time constraints. An open learning institution is seen as one dedicated to helping individuals overcome these barriers to their further education (Paul, 1990).

Bell and Tight (1993) feel that both Lewis and Spencer (1986) and Paul (1990) fall into the common trap of characterising open learning as being about the removal of barriers, when in reality, all educational providers operate somewhere along the spectrum or continuum between open and closed (Rumble 1989). Furthermore, if the concept of open education is defined as having to do with matters related to access, freedom from constraint of time and place, means, dialogue and the presence of support services, then many systems which describe themselves as 'open', are in fact, remarkably closed when measured against these criteria for openness (Rumble, 1989).

Whilst Rumble (1989) focuses on the word 'open', Cunningham (1981) points out that definitions and discussions of open learning seem to concentrate on the 'open' part and leave 'learning' in the background. He maintains that, in open learning programmes, there are differences in the assumptions made about learning and that these are reflected in the nature of the educational provision. For some, knowledge can be conceived of as a valuable commodity that exists independently of people and can be stored and transmitted. In this instance learning is a process of acquisition of facts and skills, and the lecturer is the subject expert and/or the guardian of knowledge. She or he will be have the responsibility for instructing, although this may be delegated to course media and materials. For others, as well as in the spirit of this thesis, knowledge (or knowing) is the process of engaging with and attributing meaning to the world, including self in it. Learning is thus the elaboration and change of the meaning-making processes and the enhancement of personal competence. The lecturer is a facilitator and co-learner and a context for exploring each other's meaning systems is created. Boot and Hodgson (1985) make a necessary distinction between the 'dissemination' orientation and the 'development' or 'tutorial' orientation.

This thesis will adopt the latter orientation where the following tenets hold:

- Knowing is a process of engaging with and attributing meaning to the world.

- Learning is about the enhancement of personal competence and confidence.

- The tutor's role is that of a facilitator, resource person or co-learner. The meanings that the tutor attributes to events is no more valid than anyone else's.

This compares to the dissemination orientation where the following tenets hold:

- Knowledge exists independently of people and can be stored and transmitted.

- Learning is solely about the acquisition of facts and skills.

- The tutor is the subject expert.

- The tutor as the subject expert is the best person to assess the quality of work and will measure proficiency against externally recognised standards.

The essence of the development orientation is open learning. Face-to-face interaction between tutors and students is a central component which, on the one hand, goes against large numbers of students being involved on any one open learning programme, and so represents a constraint on access. On the other hand, it centres on the provision of contexts and processes to enable individuals to control the direction of their learning, and to support them in the creation and validation of their own meanings. One of the ways in which this can be achieved is through the provision of face-to-face tutorials. A tutorial in the spirit of this thesis (which will be re-iterated shortly) refers to the domain where student and tutor exchange ideas and make sense of the world of learning.

Face-to-Face Tutorials

Face-to-face tuition takes on different forms depending on the context for open learning (Thorpe, 1988). In most forms of open learning, face-to-face tuition has a voluntary aspect. It is usually provided by an academic institution, not unlike UNISA, at one or more of their off-campus learning centres with the assumption that learners will want to use it. In a paper entitled

"Distance teaching: a contradiction in terms?" Sewart (1981) examines the role and need for learning or study centres. Sewart considers that the case for their existence can be attributed to an inability to develop the 'ideal' instructional package. From this perspective, learning centres are 'dustbins' into which functions are emptied which are too difficult or expensive to perform at a distance.

Sewart (1981) also sees a more positive justification for learning centres. He points out that they provide the human element where student and tutor meet face-to-face and have regular, person-to-person contact. At learning centres, tutors can provide tutorial support and help students adapt to methods of individual and independent study.

Group size appears to be central to the definition of whether one is referring to a tutorial class or not. Nicol (1971) defined a tutorial as a learning situation in which the tutor meets with one or two students, encouraging and stimulating their thoughts on the tutorial topic. In addition to this facilitating role, the tutor may also take an explaining and clarifying role.

An essential factor of a tutorial is prior preparation by both the tutor and the student. Nicol's (1971) feels that the term tutorial is often misused and that many so-called tutorials are in fact small group discussions, especially where five or six students are present together with the tutor. When there are more than eight students, this is taken to represent a large group (Buber, 1965; Nicol, 1971).

Pastoll (1992) also addresses the question of numbers, but feels that a group of eight to forty-eight students does not necessarily mean one cannot refer to it as a tutorial. By dividing the class into subgroups to allow for interaction, the results in the groups can be compared or assembled in a plenary session. For Pastoll and for UNISA, the term 'tutorial' is simply a handy catch-word in the academic world (UNISA, 1998). It is used to describe *any* kind of planned learning event and can be defined as an occasion for students to receive feedback about their own

constructions of meaning (Pastoll, 1992). Students are motivated by the personal example of the tutor to share their ideas, engage in debates and receive feedback about their constructions of meaning. Given current understanding of learners and the learning process, modeling or learning by example practices are advocated as being most effective, in that students can acquire new forms of behaviour and new constructions of meaning partly through observing the actions of their tutor (Otatti, 1999).

The construction of meaning does not happen through observation alone. According to Pastoll (1992), students need some of the following:

- Stimulus material, that is, text books and study guides.

- An interpretation task, such as, instructions to the participants to make sense of the stimulus material.

- Airing and sharing -- an opportunity to talk about their ideas and interpretations.

- Feedback -- information to the student about the way in which others respond to him or her.

Unlike a lecture, that is linear, in that knowledge is transferred from the lecturer to the student, a tutorial is circular and based on an inquiry-based approach to facilitate learning (Elsdon, 1996). Inquiry-based learning is manifested by the ability and inclination on the part of students to formulate and pursue their own questions and line of thinking. Development of the individual mind is the goal, and is based on the assumption that tuition includes mutual support (between students and also between the tutor and the student) in a dialogic relationship, directed at the gaining of knowledge and the development of ideas.

The issue of what kind of knowledge is accrued, has been constructed by various authors.

One such writer in the field of outcomes-based education is Granger, (1990, p.163). He writes:

> The recognition by educators of the contingency of knowledge has effected a major shift
>
> in our focus on learning: a shift away from a fixed or absolute body of knowledge which
>
> the learner must master in the relationship between that knowledge and the learner. What
>
> has become crucial, is the fact that educationists are stressing the mutual integration and
>
> interrelationship between the experience of the teacher and those of the learner during
>
> teaching. The tutor is not only instructor, but has also become experiential learner.

Cropley (1977) used the concept 'experiential learning' to mean an interrelationship

between the experience of the tutor and those of the student. In experiential learning, the student

and tutor yearn to experience their existence as meaningful. The student, in particular, seeks the

inner assurance that he has a certain worth, that he and the tutor have meaning for each other, that

he is needed. He also needs the tutor to confirm these facts in their dialogue. Knowles (1987)

contends that adult learners have a strong need to be self-directing. They define themselves ˣ

through their experience and their critical faculties rather than through external sources.

Keegan (1986) further highlights the need for instilling critical thinking. He proposes that

it is of no avail to acquire more and more knowledge without having acquired critical ability.

Critical ability involves the ability to judge the value of knowledge, to retain interest in study,

to develop a desire to continue learning and to look at new knowledge with a critical eye. This

can be achieved if the tutor sets him or herself the task of preparing creative questions whereby

his or her students' comprehension skills will be developed (Snyder, 1972). Usher (1986)

referred to critical thinking as the ability to consider, from various perspectives and in depth, the ⱼ

meaning, implications, sequences and value of any experience leading to learning and the

creation of knowledge. It is thus not simply an intellectual skill, but depends on a complex interaction between feelings, socialisation, history, personality traits, past experience and the store of information available to individuals or groups against which to evaluate new experiences (Lewis, 1984; UNISA, 1998; Usher, 1986). One of the important advantages for learners of extending their powers of critical thought may be an increased sense of self-efficacy, which Bandura and Cervone (1986) believe facilitate learning and the ability to apply it.

McClusky (1975) held that learning should tap some deep interest and need in the student, restore his confidence in the ability to learn and should provide plenty of opportunity for fellowship. It should also provide counselling in order to assist students to relate instruction to personal needs. McClusky furthermore emphasised the characteristics of the learning situation. These included a supportive environment, the use of tutors and auditory and visual imagery in the presentation of the information. McClusky also referred to the criteria for planning adult learning. He suggested that learning is made meaningful if the adult student participated actively in class and was encouraged by tutors to deal with their experiences. Ideally, learning involves active personal interaction with and integration of a body of knowledge and experiences (Taylor, 1983; UNISA, 1998). Tutorials help students develop intellectual self-confidence, their communication skills and their self-image. Each student comes to the learning context limited by their own experiences and by their past. Through discussion, each student gets to share their personal network of assumptions. Through comparison and contrast, their conceptual blueprint is challenged and they can decide whether or not to change their ideas (Pastoll, 1992).

A tutorial in the spirit of this thesis (as has already been mentioned) is seen to refer to a conversational domain where students engage with each other and the tutor, and where the exchange of ideas can take place.

Tutor Training

Wherever tutors are used by academic institutions, there will be the need to prepare them

for their work. Pastoll (1992) feels that training may, at the outset, seem like a strong word to

use in this context, as many tutors are natural teachers. All they may need is to be guided (on an

optional basis) in the principles that govern tutorials. On the other hand, the Advisory Council

for Adult and Continuing Education (ACACE) advised that the training of tutors should not be

optional (ACACE, 1983). The Council felt that tutors require training in order to be able to

assess their own personality against the requirements for tutoring. They should also be willing

to compare their own tutoring styles and techniques with that of other tutors, assess their teaching

skills and their practical problems in this regard. If still not satisfied, they could try out a

reflexive approach which means discussing (with the adult student) how to go about teaching and

learning effectively, using the didactic principles as a basis for discussion (Mackie, 1981;

Williams, 1990). Students have been overwhelmingly in favour of the reflexive approach. Many

students have expressed their frustration with the format and topics selected by the tutor, because

it jackets them into thinking along a certain path (Williams, 1990). Students indicate that whilst

it is initially difficult for them to extricate themselves from the power of prescription, it (reliance

on prescription) can nevertheless be overcome. Once the tutor and student engage on how to

proceed together through the learning experience, the student immediately feels like a stake-

holder in his or her own learning and feels part of the wealth of suggestions, ideas, opinions,

emotional reactions and divergent views, thus stimulating participation as well as critical

thinking (Bourdeau & Bates, 1997).

Some authors have concerned themselves with who is to conduct the training and

encourage tutors to involve their students since, clearly, this may not happen as a matter of course

(Abercrombie, 1985; Pastoll, 1992; Peter, 1981; UNISA, 1998). Others feel that if training is

to take place, it should be conducted within departments. The rationale is that trainees need a

subject-specific context in which to try and test out the principles they are learning (Pastoll,

1992). The advantage of training within departments is that the training course can help to build

a spirit of camaraderie among a group of colleagues (Peter, 1981). Fields (1989) (borrowing

ideas from various authors) listed five elements that are regarded as essential to effective in-

service training:

- *Written statements and workshops*

  In a written statement or live presentation presented in a tutorial guide or at a tutor

  workshop, the rationale for the importance and usefulness of tutorials is standardised and

  less prone to any misinterpretation.

- *Demonstration and models*

  Aside from Fields (1989), Joyce and Showers (1981), and Sparkes (1995) argue that little

  growth in tutor behaviour can be expected without clear demonstrations of recommended

  instructional procedures. The demonstration can be conveyed via film, or videotape,

  detailed narrative or even live description. What is essential is that the behaviour in focus

  is visualised in practice by the recipients of the in-service training.

- *Practice*

  In-service models frequently employ forms of micro-teaching and role-playing to achieve

  practice (Fields, 1989; McKibbin, 1982). It may be argued that tutors would prefer to

  practice the recommended procedures in the relative privacy of their own classrooms in

  preference to having to learn and make errors in front of colleagues. The important thing

  is that tutors practice the pointers presented to them -- whether this takes place in front

of colleagues or not, may not be all important (Fields, 1989).

Feedback

Feedback is a powerful component of tutor training. Brophy (1974) found that giving tutors information about their classroom behaviour was an important stimulus for significant changes in how tutors interacted with students. Peer observation is also touted as an important mechanism for giving tutors feedback about their classroom behaviour (Sparkes, 1995). In this situation tutors observe each other tutoring and comment on the use of various instructional methods. Fields (1989) sees peer observation to be a desirable practice, but one which may require careful guidance and monitoring by the trainers. Tutors can obtain feedback via a number of additional techniques. One such procedure is that of self-assessment (Bailey, 1981) where tutors use instruments such as checklists to track their practices and progress.

Coaching

Coaching is described by Sparkes (1995) as the provision of companionship, giving of technical feedback and the analysis of when to apply a model and the effects of its application. It can be provided by senior tutors, supervisors, university professors and the like. Wade's (1984) meta-analysis of in-service tutor education concluded that coaching did not always have the potential to alter tutor behaviour as proposed by Sparkes (1995). It appears that the feedback component of coaching, a substantial part of the procedure, can be provided through less costly opportunities such as informal meetings.

Other authors (Holmberg, 1989; Keegan, 1986) feel that there is a potential danger that a department, by following some of the above in-service suggestions, could propagate inefficient

methods. From this point of view, tutors need to be exposed to what is going on in tutorials in other disciplines as well, so that they can cross-pollinate ideas. The author suggests that the more useful arrangement would be a both-and approach as opposed to an either/or one. Learning centres could arrange for tutor workshops for all disciplines, but also encourage tutor-training within departments.

Whilst the above approaches seem to propose a methodical, structured, skills-based approach where particular methods of training are propagated, Cunningham (1981) warns that skills-based approaches can fail because they are based on the notion of an expert trainer telling tutors how to follow a step-by-step training programme. Trainers may inadvertently deny the tutor the opportunity to take control of their own learning. Cunningham (1984) takes up the question of the role of the trainer and provides a basis for exploring this role in relation to what he refers to as 'meta-learning'.

The notion of meta (second order) learning indicates that learning has to mean something different from just learning tutoring skills and subject knowledge. Meta-learning refers to learning to learn. In the process of meta-learning, the tutor needs to be aware of how they personally tutor or have learnt to tutor, and what alternatives there are to their current thinking patterns. They also need the freedom to choose for themselves what they want to learn about tutoring and how they want to learn it. Cunningham's (1986) stance is closest to that of Bateson's (1972) concept of Learning II or Deutero-learning. The kind of tutor who has learned to learn how to tutor may be labelled a 'self-starter' or 'self-confident'. Such terms can be replaced, whereby the word *after* it is applied to itself. Thus, 'self-confident' becomes 'confident of one's confidence' (Watzlawick, 1984). Cunningham (1981) refers to this as self-managed learning. Here, tutors have to think about how they have learnt to tutor in the past and propose tutoring strategies to be carried out themselves.

They also have to consider the goals they have and how well they are meeting these. Tutors are thus involved in assessing their own tutoring, are open to comments from other significant role players (students, fellow tutors, academics and the like) and they are open to influence the operation of their training. They also have to face up to changing their strategies ⋏ if these prove to be inefficient. In this sense, the way tutors are trained is no different from how these trained tutors will one day conduct their tutorials. Training and tutoring will mirror each ⨉ another naturally. Cunningham (1981) refers to this as genuine meta-learning and believes that only by addressing the patterns by which tutors learn to tutor, will it give them a basis for operating at a meta-level (Cunningham, 1984).

The trainer and fellow tutors assisting in the training programme can provide a range of methods for the development of new patterns were current patterns are unhelpful. Cunningham (1984) focuses around specific aspects of patterning, one of the most notable being 'mapping'. People map the world, their ideas about it, their beliefs and so on. The problem is that people's internal maps sometimes create limitations on their learning (Cunningham, 1981). One way to get beyond this dilemma, is to change the map.

In order to change the map, Watzlawick (1978) proposes the use of 'right brain' methods which do not operate according to left brain, linear, reductionistic principles. Watzlawick is clear that the left brain or right brain distinction is not simply about dividing the brain into two rigidly separate hemispheres, but for the sake of this discussion, it remains a valuable distinction as the thesis concurs with the ideas of Cunningham (1981) and Watzlawick in this respect. Watzlawick encourages trainers to assist tutors to develop an appropriate map about the use of the training group, and to foster re-mapping by talking about what the map is and how it can be re-mapped or altered.

Another right brain language mode is metaphor (Watzlawick, 1978). The metaphors we

hold to describe learning can trap or liberate, or both. The classic educational metaphor is to

consider the tutor as a bucket to be filled up with knowledge. This is Boot and Hodgson's (1985)

so-called dissemination orientation, which was described earlier in this chapter. The problem

with this orientation is that the bucket leaks, so one has to keep providing top up courses to keep

the bucket filled. This is the standard training method: the trainer identifies existing and desired

standards of performance and then trains to fill the gap between the two. One alternative

metaphor is that of an acorn or the development orientation described earlier in this chapter (Boot

& Hodgson, 1985). Here the idea is that the tutor is growing into a mature oak. The acorn has

all that is needed to produce the oak, provided it is nurtured. This metaphor assumes the tutor

has all the resources they need and do not need constant filling up (Watzlawick, 1978). Metaphor

change is part of the general strategy of 'reframing' (Watlawick, 1978). The idea here is that one

frames the world in a particular way, and one needs to look at the world differently.

The above idea is extensively dealt with in the chapter on ecosystemic theory and holds

certain implications: tutors who report to having a problem with fellow tutors (who are

confusing them) can be invited to observe what these confusing tutors are doing, in order to get

a better idea of what is confusing and what is not. This reframes events to include the option

of learning from others. Confusion and stuckness, according to Watzlawick (1978), are

marvellous states to reframe.

Bandler (1985) and Pirsig (1974) point out that these states call for new learning.

Stuckness, for example, is a positive opportunity to learn something new in order to get unstuck.

In order to deal productively with feeling states such as stuckness, it is necessary to go to a meta-

level (Cunningham, 1986). It is important to address the question of how we feel -- about how

we feel. If we feel fine about being stuck, then we can stay with it. If we feel badly about being

stuck, we may also wish to find a way out of it.

The impression created here is not one where the role of the trainer is negated. By their very nature, trainers cannot not influence. The issue is *how* they use their influence and if skills are to be used, it is more about the *manner* in which they will be employed rather than whether or not they should be employed at all. The manner and the 'how to' will be extensively substantiated in the chapter on ecosystemic epistemology. For Cunningham (1981) there is a simple option for trainers: they can either liberate their tutors so that they can be more self-managing *OR* they can reinforce dependency. Learning to learn is only one way to address the issue of training. It is not a truth nor an ideal. In Cunningham's (1981, p.34) words: "It is just the best way I know".

His work on open learning and self-managed learning forms an important basis for rethinking perspectives on learning and training and can be set alongside the work of Bateson (1972), Watzlawick (1978; 1984), and Erickson (1980). It was Bateson (1972) who argued consistently for analysing patterns and processes rather than content. Watzlawick (1978; 1984) also had pertinent comments to make about metaphor and other patterns. Finally, Erickson (1980) exemplified (in his hypnotherapy) a fundamental grasp of pattern or process issues and of the use of metaphor in change.

The Way Forward

Bearing in mind the definitions of the concepts which have been subjected to a dialectic in this chapter, it is now viable for the author to introduce the chapter on the implementation of student support services at UNISA. The thesis will draw on the invaluable (foundation-laying) definitions in this chapter, which have given the reader an appreciation for the fact that the debates on distance and open learning have been raging for many years and in many parts of

the world. UNISA is *not* on the periphery of these debates. It too has created a tutorial support

programme out of concern for its students and in this way, but also due to the changing face of

education in South Africa, embraced the notion of open learning.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT
SUPPORT SERVICES AT UNISA

The Broad South African Context

Extensive developments have occurred in the field of distance education since the introduction of the democratic government in South Africa in 1994. The South African Institute of Distance Education (SAIDE) pointed out that the emerging vision and higher education framework made a case for "transforming institutions in South Africa which are already using a correspondence mode into institutions using sound distance education modes" (SAIDE, 1994, p.7). One of the most notable features of such a sound distance education mode was seen to be the provision of effective support to the distance student in order to ensure success in matters pertaining to their educational goals.

A number of key policy documents, which preceded the new Higher Education Act of 1997, highlighted the importance of distance education methods in addressing some of South Africa's educational problems. For example, The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE, 1996, p.16) put the matter as follows:

A key challenge for higher education is to enhance the quality of higher education programmes and to improve success and throughput rates. This challenge must be met in the context of greatly increased access to a wide diversity of students at varying entry levels and within a higher education budget that increases significantly slower than the enrolments rise. The Commission believes that distance education and resource-based learning are a fundamental part of meeting this challenge.

The repeatedly highlighted constraint that hampered distance education provision in South Africa was seen to be the absence of student support. *For one*, Professor Simon Maimela (UNISA Vice-Principal of Tuition at the time) pointed out, in 1995, that the new South African context was placing new demands on all institutions of higher learning, compelling them to play a key role in developing new strategies to deal with the emerging economic, human resource and social development of the country. He also pointed out that greater emphasis was being placed on the role which distance education was to play in meeting both these new demands and eliminating the backlog in education (UNISA, 1996). *For another*, the Directorate for Distance Education of the National Department of Education emphasised, in 1996, that student support was one of the key safeguards that underpin a well-functioning distance education model (DEQ, 1996). It emphasised that learners needed to be supported to the extent that various forms of tutoring, such as, contact tutoring, counselling and peer support structures, needed to be provided.

A number of points, which flow from the quality safeguards just mentioned, include some of the following:

- The need for academic support for students.

- The appointment of tutors who would be selected as facilitators of learning.

- Adequate administrative and professional support for tutors.

- The onus would be on the educational institution to monitor and evaluate tutor performance on a regular basis.

The Draft Report on Integrated Learner Support summed the matter up by pointing out that the changing *internal* and *external* environment made it incumbent on educational

institutions to reappraise their activities *internally* in order to ensure continued relevance

(UNISA, 1997). *Externally*, the fundamental values enshrined in the Constitution, and the

principles contained in various policy documents, such as the NCHE report and the Green and

white papers on higher education (as well as the Higher Education Act of 1997), embraced the

concepts of open education and layed an emphasis on increased student support (UNISA, 1997).

In response to the movements in the broad South African context, UNISA responded by

developing decentralised learning centres and the tutorial support programme, to mention only

two of its efforts.

UNISA'S Response to the Changing External Context

Background

As early as 1987, at UNISA'S distance education conference, a number of presenter-

lecturers grappled with the idea that, if distance education was to be considered as effective as

contact teaching, it would have to undergo some revision:

Van den Bogaerde (1987), of UNISA, in his paper on distance education and preparing

it for the 21st century, looked largely at whether one *could* find an instructional model that would

make distance education as effective as contact teaching, as well as foster greater understanding

between distance education and traditional universities. Booyse (1987), also of UNISA,

addressed the issue that, if students were to broaden their intellectual horizons, they needed

involvement with a human person, namely the tutor. To address this matter, it would be

necessary to dispose of the myth that students in the distance education situation were

independent adults in need of no more than knowledge. Rather, the involvement of students with

lecturers should no longer be considered in terms of pedagogic (teaching) categories, but in terms of the need for involvement and interaction.

In this regard, Smit (1987), of UNISA, urged lecturers involved in distance education to address the dearth of face-to-face influence and provide additional help to students, in order to guide them in developing their critical thinking. Muller (1987), of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), pointed out that students required more personalised and individual help with courses and suggested that a system of tutors could be used. Tutors were conceptualised by him to be subject matter experts who would require orientation and training before being placed at the disposal of students.

Adey, Gous and Potgieter (1987) urged that the tutor be trained to assume a facilitator role rather than a didactic one, by concentrating more on the learner than on the content. Finally, Neuland, Cronje and Hugo (1987) felt that group discussions between tutors and students would help to overcome the educational barriers inherent in distance education and in so doing, provide a more holistic view of education.

As early as 1987, it became evident that face-to-face support was seen as a necessary component of distance education, but it was not until the 29th of May 1995 that UNISA'S senate accepted face-to-face student support at learning centres as a vital part to the basic study package:

In 1995 the university introduced a number of initiatives aimed at addressing the support needs of students. To this end, it resolved to establish a network of provincial learning centres and a couple of community based (satellite centres) which would provide physical facilities, study resources and academic or tutorial support to students. Between April and May 1995 the first phase of the experiment was launched, which was documented in the August 1995 progress report circulated to the Deans of Faculty (UNISA, 1998). The progress reports of the learning centres, as well as feedback from departments and the Working Group on Student Support

Services, highlighted the need for practical strategies in the areas of effective coordination, as well as clarity on the role of tutors and counsellors.

As a result, in April 1996, the Student Community Liaison Department employed a person to work full-time on tutorial support at a national level, so as to ensure that it would be well coordinated for the benefit of students and staff alike.

The support service (which, as already mentioned, was launched as an experiment) can be seen as a mechanism through which UNISA sought to overcome the barrier of student isolation and put the so-called 'human face' back into the distance learning process. The success of the tutorial support programme, over the period from 1995 to 1999 and beyond, is being measured in terms of a number of *qualitative* and *quantitative* factors.

From a qualitative standpoint, it should be noted that the support programme has managed to attract local tutors who rate highly in terms of academic qualifications and experience (UNISA, 1998). The impact of the programme has also been assessed through a quantitative evaluation. The results of students who participated have been evaluated (by the Bureau for Management Information (BMI at UNISA) against representative samples of control groups. Evaluations in 1995, 1996 and 1997 have shown that, in most cases, the pass rates for each study unit were higher for learning centre students than those calculated for corresponding control groups. The evaluation report also concluded that, in the experimental stage, the tutorial support services at the learning centres seem to be well under way to achieving a more student-centred distance education approach (UNISA/BMI, 1997).

In conclusion, as the world approaches the 21st century, it can be seen that UNISA is actively reappraising its role and function as (arguably) the largest distance education institution in the country. The university is looking to play a pro-active and supportive role in meeting the needs of its target audience. In this way it can be said to be doing good on its commitment to

advance academic matters through student support. It can also be acknowledged that these

fundamental changes have begun to bring UNISA in line with the practices of large distance

education institutions, whose practices show that distance education institutions are moving away

from the traditional industrial model that is characterised by the course design team, towards a

more distributed model, based on study centres and communication networks (Sweet, 1993).

The Adult Learner and Integrated Learner Support

The Adult Learner at UNISA and the Learning Centres

It is estimated that in 1999, 117 046 adult students were registered with UNISA in

comparison to 124 212 in 1998. This constitutes about 2 000 fewer white and 5 000 fewer black

students. A total of 56% of students were women. There are a number of reasons for the fewer

registrations. The factors include a lower number of matric pupils emerging from the school

system, greater competition in the field of distance education, decline of the economy and the

high rate of unemployment in South Africa, which is compelling students between the ages of

eighteen to twenty years to opt for formal education in order to stand a better chance of procuring

a job in the market place one day (UNISA NEWS, 1999). In spite of these statistics, the

university has not gone back on its promise to provide its adult learners with adequate leaner

support.

In order to address the issue of student support at UNISA, it is important to paint a picture

of the adult learner at the university, and to address why they would be in need of support:

Students of UNISA are often referred to as being adult learners within a distance or

correspondence educational system. These terms are taken to refer to the fact that these adult

students do not attend daily classes as in residential universities, and also do not solely comprise school leavers. People beyond school-leaving age are afforded the opportunity to register with the university whilst maintaining a part-time or full-time job. In addition, adult education is seen as a 'second-chance' for adults who did not have access to basic education when they were younger -- either because they could not afford it, or because of other barriers, such as geographical distances that prevented attendance at a residential university.

The characteristics of adult learners have been much debated. UNISA'S Certificate Course for Distance Education Practitioners, Module 1 (1996) points out that, whilst adult learners are viewed to have life skills and experience to draw on, they also have many responsibilities besides study and may find it more difficult to apply themselves due to feeling isolated, burdened by many duties, and apprehensive about learning something new (UNISA, 1996). A support service, which deals partly with these concerns, is therefore vital.

Some of the above problems *have* been addressed by the creation of open-learning centres where students of the university can register and attend weekly tutorials. The learning centres projected a total of 11 000 enroled learners in 1996. This was a 170% increase on the 1995 enrolment figure of 4 066. The figures for 1999 and the year 2000 are almost identical to those of 1996. (This has been seen to be due, in part, to fee increases and otherwise due to the changing face of education, as has already been mentioned.)

An analysis of the profile and exam results of students attending learning centres conducted by the BMI at UNISA from 1995 and onwards, seems to indicate that the profile of each learning centre varies. We can thus not speak of a typical learning centre student. In Pretoria, Johannesburg and Durban, for example, a black UNISA student who is either a teacher, clerical worker or full-time student, is regarded as a typical student (UNISA/BMI, 1996). The identification of a typical Cape Town learning centre student is not so straightforward as there

are no obvious dominant groups (UNISA/BMI, 1996).

In spite of this mixed picture, the pass rates calculated for each learning centre student

has been consistently higher than those calculated for the corresponding control group students

(UNISA/BMI, 1996). The tutorial support programme is thus well under way to achieving a

more student centred distance education approach. It appears that the provision of student

support services is one of the key reasons for this success, and the thesis now elaborates on the

Integrated Learner Support Project (ILS) before addressing and describing the various forms of

student support services available.

Integrated Learner Support

During 1996, the ILS, under the auspices of the Tuition Coordinating Committee, was

approved to develop an integrated learner support system for UNISA as a whole. They were

requested to present their suggestions in this regard to the senate. More than eighty structured

interviews with various members of the administrative and academic departments, as well as the

Student Representative Council (SRC), were conducted. Reports concerning learner support, as

well as the proposals of an external management bureau on the restructuring of student support,

was taken into account (UNISA, 1996).

Draft proposals were compiled by the six members appointed to the project and circulated

to all the departments of the university for their comments. An open discussion between all

UNISA staff members was held, and the feedback received was incorporated into the proposals.

A final report was presented to the senate, who accepted the proposed learner support

system in principle, and the matter was referred to the Tuition Committee for implementation.

The Tuition Committee briefed the ILS Task Group on matters pertaining to the structure of the integrated learner support system, after which a final report was submitted to the senate. The senate, in turn, instructed the Task Group to collect further information from departments and management, in order to refine its proposals, as there appeared to be a lack of accurate information with regard to the cost implications of such a system, as well as a lack of integration between the various tuition-related initiatives.

The Task Group collected further feedback from faculties and academic departments and compiled the Draft Report on Integrated Learner Support to present to the senate. It is generally accepted that the implementation of the proposals of the Task Group depended largely on the availability of resources (UNISA, 1997).

The recommendations of the Task Group essentially fell into three categories: *general guidelines, priorities and specific recommendations. General guidelines* referred to the forming of parameters for the implementation of an integrated learner support policy. *Priorities* determined the order of importance of the implementation of the various areas of learner support strategies, such as the acceptance of the goals of open learning and developing independent learners. (Support strategies should thus be prioritised for courses offered to first-time students, and progressively decreased as students 'mastered' independent learning.) Finally, *specific recommendations* pertained to the use of each of the learner support strategies identified (UNISA, 1998).

From the above outline, a working definition, as defined in the Draft Report on Integrated Learner Support, emerged. Student support was seen to encompass "the entire range of methods and strategies employed in the presentation and delivery of courses at assisting and enabling learners to comprehend fully, assimilate and master skills and knowledge needed to achieve success in their studies" (UNISA, 1997, p.5).

Student Support Services at UNISA

UNISA has begun a number of support initiatives aimed at adding value to the learning experience of students. These initiatives include learning centres, tutorial support services, peer-group support and counselling support services:

Decentralised Learning Centres

A learning centre can be seen as an off-campus site where distance students receive a range of support services, such as face-to-face tutorials, and where a range of support activities, such as student orientation programmes, are provided (UNISA, 1996; 1998). In the sense that learning centres provide a wide range of support services, enable students to learn at a time and place (which satisfies their circumstances and remove barriers that prevent attendance), it can be defined as an open learning initiative (Coffey, 1977; Lewis & Spencer, 1986; MSC, 1984).

UNISA has five provincial learning centres, one each in Kwa-Zulu Natal, the Northern Province and the Western Cape Province, and two in Gauteng (Johannesburg and Pretoria). The learning centre initiative has also been extended, through the formation of partnerships, to develop a number of community-based satellite centres, such as the one in Umtata. The organisation and operation of these centres is the responsibility of the Department of Student Support, whose staff is located at UNISA.

Each learning centre has a core team which is comprised of a learning centre manager, operations manager, as well as an office manager and other support staff (previously referred to as the coordinator, assistant coordinator, and the secretary respectively). They are responsible

for all aspects of management and administration of the centre. Aside from the fact that UNISA pays the salary of the personnel at the learning centre, the centre is financially self-sufficient (UNISA, 1998).

The role of the learning centre and its staff is to establish an important *link* between the student and the university, because it provides all UNISA students with the choice of whether or not to register to attend face-to-face tutorials. By providing a supportive learning environment, it is hoped that the student will be helped to develop self-confidence and independence in learning (UNISA, 1998). The student is furthermore provided with a platform for interactive learning and a place to come together and establish face-to-face contact with peers, tutors, administrative staff and the like. Local tutors furthermore serve as a link between the student and academic departments. Learning centres thus take away the feelings of isolation that many distance students have complained about (UNISA, 1998).

Although the learning centre is available to all UNISA students, for students to qualify for the tutorial support programme, they need to be registered with the university proper as well as the learning centre for the current academic year. Students are requested to pay a non-refundable administration fee of sixty Rand (R60-00), plus eighty Rand (R80-00) per module or one hundred and sixty Rand (R160-00) per year course. The tutorial programme offers supplementary support to distance students who would otherwise not have the opportunity to interact with peers, tutors and lecturers.

Face-to-Face Tutorials

A face-to-face tutorial is an organised session at a learning centre where students and tutors meet regularly (usually a Saturday) at a common venue and at a scheduled time. Tutorials

are participatory in nature and the tutor is expected to play a facilitative role (UNISA, 1998).

For tutorials to be effective, the tutor should not be confronted with large groups of students. On the other hand, it is not cost-effective for the group to be too small. To satisfy both criteria, a tutorial class commences once fifteen students are registered for tutorials in the subject concerned (UNISA, 1996).

A subject-specific tutor is appointed as soon as the minimum number of students have registered for a tutorial. A weekly tutorial timetable is usually negotiated between the students, tutors and administrative staff at the learning centre. This effort is aimed at developing a timetable that will minimise clashes and accommodate the time constraints of the students in the tutorial group. Once weekly tutorials commence, they are for the most part:

- Conducted for one hour per course, per week or two hours per course fortnightly.

- Scheduled to run from Tuesdays to Saturdays from 16:00 to 20:00 and on Saturdays from 08:30 to 16:30.

- Scheduled to start in the first week of March until the second week of October.
  It is important to take into account that the tutorial support timetable may be scheduled according to the regional dynamics and the discretion of the tutorial coordination staff at the learning centre (UNISA, 1998).

General Counselling Services

Student counselling is an ongoing activity at the learning centres and is conducted by the Bureau for Student Counselling and Career Development (BSCCD) and the learning centre managers. The regional learning centres in Durban and Cape Town are fully integrated parts

of the wider bureau system and act as semi-autonomous units, providing all the direct services

offered at the main campus as far as resources will allow (UNISA, 1998).

The learning centre managers are typically involved in projects to meet student demands

and offer counselling to students with respect to problems relating to the tutorial programme,

such as, attendance at tutorials, general administrative problems and problems relating to

interaction between students and tutors.

The core business of the BSCCD is to help students to cope with the skills and knowledge

required by them to cope with the academic year. The proverb of 'give a person a fish and

tomorrow he will be hungry again. Teach a person to fish and he will never be hungry again'

encapsulates the philosophy of the bureau. The bureau is thus concerned with the career

development of a student. Career is taken to encompass pre-vocational and post-vocational

concerns, as well as the integration of career with family, community and leisure (Herr, 1988).

Whilst counsellors at the bureau mainly provide advice on study techniques and learning skills,

they also provide advice on a variety of personal problems, such as a crisis in the family that has

resulted in a student missing an exam (UNISA, 1998).

From this it can be gleaned that the activities of the BSCCD and the learning centres are

student-oriented, in that they strive to understand and attend to the diverse needs of students

within the broad area of career development.

Student Development Workshops

UNISA understands that most students in the country are accustomed to a schooling

system that has been historically residential and teacher centred (UNISA, 1998). It is therefore

to be expected that the majority of adult learners, who enter higher education through the distance

medium at UNISA, will experience some or other problem in adjusting to the distance education mode. UNISA has responded to this challenge by assisting students to reorient their mind set toward the ability to learn independently. In addition, the learning centres, in collaboration with the student counsellors at the BSCCD, run a series of student development workshops that entail the following:

- The workshops are held twice a year, at the beginning and toward the end of the same academic year.
- The first workshop aims at providing the student with general study skills which will alert the students to what is expected of them in tutorials and peer group discussions, that is, the notion of participation.
- The second workshop provides students with examination techniques in order to prepare them for exams.

The overall aim of these workshops is to help students to develop their ability to express themselves, become confident about their studies, and in this way, cope with the demands of their courses (UNISA, 1998).

Peer-helper Services

The peer helper service, initiated by the BSCCD, offers counselling by students (trained by the bureau) to their peers. They provide help with regard to such areas as registration, subject and career choice, as well as study problems per se. If they are unable to help students, they will refer them to professional counsellors (UNISA, 1996).

Students are furthermore encouraged to form study groups for subjects for which a tutor cannot be provided by learning centres due to insufficient numbers. A study group timetable is drawn up and classes are allocated so that organised groups are able to carry on with group work. Such groups are encouraged to meet weekly and the groups are usually monitored by so-called group leaders. Group leaders are responsible for collecting the attendance register and for ensuring that the groups meet once a week. Whenever necessary, groups are put into contact with tutors at the learning centres, who are able and ably qualified to assist students with subject difficulties (UNISA, 1998).

These services are important elements of student support as they appear to be an effective way to make the university a more student-friendly and accessible place (UNISA, 1996). In addition, these services might once have been considered to be mere appendages to the wider academic programme. However, it is now being viewed in a different light: these contributions have made a major catalytic effort towards developing a transformed and integrated delivery system (UNISA, 1998).

Library Facilities, Study Space and Technological Support

Library and study facilities are available at the main campus in Pretoria as well as at its provincial centres, but not at the satellite centres. In spite of this, satellite centres do provide students with quiet places for individual study and group discussions. As far as technological support is concerned, telephone, video and audio cassette services are three options that are widely used. Most recently (since 1998), other technological options, such as the students-on-line system (Internet), video-conferencing and E-mail, have being explored. In conclusion, UNISA is actively engaging various stakeholders on the need for a new tuition model, which will

aim at ensuring the production of a well-designed study package of high quality, through a team of educational and media specialists (UNISA, 1998).

These efforts can be seen to portray UNISA as an institution that is continually exploring ways of enhancing students' learning opportunities through the provision of student support.

The Way Forward

It is clear from the theory and practice of distance education developed at UNISA to date, that the success of any student support programme depends on its being integrated as an essential part of the total tuition system of the institution. Against this background, all the role players need to be fully informed about the role that they are expected to play.

This chapter has set the scene in terms of student support as a whole, and the next chapter devotes itself in depth to one of the aspects of student support, namely, the tutorial programme and in particular, the role and function of the tutor in the programme. Most important of all, the notion that tutors themselves need to receive support in the form of training in order to equip them to perform their work satisfactorily, will be addressed.

CHAPTER 4

THE TUTOR IN THE TUTORIAL PROGRAMME

Students need the support of the academic and administrative departments to enable them

to profit from their learning experiences. This section addresses how the tutor is appointed, what

the nature of their work is, as well as how they contribute to, and are supported and evaluated in

their task of facilitating learning in the student.

Tutor Recruitment and Appointment

The manager of each learning centre recruits tutors by:

- Contacting the relevant academic departments at the UNISA, requesting the names of

    suitable candidates who possess, at the very least, a postgraduate degree in the subject in

    question.

- Placing advertisements in local newspapers.

- Word of mouth.

- Liaising with other tertiary institutions.

The final decision regarding the employment of tutors rests with the academic

departments. It can be seen from the above outline that UNISA'S academic departments, in

collaboration with the Department of Student Support, ensure that the tutors are highly qualified

in their subject field, and have a sound knowledge of subjects in which tutorials will be

presented.

Once tutors have been approved, they are given a contract to sign (see Appendix 1). The new Labour Relations Act no 66 of 1995 prescribes that personnel (part-time in the case of tutors) must have a clear contract that states the conditions of employment, period of tenure and specifications of the job (UNISA, 1998). As soon as the employment of tutors has been authorised by the Vice-Principal (Tuition), a letter of appointment (see Appendix 2) is issued by the Department of Student Support on behalf of the university. For the purposes of quality assurance, and to facilitate the internal audit functions, the tutor appointment letter, acceptance form and agreement document must be available for all tutors appointed by the university.

Once these measures are in place, and once fifteen or more students register for a particular course, tutorial classes commence.

The Learning Centre's Expectation from a Tutor

Once tutors are appointed, much is expected from them. Their *academic* role is to facilitate learning by identifying and meeting students' needs, help students to understand their course material, organise self-help groups or study circles, and give students feedback on their performance in tutorials (UNISA, 1998).

Tutors also have a counselling and administrative role to fulfil. The *counselling* service mainly consists of academic counselling, and in this capacity, the tutor will be expected to help students to maintain motivation, provide them with guidance and support on study problems, and facilitate study group activities. In respect to their *administrative* duties, tutors maintain an orderly tutorial by collecting and signing their registers. They also ensure that students sign the register; they notify students and the administration in advance of leave of absence and communicate with the administrative office about matters which may affect the smooth running

of the tutorial programme. Such matters include clashing sessions, condition of classrooms, the

need for learning aids and so on.

The Nature of a Tutor's Work *tutorial*

Once a tutor has signed his or her contract and the learning centre has spelled out their

expectations, the tutor begins his or her work and must have a picture of what the nature and

processes of tutorials are. This is not an easy task. Tutors have expressed concerns about the

difficulties that they encounter in conducting tutorials. On the one hand, UNISA emphasises that

tutorials are meant to be facilitative. Yet, on the other hand, the student expectation is often that

tutors must lecture them and give ready answers for their assignments and possibly also 'tips' on

what questions are going to be in the examinations (UNISA, 1998).

These varying demands, as well as the different learning situations, require different, but

appropriate, responses from the tutor. For this reason, tutors are made aware (by the learning

centre, as well as by the Department of Student Support), of the *various ways* in which they can

conduct their tutorials in order to guide their students successfully through the learning

experience.

Knowledge-Based Tutorials

In a knowledge-based tutorial, the aim is to provide the student with essential background

information and intensive guidance about their subject or course content (UNISA, 1998). This

type of tutorial is particularly essential at the beginning of students' study cycle, when they may

be unsure about the requirements and arrangements of their course. They may also not be

equipped at this stage of their study career with the learning skills necessary to apply and integrate the knowledge.

Boshoff (1998), the tutor for Research Methodology at the Cape Town learning centre, provides an explanation of how a knowledge-based tutorial can be put to effective use:

In his feedback report Boshoff (1998) mentions that (during the first semester) his tutorials usually consist of intensive guidance and presentations, that is, explaining and discussing a specific chapter or topic with the aid of a projector and/or writing board. His presentations elicit two-way communication in that students receive ample opportunity to ask questions and to share their views.

In the second semester, Boshoff (1998) provides students with two hundred revision questions, largely the products of his imagination, but some based on the study guide. The rationale here is to assess whether or not students have benefited from the presentations in order to be able to apply the *knowledge* and *integrate* the material. Boshoff (p.4) remarks as follows: "I feel that the tutor must engage the student in two-way communication, and in the time, help the student to integrate the material in question".

Remedial-Based Tutorials

In this style, the tutor seeks to diagnose and assess the problem that students are experiencing, and coaches them to solve the problem. This usually involves either guiding the students to discover the solution for themselves, or the tutor could show or tell the students what the solution ought to be (UNISA, 1998).

Ramulongo (1998), the tutor for Psychology 1, as well as second-year Developmental Psychology at the Pietersburg learning centre, states in her feedback report, that she usually

begins her tutorial sessions by assessing the problems that students are experiencing. She then

applies the coaching style by assigning her students with a *task*, with the aim of encouraging

them to search for the answers. Once students have addressed the task, she is either satisfied that

they have grasped the material, and if not, she shows or tells them where they have gone wrong.

Ramulongo (p.6) remarks as follows: "By giving students a task to perform, I hope to encourage

them to seek the answers, instead of finding them ready made. This is irrespective of whether

they are struggling to find the answers or not".

Explication-Based Tutorials

In an explication-based tutorial, the tutor's task is to explain the material to the student.

Unlike the knowledge-based tutorial, where the aim is to impart knowledge, the explication-

based tutorial emphasises the need to clarify certain texts with the student. The students' role

is to direct their attention to checking their understanding against the knowledge which the tutor

wishes them to have. Clarifying and reaffirming the message of certain texts and checking that

students understand it, is generally what happens in most classroom teaching (UNISA, 1998).

Jansen (1997, p.2), the tutor for Psychology 1 at the Cape Town learning centre (in her

feedback report of 1997), has this to say about explanations:

Knowledge of the subject and the ability to explain it, is one responsibility that the tutor

may never shirk. He or she must familiarise him or herself thoroughly and be able to

explain the course material. This does not mean that the tutor must know and explain

everything. This is impossible. Being a tutor means aspiring to offer support to the

students.

Therefore, the tutor must ensure that he or she has a sound understanding of the subject and be able to convey this.

Facilitation-Based Tutorials

The facilitation-based tutorial is favoured by UNISA and the learning centres. In this style, the tutor is seen as a facilitator. Their task is to promote skills among the students in order to help them to learn independently. The emphasis is on motivating and encouraging students to develop their study skills, and to provide them with the resources to attain their goals (UNISA, 1996).

In this style, the tutor takes a 'back seat' and the students are expected to participate actively during the tutorial sessions. Students acquire knowledge by means of their own learning endeavours and solve problems through discussion with their peers and with the tutor.

Alberts (1998), the tutor for Developmental Psychology and Psychopathology at the Cape Town learning centre, stated in her feedback report, that she engages her students in numerous discussions. If no opinions or discussions are forthcoming, she uses *real life examples* in order to encourage participation. Alberts (p.1) remarks as follows: "Real life examples are a way of making the text come to life".

Jansen (1997) (already mentioned), is a passionate believer in the facilitative approach. She usually divides her class up into small groups, where the students have to cooperate to find answers to a question. In her role as facilitator, she was able to create opportunities for her students to talk to each other. She felt that small group work facilitated the participation of all students, especially the less assertive ones, who may be inhibited, and do not talk freely in the presence of the tutor. Jansen (p.2) remarks as follows:

A facilitator is the director of the tutorial play, not the power broker. The job requires the ability to mediate and facilitate dialogue among the participants. The days of telling students what to do, when to do it, are long gone.

Cilliers (1998), the tutor for second-year Developmental Psychology in 1998, expects that students should become increasingly independent of her as their skills improve. This is why she says that the *tutor* should work *before* the tutorial, and *students* should work *during* the tutorial. In order to encourage them to work during the tutorial, Cilliers encouraged debates during her tutorial sessions, which she facilitated. Cilliers, (p.1) remarks as follows: "It is important to facilitate the debate, as students are sometimes inclined to divert from the topic at hand. If the facilitation process is successful, the tutor feels satisfied and the students grateful".

Mauger and Boucherat (1991) distinguish a tutorial from other academic events in the sense that a tutorial is an *occasion* for students to receive feedback about their own constructions of meaning. Knowledge, therefore, is not 'out there' somewhere, for example, in a textbook. Anything one finds in a book has been arranged by that particular author's mind. In the tutorial class, an opportunity is created where students can form their own mental images or constructions of meaning, and then check out their images for consistency with other students. Tutorials can be facilitated this way if tutors employ some stimulus material (something to read or touch), or a task that involves interpretation, such as making hypotheses about something. It also involves sharing these hypotheses, and opening oneself up to feedback. Any learning event which lacks these characteristics would not be considered to be a facilitative-based tutorial (Mauger & Boucherat, 1991; Pastoll, 1992).

Pastoll (1992) also believes that every bit as important as learning about facilitation, is learning about ourselves and about the way tutors personally think and respond in tutorial

situations.   A facilitation-based tutorial cannot ignore the tutor and how she or he thinks, as this affects how the tutorial is managed, which in turn affects how students begin to grow and develop ideas about their own ideas, facts and fancies.

Wherever tutors are used, there will be a need to prepare them for and support them in their work as (clearly) much is expected from them. The thesis now addresses these support measures, which includes the question of how (as well as what type of) training facilities can be developed in order to enhance the work experience of tutors.

Support Given to Tutors

In order for tutors to do justice to their multiple roles, tutors need to be well trained and supported by UNISA. The support services in question will now be addressed:

Links with the Respective Academic Departments at UNISA

The tutor is a recognised component of the whole delivery system at UNISA. To this end, tutors and lecturers are encouraged to communicate and give one another feedback, either directly, or through the learning centre managers (UNISA, 1998).

It has become clear, confirmed by the feedback gained from UNISA's experience of the 1995 to 1997 experiment, that academic departments involve tutors in their total teaching strategy and planning (UNISA, 1998). This can be done effectively by devising well-defined strategies for the training and development of tutors (the very concern of the thesis), as well as providing tutors with clear guidelines or year plans for the tutorial programme and any other areas that need attention.

Teaching Aids Provided by the Learning Centres

At the beginning of each academic year, tutors are provided with materials, such as, tutor files to organise their documentation, a set of study guides, the prescribed textbooks, as well as calculators and software where required. In addition, overhead projectors, writing boards, E-mail facilities, photocopying equipment and television or video equipment are available to tutors through the learning centres. Finally, some of the following procedures and events are put into or take place:

Class Visits

Regular class visits are conducted by the learning centre manager and, where possible, by the departmental representative after prior arrangements have been made with tutors. New tutors are visited regularly during their first month of tutoring in order to assess their level of competence, and to provide them with guidance and support where necessary. The tutor is given feedback after his or her class in the manager's office, so that they can together work out how the tutor can be supported (UNISA, 1996). The class visits are conducted for the purpose of quality assurance.

Tutor Meetings

A tutorial is not intended to replace study material or academic lecturers. Likewise, a tutor is not taken to be a lecturer. A tutor must be provided with the support to help students to apply themselves effectively. To this end, learning centre staff members regularly remind tutors

(at tutor meetings) that they must know *who* their students are and *what* their educational

background is. Tutors are also helped to understand what role tutorial support plays, and what

the role of the tutor is in face-to-face support and dialogue. Tutors are thus instructed on how

to facilitate adult learning, namely away from a didactic to a more facilitative mode (UNISA,

1996).

Annual Tutor Training Workshops

Aside from tutor meetings that are held (on average) monthly to discuss the progress

made with the tutoring system as a whole, tutors from all subjects are invited annually to a tutor

training workshop. The Department of Student Support began these tutor training activities in

1995. The first of these activities was held in May 1995, where Johannesburg and Pretoria

tutors met. This workshop was attended by 121 participants representing tutors, academics,

management and workshop facilitators (UNISA, 1998).

The Department of Student Support furthered its 1995 training programme by launching

orientation-type workshops in 1996. The overall aim was to introduce tutors to learner support

services provided at the learning centres. Workshops were organised at all the provincial

learning centres, that is, Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Pietersburg and Pretoria. These

workshops have become annual events and deal with such aspects as the role of tutors, tutoring

methods, study skills, the relationship between tutors and students, as well as tutors and UNISA

lecturers, to mention only a few.

Tutors are requested and encouraged to communicate their opinions about these

workshops. The tutor workshop summary findings, as reported by the Department of Student

Support in 1996 to 1998, seem to indicate that tutors are dissatisfied with certain aspects of these workshops (UNISA, 1998).

Aspects of the workshops that were found to be unhelpful were with regard to:

- *Duration*: some respondents felt that the workshops could be covered in half a day, while others felt that more time was necessary for practical activities.

- *Presentation methods*: many tutors voiced their dissatisfaction regarding information overload, that is, a mass of information is usually conveyed at workshops either by tutors or academics, and this does not result in facilitated participation by all attendants. Some tutors also felt that the same ground is covered annually and that nothing novel is emerging from these workshops. Finally, tutors have expressed their concern that, when tutors of all faculties meet, it is difficult to orchestrate activities in such a way that they (the activities) have relevance for all attendants. In order to address this, workshop facilitators have provided tutors with the opportunity to meet with the relevant lecturers in groups at these meetings, and in so doing, address areas of especial interest to the group in question.

- *Tutors' expectations not met*: the summary reports are indicating that tutors have been requesting more exposure to practical tutoring methods.

In light of the above findings, it is becoming clear that monthly tutor meetings, and an annual tutor training workshop, are regarded by tutors to be insufficient as training input. Psychology tutors in particular, had some of the following things to say in their 1998 feedback reports to the Department of Psychology at UNISA: "The easiest way to gain respect as a tutor is by being exceptionally well trained and prepared for that first tutorial"(Boshoff, 1998, p.5).

During the meetings I attempted to put the control of the sessions in the hands of the students, to solve their own problems. The focus was placed on the knowledge within the group. The group was sometimes disappointed in me because I didn't have all the answers and all the possible knowledge. Tutor training would certainly help me out with such-like issues. (Steyn, 1998, p.3)

Tutoring can be very taxing, both professionally and personally. As a tutor one must, at all times, be aware of the occupational hazards that go with the job. Tutors must create some space for themselves where they can be supported, guided and nurtured. Therefore, at this junction, I'd like to point out that in my opinion, training and development facilities for tutors are lacking. (Jansen, 1997, p.2)

The question now becomes this: If the measures already in place do not provide adequate enough support, what more can be done for the tutor? The author suggests that inter-departmental training (as already debated in Chapter 2) is a worthwhile option to explore. The rationale is that trainees need a subject-specific context in which to try out the principles that they are learning. On the other hand, by keeping the whole show in-house, there is the danger that a department could propagate inefficient methods, or at least remain restricted to a limited range of techniques. In the context of UNISA , and in the light of ecosystemic epistemology (to be described in depth in Chapter 5), which posits a 'both-and' philosophy rather than an 'either/or' one, there is no fear of this. The ideas of this thesis will centre primarily around subject-specific training, but this is not to say that the annual training workshops and other support measures will become redundant. It is believed that all support measures can be integrated into the UNISA'S overall tuition model.

Training Within Departments Introduced

Abercrombie (1985) has suggested that it is important for tutors to be trained within their own departments, since tutorial skills, discussions, role plays and the like cannot be explored in a vacuum. The rationale is (as already stated) that trainees need a subject-specific context in which to try out the principles they are learning. In addition, Land (1998) feels that it is dangerous for those designers of open learning tutor training programmes to assume that tutors need to be able to do 'X' and 'Y' by the end of their training, and that the best way to ensure that they do this, is to tell them what to do and how to do it. The reality is that there is no such thing as 'by the end of training'. Within a good training system, it is key that tutors be helped to discover for themselves how they learn best (meta-cognition). This learning is life-long and is not achieved by providing skills alone, nor by teaching tutors 'once and for all' type of approaches to tutoring. Rather, it is about assisting the tutor to realise the nature of the talents he or she already possesses and, by providing opportunities like training, the tutor is given the opportunity to apply his or her talents to greater effect, and to build on them where necessary.

The author alerts the reader to the fact that the aesthetics and pragmatics of subject-specific training will be discussed in depth in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively. Training within departments has been introduced here as a heading in order to convey to the reader that the author envisages that it will one day take its rightful place here, that is, under the general 'heading' of support services available to tutors in the tutorial programme.

Tutor Evaluation

The provision of any tutorial programme requires evaluation of the various subsystems,

the training system for one, and the tutor-student subsystem for another. Thorpe (1993, p.56)

describes evaluation as "a collection, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspects

of a programme of education and training as part of a recognised process of judging its

effectiveness, its efficiency and any other outcomes it may have". In line with this definition,

UNISA (1998) conducts evaluations of the tutorial programme as a whole on two levels, namely

the formative and the summative.

At the *formative* level, learning centre managers and the tutors participate in ongoing

evaluation, not only of the tutor subsystem, but of all other aspects of the programme, including

communication and training strategies. Learning centre managers also conduct class visits (as

mentioned earlier) which enables tutors and students to give immediate feedback on the issues,

success and problems they experience with the delivery of tutorials. Finally, students are also

asked to evaluate their tutors at the end of each academic year. Tutors also evaluate themselves

in a self-evaluation form (see Appendix 3 for examples of both these forms). These measures

ensure that a process of monitoring tutorial facilitation is implemented.

Summative evaluation mainly concerns the annual academic cycle of the programme, and

is intended to complement the formative process outlined above. The outcomes of this

evaluation enable learning centres to make recommendations to the academic departments on

reappointment of tutors, and to help the learning centres make more effective operational and

administrative plans for delivery of the tutorial programme. The Department of Student Support

is responsible for the management of this process and for ensuring liaison with the tutor

coordinators of academic departments on all aspects pertaining to evaluation.

Evaluation of the tutor training programme as it pertains to the subject of psychology (and

this thesis) cannot be as neatly conceptualised as the evaluation of the tutorial programme,

outlined above. Bateson (1972) noted that rigorous evaluation alone is paralytic death, and

imagination alone is insanity. The subject-specific tutor training programme, once instituted and feedback is generated from all the role players concerned, will have to ask itself the ultimate question: Were elements of the trainees' world view reorganised and interweaved into the training system enough for us to say that 'news of a difference' (new meaning) has emerged? We shall see.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to place the subject specific idea of tutor training within the context of the bigger picture -- namely where it fits in regarding distance education and open learning at UNISA.

The author's attention now turns to the theoretical (Chapter 5) and practical matters (Chapter 6) as they pertain to the subject of tutor training.

CHAPTER 5

AN ECOSYSTEMIC APPROACH TO TUTOR TRAINING

Introduction

In this chapter an approach to tutor training, derived from an ecosystemic orientation, will be presented. The author will 'invite to the ongoing debate' (that was started in Chapter 2) authors such as Bateson, Maturana and Keeney, which the author believes have invaluable contributions to make to the evolving ecology of ideas as they pertain to the subject of tutor training.

Before embarking on this debate, it must be stressed that an ecosystemic approach to the subject at hand is not simply another theory. Ecosystemic epistemology represents a different way of thinking -- this has been referred to as an alternative or 'new' way of thinking. This does not imply that it is superior or more 'true' than any other world view. The search for truth is in fact a Newtonian idea. Ecosystemic theory is simply another way of thinking about the world. In so doing, some of the very basic assumptions of Newtonian thought will be questioned, many of which we have become so accustomed to that we seldom realise that they are assumptions, and not facts. The goal in this chapter therefore is to propose a paradigm for conceptualising tutor training in a way that is congruent with the ideas, concepts and world view of this new way of thinking.

An Alternative Epistemology

A Brief Historical Overview

In adopting an ecosystemic view on tutor training, being able to shift from a reductionistic, Cartesian-Newtonian philosophy to a holistic one, is crucial.

Newtonian physics, a most influential mode of thinking introduced into the field of science, is named after Isaac Newton. Descartes created the conceptual framework for seventeenth-century science, but his view of nature as a "perfect machine, governed by exact mathematical laws, had to remain a vision during his lifetime" (Capra, 1983, p.39). The man who realised the Cartesian dream, and completed the scientific revolution, was Isaac Newton. He developed a complete mathematical formulation of the mechanistic view of nature, and thus accomplished a grand synthesis of the works of Copernicus and Kepler, Bacon, Galileo and Descartes.

Newtonian physics, the crowning achievement of seventeenth-century science, provided a mathematical theory of the world that remained the solid foundation of scientific thought, well into the twentieth century (Capra, 1983). It epitomises the notion that a reality exists and can be proved, and it rests on the notions of *reductionism or atomism, linear causality and neutral objectivity.*

Reductionism or atomism focuses on the basic elements of an object or phenomenon. Once the elements and their properties are known or measured, an understanding of the whole phenomenon can be achieved by recombining the elements (Fourie, 1991).

Linear causality implies that the elements are connected through cause-and-effect (Hoffman, 1981). *Neutral objectivity* assumes that to arrive at the truth about phenomena,

objectivity of observation is necessary (Colapinto, 1979; Fourie, 1991).

When dealing with phenomena, such as those of classical physics, this Newtonian way of thinking is useful (Fourie, 1991; 1994). Early in the twentieth century, though, physicists such as Einstein (with his theory of relativity), Heisenberg and Planck showed that the intricacies of quantum physics required a different way of thinking about the world (Capra, 1983). The notion of an objective reality began to be questioned. Despite this observation, the natural sciences continued their adherence to a Newtonian way of thinking because they wished to maintain credibility as a scientific discipline. The social sciences followed suit -- in order to understand human behaviour, it is necessary to reduce it into its basic elements, which were seen to be interconnected via cause-and-effect, and which were regarded to be uninfluenced by the process and contexts of study (Fourie, 1991; 1994). These (hypothetical constructs) were often treated as if they were real. This process, known as *reification*, resulted in the wide acceptance of the existence of entities such as the 'ego', the 'unconscious' and the like (Doherty, 1991; Fourie, 1991; 1994).

In Haley's (1971) review of the field of family therapy, he explains how researchers and therapists, prior to the family therapy movement, which took off in the 1950's, looked mainly at intrapsychic factors in individuals, and on bringing about change in those individuals.

The movement toward therapy and research with whole families appeared in the 1950's. Moreover, investigators in the 1950's faced a continually changing unit of observation. They first shifted from the individual, then to the dyad, then the triad. This was the period of emphasis on the nuclear family. Then, perhaps with the recognition of the importance of extended kin, the unit shifted to an even larger ecological network (Hoffman, 1985). Sometimes a therapist noticed that, when his or her patient did change in individual therapy, there were consequences within the family.

This kind of change forced the therapist to think and describe the social function of psychopathology, and to take the context into account (Keeney, 1979).

Within each of these steps, both researchers and therapists sought an appropriate social model (Haley, 1971). The most popular model was a systems theory derived from cybernetics (Becvar & Becvar, 1993; Hoffman, 1981). This model could deal with interacting elements responding to one another in a self-corrective way, which is the way family members were seen to behave. Communication terminology began to be part of the language of this field, and family behaviour was analysed for body movement communication, as well as for linguistic and verbal behaviour (Haley, 1971; Miller, 1997).

The first adaptation of a technological model to the field of human behaviour, referred to as first-order cybernetics, used as its referent the world of machines (Hoffman, 1981). Based on developments in computer science and communication engineering, cybernetics is used to describe the general principles of how systems operate. It is chiefly concerned with control mechanisms and their associated communications systems, particularly those which involve feedback of information to the mechanism about its activities (Sluzki, 1993). The description of processes that could be applied to human behaviour were designed to explain how systems maintained and changed their organisation, and emphasised control and recursiveness (Hoffman, 1985).

Recursiveness, through negative and positive feedback, was the term used for maintenance and change respectively that occurred in a system. However, the first-order cybernetic model did not take into account the observer's part in either facilitating or blocking the self-correction that may have been occurring in the system (McDaniel, 1995).

As increasing fields of scientific enquiry encountered problems, the inadequacies of a Newtonian and first-order way of thinking became clear -- one cannot often understand the whole

by means of a synthesis of the parts. Criticism of the Newtonian epistemology came from the natural sciences (Capra, 1983; Prigogine, 1984), biology (Maturana, 1975), anthropology (Bateson, 1972; 1979) and various branches of family therapy (Keeney, 1979).

In the physical, as well as the behavioural and social sciences prior to the 1970's, an epistemological systemic assumption was that change was only meaningful if it was continuous over a certain range of possibilities. Discontinuous change was, in a way, ignored and viewed to be an aberration. It is of interest to note that the second law of thermodynamics states that all structure invariably degrades toward a point of unstructured equilibrium (Dell & Goolishian, 1981).

In contrast to the second law of thermodynamics, the second law of systems postulates that cohesion and unification are accounted for by the tendency of things "to become more and more orderly if they are left to themselves" (Dell & Goolishian, 1981, p.98), that is, "order through fluctuation" or "order out of chaos" (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984, p.76). This shift indicated that change could be sudden, discontinuous and random. This was an evolutionary model of change, rather than the previously posed developmental stepwise model (Miller, 1997).

In a similar vein, Bateson (1972) spoke about the dangers of linear or non-holistic thinking. Keeney, together with Sprenkle, used Batesonian arguments to attack the use of concepts such as homeostasis and their essays in "Family Process" sparked off numerous debates (Allman, 1982). Maturana (1975) offered his contribution by contrasting a control model for living systems (the input-output model of the engineers) with an autopoietic one, where living systems are respected in the dimension of their wholeness, rather than as objects to manipulate.

The above critical concepts primarily attest to a disillusionment with a Newtonian and a first-order outlook. It alerts the reader to the idea that, as more complex problems were encountered in the social sciences, and with the advent of family therapy, the Cartesian-

Newtonian way of thinking was, and is, being challenged. This challenge heralds a movement

towards *description* rather than explanation, towards taking *context* and its associated concepts

of interrelatedness, wholeness, circularity, patterned events and subjectivity, into account. In all

these areas, general systems theory, second-order cybernetics, ecology and constructivism (as

shall now be seen) have played their role.

From Linear Causality to Circularity

In adopting an ecosystemic perspective to tutor training, the ability to shift from a cause-

and-effect or linear point of view to a holistic orientation, is crucial. The word epistemology,

following Bateson (1972), refers to the way we know and understand the world around us, which

determines how we think and act and organise our existence. Bateson (1979) emphasised that

mental processes require circular chains of determination. Accordingly, it is the author's belief

that trainers should use a circular rather than a lineal cause-and-effect epistemology.

A linear epistemology orients the trainer to focus on discrete sequences and to

hypothesise about causal connections. A circular epistemology orients the trainer to focus on

recursiveness in the interaction between parts of the system and to hypothesise about holistic

patterns (Tonn, 1998).

It is in this sense that an ecosystemic epistemology can be conceptualised. It does not

attempt to reduce tutor training into discrete elements, such as, 'skills training' or 'insight

awareness', which are then thought to be the 'cause' of learning or changes in the tutor. The

focus in an ecosystemic training will always need to be on identifying circular patterns that are

characteristic of cybernetic feedback. The concepts of holism and interconnectedness replace

reductionism (Bogdan, 1994; Maturana, 1975).

This point bears repeating: tutor behaviour during the process of training *cannot* seen to be caused by anything. Behaviour constitutes an evolutionary step in the developing of the interdependent network of ideas existing in the training system. Concepts such as circularity, co-evolution and structural coupling will have replaced linear causality (Hoffman, 1981; Maturanna, 1975). *Circularity* (as already mentioned) refers to seeing circular patterns as opposed to cause-effect relations. *Co-evolution* refers to the way we socially construct and develop reality by our use of shared and agreed meaning and ideas, communicated via language (Coale, 1994). *Structural coupling* refers to the mutual influence between systems when they interact in a mutually satisfying way. This satisfying way or fit ensures the survival of the system for when the structural coupling is inadequate, the system dies (Dell, 1979). The circular ideas therefore, which will develop and evolve in the training situation, will be co-constructed -- everybody will partake in their construction. If these constructions satisfy the participants concerned, they will be said to be structurally coupled. There is nothing real or objective about the interplay of the participants' idiosyncratic ideas. Hence *constructivism* (meaning all reality is constructed), rather than the notion of objectivity, is taken up in order to make sense of the world of training (Field, 1996). Furthermore, the trainer is also seen to be part of the system that she or he is training. At root, this idea simply represents a preference for the Kantian model of knowledge over the Lockean model. Locke regarded mental images as representations of something (the trainer) outside the organism (training system), while Kant assumed that mental images were wholly creations of the organism (training system) produced as a by-product of its navigation through life (Efran, Lukens & Lukens, 1988). The images of the objectivist can be thought of as discoveries about the outside world, and the images of the constructivist are more like inventions about what is out there.

For Wade (1999) tutor training is synonymous with training activities designed to

increase the competencies needed by tutors in the performance of their assigned duties. This viewpoint (elaborated on later) is considered less useful from the viewpoint of this thesis as it does not address the circular patterns of interaction between parts of the training system, nor does it include the trainer as part of the field of observation and training. From the ecosystemic perspective, there is a circular pattern between the trainer and the training system she or he is part of. This process has already been described as the cybernetics of cybernetics or second-order cybernetics, and accurately reflects the world view of the likes of Bateson (1972) and Keeney (1982).

When one is working on identifying circular patterns, no attempt is made to dissect the circuitry (the training system) into elements. Ecosystemic epistemology requires that we begin to see patterns of relationship, the wholeness of the system, as well as the training procedure. In order to even speak of ecosystemic training (itself an abstraction), descriptions such as 'trainer' and 'trainee', will need to be reframed in terms of pattern and relationship, and not as things out there, isolated and disconnected from the whole. While it is not altogether essential to reject these traditional terms (trainers and trainees), we do need to reframe these words as references to patterns and not things. Essentially, the need for training (on the part of the trainee), and the 'interventions' of the trainer, can be seen as communications in an information network of human relationships (Keeney, 1979).

To sum up: Ecosystemic training is a process toward creating a new, circular ecosystem. Within this ecosystem, the trainer and the trainee are not merely two distinct entities. The trainer and trainee are both observers of the effects of specific training actions, and the participants that facilitate learning. This new system is a *meaning system* where trainer and trainee participate, contribute and collectively define and address the issue of training.

Ecologies of Meaning and Ideas

A core tenet in this study is that tutors punctuate (meaning mark and define) situations in which they are actors, and that such punctuations are generalisations that have been learnt through repeated interaction with others. Knosland (1990) noted that tutor behaviour is dependent upon the *meaning* of the tutorial as an event, rather than simply as an event. Following this line of thinking, training can be viewed as a process in which basic premises (or the ecology of ideas) underlying perception, cognition and behaviour can be reorganised (Bateson, 1972; Maturana, 1975).

The issue then of how tutors' perceptions and cognitions can be reorganised (not in a linear way), is essentially how the acquisition of ideas in one or more tutor will prompt other tutors to reorganise their perceptions and cognitions. In this way, new ecologies of meaning and interactional patterns evolve. Ecosystemic training can thus be seen as a way (among many other ways) to facilitate the emergence of ideas, where a multiverse of realities is created (Tjersland, 1990).

Within the context of this multiverse system, the trainer's task is to aid the tutor to integrate the various views offered by the various role players, and in this way help the tutor to reorganise elements of their own perceptions and thinking. Perception now becomes a process of construction, and alerts us to the idea that reality is created by us in interaction with others in our world, and is influenced by the way we think and observe. This interaction or blending of perspectives was described by Bateson (1979) as binocular vision, that is, each 'eye' provides a different perspective, but the integration of views yields the bonus of *new* depth perception.

The emphasis here is on the emergence of new information, on what Bateson (in Keeney, 1983) called news of a difference. This news of a difference requires a change or transformation,

so that the news of a difference may be passed on to the next part of the circuit.

One can surmise then, that in training, more is required of the trainer than merely supporting the one-sided view of the tutor. If tutors are given a forum to discuss their ideas, interact with other tutors, and in this way come to realise that reality is constructed in interaction with colleagues, then new information or news of a difference can emerge. It is the multi-view which will allow for new information to emerge via the medium of *language* (Speed, 1991).

Human Systems as Linguistic Systems

Reality is co-constructed in language by the observer internally to him or herself, and externally through the observer's communication with others. An ecosystemic approach to tutor training therefore takes the position that it is not possible to achieve an 'objective' view of the world of training, because observations will always be influenced by the perspective of the observer (Atkinson & Heath, 1986; Owen, 1992). Training will not attempt to correct the trainee nor teach him or her about training directly. When we adopt an ecosystemic perspective, we take on the position that organisms correct themselves if not interfered with. This suggests that training should focus on allowing the tutor to achieve his or her own adjustments. The challenge for the trainer is to facilitate a domain of discourse by joining (or structurally coupling) with the tutor system in a way that will promote self-correction (Becvar & Becvar, 1993). The above idea links with the notion of autonomy, as proposed by Maturana (1975) which, in turn, led Maturana and Varela (cited in Zeleny, 1998) to develop into the theory of autopoiesis. Autopoiesis sees living systems as organisationally closed and capable of self-reference, self-regulation and self-transformation.

If the organisation of an autonomous system is closed, where does this leave the trainer?

Is the trainer simply incidental? Redundant? Varela (1979) seemed to feel that an observer (trainer) can interact with the system's wholeness by "poking at it" (p.28) and perturbing the stability of the whole system, which in response, would respond *OR* would not respond. The implicit message here is of great importance: Ecosystemically speaking, the trainer cannot *not* influence the training process, but he or she cannot dictate or specify to the trainee system how it should respond either. Trainer and trainee are essentially bringing forth a new reality together through interaction and conversation.

Maturana (1975) came to a different conclusion, namely that there is no such thing as information, and it is here that he departs from Bateson's (1972) notion that information is news of a difference, which makes a difference. For the purposes of this study, the importance of information will not be discarded, but it will also not be regarded as a unilateral tool. Trainers would not purposively seek information in any strict programmed format, but would be receptive to the experience, which would take place in a particular domain, and through the *medium of language*.

The domain of news or meaning is referred to as the conversational domain, where conversation or language is taken to refer to the linguistically mediated and contextually relevant meaning that is generated through words and non-verbal actions (Maturana, 1975).

Anderson and Goolishian (1988) point out that we (humans) are users of language. We speak as part of the human process of creating and dealing with the realities in which we exist. Reality, in turn, is constructed through social discourse, and is agreed upon through conversation (Real, 1990). The conversational domain brings forth a new reality that draws on descriptions or comments, in order to convey meaning (Griffith, Griffith & Slovik, 1990).

In the light of the above reasoning, trainees would be required to relate and comment on their experiences as tutors (Coale, 1994). In addition, training would need to provide a context

where various role players (students, fellow tutors, lecturers) are involved in a process of mutual search and exploration through dialogue -- a crisscrossing of ideas in which new meanings are continually evolving (Howard, 1997; Wassenaar, 1986). Multi-level conversations are seen as part of a struggle to reach an understanding with those with whom we are in contact. We cannot step out of our domain of interactions. We live, therefore, in a domain of subject-dependent knowledge and subject-dependent reality (Maturana, 1978). When interaction takes place in a mutually satisfying way, the training system (as already mentioned) can be said to fit or to be structurally coupled. This fit ensures the survival of the system, and language aids the fit (Real, 1990). *Language aids the fit.* This bears repeating. It allows contact to be established and a "consensual domain" to be erected (Le Roux, 1998, p.89). The question then of how tutors will be trained, is essentially one that asks how the consensual domain will use language in the evolution of ideas and interactional patterns between the various role players. Each member of the system will have their linguistic reality. There may be consensus among some members, but not among all.

From an ecosystemic perspective, training is the co-evolution or development of new meaning and takes place through conversations about conversations (meta-conversations) (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988; Santos, 1999).

A Meta-Level Approach: Toward Second-Order Cybernetics

In first-order cybernetics, the observer, who provides descriptions about and offers instructive techniques to a system, would be considered to be objective. In terms of this way of thinking, the trainer (also the author) would view the training system from the outside, as if disconnected to it.

Within the ecosystemic approach, the view is taken that the trainer is part of the field of observation, and also that she or he would be unable to exert influence on the training system in a direct or lineal way (Alexander, 1999). All that the trainer can do, is present ideas (verbal or recorded), which could perturb the consensual domain and, if any techniques are to be used, they should be adequately coupled to the ecology of which they are part. From this it can be seen that both first and second-order cybernetics are seen to offer something different, but this difference does not have to mean a choice of one approach over another. Ecosystemic epistemology alerts us to the fact that both first and second-order cybernetics are complementary. However, if the trainer presumes to use training techniques, while seeing himself as a unilateral power broker, she or he is dealing with partial arcs of cybernetic systems, and does not fully understand the whole ecology of the situation (Alexander, 1999).

Aesthetics and Pragmatics as Complementary Processes in Training

Tutor training (based on ecosystemic epistemology) furthermore addresses issues of both pragmatics and aesthetics, which Keeney (1983) viewed as complementary. Since Keeney used these two concepts in the context of psychotherapy, it is necessary to define these terms as they would pertain to the context of training:

Pragmatics essentially refers to the nuts-and-bolts or practical measures of tutor training. Some of these measures were outlined in Chapter 2 on concept definitions, and have been (and will be) elaborated on extensively in numerous other chapters. It essentially refers to the use of techniques (such as coaching and teaching) by trainers in order to instruct trainees in a step-by-step approach to training (Sparkes, 1995; Wade, 1999).

Distinct from relating to what is practical, the aesthetic view is more abstract and embodies (as its goal) the perturbation of ecologies of ideas, as discussed in depth in this chapter. In particular, such an epistemology would have to embody two distinct patterns:

(a) the trainer moving in a reductionistic direction when guided by pragmatics and

(b) moving in a holistic (even ambiguous) direction when concerned with aesthetics

(Duncan, Parks & Rusk, 1990; Keeney & Sprenkle, 1982).

Polarising pragmatics and aesthetics, as if they were separate views, is an epistemological error (Allman, 1982). The basic assumption in this thesis is that an aesthetics of training should embrace and conceptualise pragmatics. The author reiterates that, in so far as techniques are conceptualised to be merely in the service of skills-training, the training procedure is at risk of merely leading to the re-enactment of old meanings (Crosby, 1991). Trainees may find themselves in a space where rehearsing old and tested skills becomes the applauded norm, but with little change taking place within their repertoire of behaviour, as well as their thinking. This is why an ecosystemic orientation is propagated here. It is deemed irresponsible to embark along with the trainee on a journey where subjective, one-sidedness is validated without attention being given to other levels of influence within the training system.

This does not imply that techniques of training are useless. They have valid contributions to make, but need to be reconceptualised in order to encompass an awareness of the circularity of systems so that trainees can, through training, encounter something new. Put differently, techniques will have to be reframed to include references to pattern and relationship. The focus shifts from the individual trainee to include the trainer as both a participant and an observer of the training process. Training can be viewed as the creative unfolding of a process where all truths are co-constructed.

Ecosystemic Ideas and the Chapter to Follow

In order to illustrate the practical application of these tenets, the following chapter will deal with the research process and research design. To be sure, the research as a whole will remain true to the tenets in this section, that is:

- The trainer will need to focus on *recursiveness* in interaction between parts of the system.

- The trainer is simultaneously an *observer* of the effects of training and a *participant* that makes training possible.

- An ecosystemic position is a *constructivist* one and holds that reality is unknowable because it changes as we watch, comment and relate to what we see. This has implications for the author, as well as the trainer, as it is impossible for either to achieve an objective view of training.

- What is aimed for in the approach to training is something of a balance between the *aesthetic* and *pragmatic* views of training, which are *complementary*.

Conclusion

An ecosystemic approach to training will enable trainees to find new meanings (through conversation) in their tutorials by revising their outlook in ways that will free them from the way that they have conceptualised matters thus far. Conversation is a process of absorbing new information and trying to use it, as well as checking what others think of the input. In other words, concepts are recycled in the process of training and gradually acquire sufficient richness

of meaning for them to be used with confidence to express the trainee's own ideas (Daniel & Stroud, 1990; Gough, 1998).

Such recycling of ideas can be achieved in a variety of ways. In residential universities it is achieved relatively easily through the use of tutorials and discussion groups (Sparkes, 1995). Applied to the training process in this thesis, it refers to the recursive relationship and dialogue between trainers and trainees. These dialogues (potentially infinite), lead to continually evolving ecology of ideas, and facilitate a domain for discourse that does not threaten the varying realities of the participants in the training process (Owen, 1992).

Finally, this approach to training is based on a world view that emphasises the constructivist notion of meaning-in-context (Coale, 1994). Meanings and ideas in this thesis are continually undergoing revision as the author introduces the reader to various definitions and ideas on the topics pertaining to the study. This is no different to the proposed way of addressing tutor training: it too will investigate the way in which trainees conduct tutorials in accordance with their ideas and meanings about it. These ideas, however, are expected to be revised (but is beyond the scope of this thesis) as the trainee engages in conversation with, or receives input from, significant role players, which includes the self-of-the-trainee, as self-evaluation highlights the important principle of self-in-context (Speed, 1991).

CHAPTER 6

THE RESEARCH PROCESS AND DESIGN

In the previous chapter, ecosystemic epistemology was employed as a fitting paradigm for the proposed training of psychology tutors at UNISA's learning centres. In Chapter 3, the context, namely UNISA and its implementation of support services, was elaborated on. The purpose of this chapter is to *introduce* and discuss the research process and design, from which the research results on tutor training will emerge. To be sure, the approach will acknowledge the importance of context, but also adhere to and be congruent with ecosystemic thinking.

Introduction

Human inquiry and the world of science has always contained the binary opposition between quantitative methods of inquiry, where the belief is that research must be objective and measurable if it is to arrive at the truth, and more qualitative methods of inquiry, where truth is heuristic and where researchers attempt to understand the meaning of complex events, actions and interactions in context, and from the point of view of the participants involved (Babbie, 1999). The author holds that the idea of competition between these two methods of inquiry is an unfortunate one. A structuralist orientation forces us to think in binary oppositions: traditional science versus new paradigm science; quantitative versus qualitative. Fortunately, there are approaches which attempt not to reconcile these oppositions, but promote them. These include the ecosystemic and the postmodern perspectives which emphasise the co-existence, juxtaposition or legitimacy of multiple paradigms (Hlynka, 1991). The author holds that both quantitative and qualitative positions are legitimate, with thoughtful individuals propagating each

of these methods. The author does not have the dilemma of having to choose between the two

research methods. A qualitative research paradigm will be employed, not because it is better or

superior to a quantitative one, but because it is appropriate to the aims of the research, namely,

to search for ideas (from significant role players' comments) on what effective tutor training

means. The aim of most qualitative research efforts is to discover something in the world of

experience, and then examine how these discoveries modify the way we understand the

phenomenon in question, while the aim of most quantitative research is to establish whether or

not some hypothetical claim about a phenomenon is actually true (Shank, 1998). These are

neither competing nor necessarily complementary modes of research. They are research models

that address different purposes.

In the sections to follow, quantitative and qualitative research will be elaborated on briefly

in an attempt to make a *useful* distinction between the two methods of research. This will be

followed with an exposé on the link between qualitative research and ecosystemic epistemology,

as well as the role of the author-researcher in this study. Thereafter, sampling and selection, data

collection, data analysis and the reliability and validity of this study, will come under view.

Finally, the limitations of the qualitative method will be discussed.

Quantitative and Qualitative Research Paradigms

Quantitative research methodology is consistent with the Cartesian-Newtonian

epistemology, which was discussed extensively in Chapter 6 on ecosystemic epistemology. It

attempts to ferret out cause-and-effect relationships, and belongs to the tradition that is concerned

with objectivity, measurement and outcome (Christensen, 1996).

One of the prerequisites of this approach is that it requires that the human scientists'

observations not be affected by their own wishes and attitudes. It also hinges on the belief that when such objectivity is exercised, and by reducing the research data into units of observation or measurement, the "truth" is discovered and change happens. The larger context of the subject in question is ignored, but the control that can be exercised in (for instance) an experiment, the ability to manipulate one or more variables of the empiricist's choosing, and its pragmatic approach, in that it produces results that have lasted over time, are seen to more than make up for ignoring contextual issues (Christensen, 1996).

With the shift in focus from individuals to larger systems in the field of general systems theory, the quantitative approach was not considered appropriate to a field of study whose data was order and pattern, instead of units of observation and measurement. It is the author's contention that the quantitative approach has its place. It has proven to be useful, which makes it important. It has also yielded many unambiguous answers to specific questions and has enabled researchers to manipulate variables so precisely that the research results can be interpreted clearly and orderly.

In spite of its virtues, the quantitative paradigm is inappropriate for use in the present study. At worst, the quantitative approach would have the author promote the view that trainees are manipulable mechanistic objects. At best, it would suggest that the trainee is not an empty machine devoid of feelings or thoughts or will, but that she or he must nevertheless have their behaviour directed in a given manner.

Both the above options are clearly incongruent with ecosystemic epistemology.

The primary characteristic of the qualitative approach is that it represents an attempt to provide as much of an accurate description of a particular situation as possible. It does not concern itself with cause-and-effect relationships. Instead, it attempts to address a given situation by describing the patterns of relationship between various role players, which include the author.

It reflects a phenomenological perspective in so far as it attempts to understand the meaning of naturally occurring complex interactions from the point of view of the participant-observers involved (Moon, Dillon & Sprenkle, 1990). It thus complements the ecosystemic approach.

This complement does not mean to say that qualitative research methods do not have their own set of disadvantages. Quantitative researchers have condemned qualitative methods and admonished them for being too subjective and lacking in adequate structure (Dillon, 1998; Morris, 1999; Olnos, 1997).

The delicate task of this thesis will be to conduct qualitative research from an ecosystemic frame of reference *in such a way* that it might stand up as a legitimate and lucid form of investigation. By taking an ecosystemic, qualitative 'research genre' approach, this author can work in a world where there is no need to try to reconcile one method in terms of any other. The author contends that the qualitative method chosen has its own way and the research findings will make sense on their own terms. This, the author feels, is one of the paths to genuine openness in the use of research methods to expand the inquiry into, and understanding of, tutor training.

The Qualitative Research Paradigm and Ecosystemic Epistemology

The qualitative approach in this study (informed by Moon et al., 1990) will embody the following characteristics:

1. It will be informed by *theory*. Ecosystemic epistemology will give the author her lens for looking at the world of tutor training. This author will not try to test the veracity of ecosystemic theory via a design process. Instead, this author is more interested in looking at observations as evidence of ongoing processes and relations. Furthermore,

the author will use the 'evidence' as it is found, in order to try to understand the nature of those processes and relations, thereby discovering new and fruitful 'news of a difference'.

2.   The *purpose* of the study (tutor training) is clearly stated before the research project commences, but the aim is to discover something in the world of tutor experience, and then examine how these discoveries modify the way we understand the issue of tutor training.

3.   The *role of the author-researcher* is that of a participant observer. The author is a tutor herself. She has developed a close relationship with her research participants, who may be termed co-researchers. The researcher thus needs to clarify her role and acknowledge her bias.

4.   *Sampling and Data collection*. Many types of sampling (e.g. quota selection, typical case selection, convenience selection, etc) are possible. The author will look intensively at videotaped footage of three tutors, as well as footage of comments from other role players.   All comments and ideas on tutoring will be subjected to a dialectic.

5.   *Data analysis*. Data will be analysed in a way that patterns can be discerned. Patterns will emerge from (rather than being imposed on) the data. Shank (1998) points out that (ironically) both qualitative and quantitative methods accept the modernist position that there is an underlying grand structure or grand narrative that will emerge in the analysis of the data. In place of this search for the defining narrative, this author offers the ecosystemic position on analysing data, namely, there is no grand narrative.

This author aims to conduct an exemplary research by simply going into the study with an open mind and coming out of it with a clear conscience.

6.   *Results*. Results will be in the form of constructed theory.

7.   *Reliability and Validity.* Reliability essentially refers to the reliability or trustworthiness

of the author's data or observations. Validity refers to the trustworthiness of the author's

interpretations and conclusions. In this way it differs from quantitative research where

reliability refers to the trustworthiness of the measuring instrument, and validity to the

fact that the instrument measures what it says or intends to measure (Stiles, 1993).

The above characteristics, many of which were discussed in Chapter 5, show that the

qualitative research paradigm (as reframed above) is compatible with ecosystemic epistemology.

The author will now proceed by widening the tenets of the qualitative research paradigm

using the ecosystem as its referent:

The research under study will be conceived of as a *living ecosystem.* The participants in

the study (including the author) will shape the process of the research, and the descriptions that

will emerge from it will yield rich information. Information essentially refers to the comments

of the various participants, but also to the author's interpretations of the comments of the

participants (Stiles, 1993). The course of this living ecosystem will clearly consist of continual

shifts (discoveries, news of a difference and more discoveries) until the research and the training

process makes sense to the author, participants and readers of this dissertation.

Organisms (the author, the students, the trainees) will survive by fitting with each other,

as well as with the research. If a relationship built on trust and *fit* is established, the trainees will

understand each other (structural coupling), as well as the approach to training. If not, they will

be uncooperative and their testimonials or comments will reveal their dissatisfaction with the

training approach. In addition, the author wishes to make a necessary distinction here between

the research process, the results of which will be in the form of discovered theory, and the

eventual training package, which will be informed by the research results. A fit between the

research process and the training package is essential if disintegration is to be avoided.

One way to counter disintegration is to ensure that each participant in this study will have the opportunity to construct the world in which they live (Fourie, 1994). In other words, author and participant(s) will be able to *co-create* (invented) realities which will offer them many and different ways to language around the central issue of training. This world of training is not an objective universe to be described. Rather, there are a host of multiverses, just as there are a host of participants.

The task of this research is not to understand the multiverses that exist, but to take the linguistic constructions (comments) to an audience (the author, fellow tutors, lecturers) for *consensual validation.* In this way, a shared reality emerges. This approach differs considerably from the view (mentioned in Chapter 5) that holds that a real social world exists independently of our observing it.

The qualitative paradigm under discussion may be problematic in one sense -- it seldom makes explicit what it is looking for (by definition it cannot). The author will now expand on this aspect in an attempt to go some way toward redressing some of the criticisms levelled against the qualitative approach.

The Ecosystemic, Qualitative Research Process

The author advocates that the present study not be viewed as a fossilised, inanimate piece of work. Instead, it is to be viewed as a context in which significant parties engaged in dialogue. In a very real sense, 'dialoguing' represents a means by which a *process* will evolve. In particular, the author-researcher has invited three tutors to demonstrate an example each of a tutorial, and to agree to have it recorded on videotape. Yet this is not the research. The

videotapes will act as a *catalyst* for comments to emerge from other participants in this study. Comments will energise the thesis as commentators comment on the video material, and on each other. Comments on comments, and the generation of new comments and meanings will create a *research in action*, as opposed to a static piece of work.

The idea that a multitude of comments (potentially infinite) are possible, alerts the reader to the fact that primacy cannot be assigned to any single comment or commentator. This is (perhaps) the most useful 'tool' of the qualitative research approach as it implies that *the evolution of the research system is the research*. In other words, the author has created a research ecosystem which is unpredictable, subject to change and where research outcomes can never be forecast. These ecosystemic ideas fit with the qualitative research paradigm in so far as there is no predictable blueprint that governs or regulates the pattern of discovery. This also implies that the author cannot directly influence the participants in this study. The qualitative paradigm assumes that there are many and varied ways to describe and influence events in the social world. No one participant-observer can be credited for having access to the 'truths' of tutor training (Piercy, 1996).

The question now becomes -- how does an author-researcher conduct an ecosystemic investigation of tutor training without falling prey to pushing or pulling for answers from the participants? One of the key concepts in an ecosystemic, qualitative research paradigm is *circularity*. By circularity is meant that the author is able to investigate any given topic on the basis of feedback from the participants. This method is predicated on the Milan associates (Hoffman, 1985) who deduced that, in order to do research, one needs to create differences (commentaries). To operationalise this in the context of the present study, every participant will be invited to tell us how she or he perceived the video material.

Comments in the domain of language can only be borne out in relationships. The author

contends that it is more fruitful to ask a tutor to comment on the video material than to ask him or her about tutor training in general. By inviting one tutor to meta-comment on other tutors, the author respects one of the first rules of human communication -- in a situation of interaction, the various participants, try as they might, cannot *NOT* communicate (Palazzoli, 1980). Individuals are best understood within their interrelational context (Piercy, 1996). This approach is a useful one for eliciting information from the participants on the research question of tutor training. By looking at how participants comment on the video material, the author will be able to generate data.

The author is known to the research participants. The author has circulated the video material to other tutors and to relevant staff members at UNISA. Each will view the video material, and then record their comments in writing or on audio or videotape, about the video and on each other. This will leave the author with a multitude of comments. What will emerge cannot be foretold, but *the material will be analysed in order to generate ideas and guiding principles on tutoring and tutor training*. The author's own comments and voice will be present in the text. These comments ought to generate additional information, informed by sound theory, and concerning itself with the relationship between differences and information. These principles are the lynchpins of qualitative research, and constitute a legitimate methodology (Piercy, 1996).

The author cannot specify here what will be done with the information generated and how it will be layed out, for these can only become clear to the author once she engages with the material in this study. The intention (at best) will be to use ecosystemic principles in order to examine (and ultimately deconstruct and reconstruct) a whole host of realities. Nothing about process research design is reductionistically elegant, except for the fact that it is well grounded in theory. *Process research design* refers to the fact that this thesis presents a context in which a process is unfolding. The research is construction-oriented, and the conclusions that will be

drawn, will be descriptive. It is thus the most appropriate design of those available in the qualitative paradigm.

More on the Role of the Author-Researcher

In keeping with the ecosystemic approach, the auhor's reality, following Von Foerster (1981), is subjective and experiential, suggesting that what the author-researcher observes, cannot be objective. This places the researcher in a self-referential position that negates claim to objectivity (Keeney, 1983). The implication for this dissertation is that all observations involve self-reference, and any description given says as much about the observer or author as it says about the subject of description. The author will thus be aware of how she thinks and what theories inform her thinking. The author and the participants become co-researchers, co-learners who cooperate with (and attempt to understand) each other's meaning system. A participant's ideas about tutoring, their stories, comments and narratives are some of the tools available for keeping the research system flexible to the development of new meaning. Thus, as participant-observer, the author will never be solely 'meta' to the research system. She is a member of the research system and this position forms as soon as she began talking with the tutors about the subject of tutor training. In addition, the author is a kind of participant-manager of conversation (Bateson, 1972). In this sense, she does not control the video presentation, nor is she responsible for creating (only for organising) a physical space in which conversations about tutoring can take place. Creating a space for dialogue and commentary is the responsibility of all the participants in the system.

The ecosystemic paradigm accedes that the notion of 'expertise' in research is more akin to that of the storyteller than it is to that of the social engineer. Researchers are co-experts in the

dialogical process, and not in social mechanics (Efran, 1998).

The author commenced her doctoral studies by informing the academic tutor coordinator (also the promoter of this thesis), of her interest in the topic of subject-specific tutor training. As a result of a basic fit between the author and the promoter, a supervisory relationship was set up after the criteria for a proposal on the subject was officially approved by UNISA. Psychology tutors at the various learning centres (as well as psychology lecturers at UNISA) were informed that the author would be conducting research on the subject of tutor training. She also told fellow tutors that no subject-specific training and development activities for tutors were in place, but that everyone could all make a useful contribution to the notion of tutor training by offering their comments, insights and observations on the subject in question. Tutors would not only be helping each other out, but would also (ultimately) have something useful to impart to their students, for example, (and at best) fresh ideas, renewed commitment and containment, because the tutor would be receiving these very 'gifts' from ongoing participation in the ideas leading towards a training approach.

The author was naive to believe that all would receive the news with open arms. The author remembers registering for her doctoral studies, and visiting the (then) head of the psychology department, together with the appointed promoter. The acting head of department's words have remained indelible: "I hope it works out for you", to which the author retorted with a determined: "It will work out. It will never be a matter of hoping that it will". The author remembers her own delight at this retort, and also the promoter's amusement with her new, seemingly precocious, supervisee. But the acting head was wiser than the author and his words of warning (not doom) have stood the test of reality and time. The author had to learn a valuable lesson -- that one can only go with the process, not against it, irrespective of commitment and determination. The author also had to learn to deal with a myriad of responses to her studies:

Some tutors and lecturers, especially the ones who knew her, approved of the idea of tutor training. Others seemed reserved and ambivalent about it. Then there were those who seemed to feel that the author was simply jumping on the bandwagon of tutor training, and they seemed to take this proliferation of interest in training to mean that it was something less than worthwhile. Even the learning centre where the author had been a tutor for over seven years, seemed unconvinced by the methodology, and yet enquired constantly about the research developments none the less!

The author had to formulate some important ideas around her thinking if she was to make sense out of these happenings:

- The author believes strongly in the *autonomous nature of any system*, whether this refers to the body of tutors or lecturers. Thus, the author respected (but not without tribulation) the autonomy of the various participants and their perceptions. The author did not see herself as a power broker who was going to poke and perturb in order to get her own way or for the sake of poking and perturbing. In the end, she worked with the process and with the ambivalence, not against it. Interestingly, this resulted in self-correction; for every seemingly negative response, there was a positive one to counterbalance it. When this occurred, the author could effectively change her own behaviour as well -- she adjusted, gathered strength and continued the research.

- UNISA as a whole is undergoing transformation at many levels. It would be naive to expect that (yet another perturbation) would not upset the balance of the system. The idea of subject specific tutor training is perhaps promoting the interests of some parts of the system at the (perceived) expense of other parts. However, it was the authors intention that all parties (especially tutors and students) should benefit from these endeavours.

- The author sees herself as the *facilitator of differential discourse.* When we think in terms of ecology, we encounter the position that organisms adjust or heal themselves. Since the whole ecology is recursively structured and self-corrective, any disturbed part will adjust if allowed to achieve its own adjustments. The challenge for this author will be to facilitate a domain of differential discourse by joining the other parts of the system in a way that will promote self-correction.

This author is not positioned solely outside the research system, but also in it. The self-in-system ensures that the author will be engaged with what she encounters and is, as a result, subject to all the constraints and necessities of the particular part-whole relationship in which she exists (Keeney, 1984).

Sampling, Selection and Research Procedure

Sampling refers to taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe (Campbell, 1998). This definition does not say that the sample taken *IS* representative. It says that it *CONSIDERS* it to be representative. When a manager (let us say female) of a learning centre visits certain tutorial classes 'to get a feel' for what tutors are doing, she is sampling classes from all the classes in the system. She is assuming that if she visits, say, 8 classes out of 40 at random, she will get a fair notion of the quality of tutoring going on in the system. Or she may visit one tutorial class three times to sample the tutoring. She is now sampling behaviours, in this case tutoring behaviours, from the universe of all possible behaviours of the tutor. Such sampling is necessary and legitimate (Campbell, 1998).

The above discussion is confined to simple sampling, but many types of sampling are

possible. Researchers classify samples into probability, nonprobability and certain mixed forms. *Probability samples* use some form of *random sampling* in one or more of their stages. *Nonprobability sampling*, like quota, *purposive*, accidental and cluster sampling do not use random sampling (Christensen, 1996).

In this study, sampling was both purposive and random.

Purposive sampling is characterised by the use of judgment and a deliberate effort to obtain representative samples by including presumably typical subjects (tutors, lecturers) in the sample (Christensen, 1996). First, tutors from the Pretoria learning centre were selected, by invitation, and asked to give a demonstration of a tutorial (with students present) on video. Pretoria tutors were selected because of the factor of convenience (the author is also from Pretoria), but also because these tutors understood the rationale of the study, ascertained from numerous discussions that the author had with her colleagues before the commencement of her doctoral studies.

The Tutors Chosen to Give a Video Demonstration

The 'Pretoria sample' comprised three tutors, to be referred to as Ms C, Ms B and Ms A. These participants were asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. Two of the tutors, namely, Ms C (who tutored second-year psychology students in the subject of Developmental Psychology in 1998) and Ms B (the tutor for first-year psychology in 1998) agreed immediately, while the third participant, that is, Ms A (the current tutor for third-year students in the subject of Research Methodology) was hesitant, but agreed to give it a try.

Ms C was asked to prepare a demonstration of an end-of-the-year tutorial, looking at exam preparation. Ms C and a small sample (8) of her second year Developmental Psychology

students were the first group to be videotaped. This taping was done in 1998. Student numbers were restricted to between six and eight students, as the video venue at the Department of Psychology at UNISA could not accommodate more than eight students without compromising the clarity of the video.

The next tutor to respond was Ms B. She and her first year psychology students were videotaped in the middle of 1998. She was asked to give a demonstration of a middle-of-the-year tutorial, focusing on whatever aspect they were dealing with at the time.

Lastly, Ms A and her third-year Research Methodology students, were videotaped at the beginning of the tutorial year of 1999. Ms A was asked to demonstrate an example of the first tutorial of the year, focusing on what Ms A considered to be important.

Minimum instruction was given to the tutors in an attempt to encourage them to do as they would normally. This was considered very important as the tutors were not videotaped in their natural environment.

Tutors and Students and Their Contribution to the Study

The students featured in the video were chosen randomly. The sample drawn was thus unbiased *in the sense that* no one student had any more chance of being selected for the video than any other student. The names of the students were written on pieces of paper and a select few (seven or eight out of twenty) were randomly chosen.

Once the tutorials were videotaped, the students in the class were asked to comment (in writing) on their experience (see Appendix 4, 5 and 6). The tutor was then asked to take their video demonstration home and view it, and then comment on what they observed at a content level (what they did), as well as on a process level (their relationship and interaction with their

students). Finally, these tutors returned to the video room to commit their comments on video.

Fellow Tutors and Their Contribution to the Study

The second stage of the research process was when fellow tutors were asked to watch the video demonstration, as well as take note of the comments of the tutor and students in question. These tutors then committed their comments on videotape as well.

Ms C's and Ms A's video was watched and discussed by the author in conversation with Mr A, the current tutor for the second year students studying Personology.

Ms B's video was watched and discussed by three tutors from the Durban learning centre, namely Ms D, Ms E and Ms F.

Academics/UNISA Staff Members and Their Contribution to the Study

The final comments were recorded by academic and administrative staff members at UNISA.

The promoter of this thesis and Ms G (a lecturer at the Department of Psychology) were recorded (on video) discussing and commenting on Ms B's video and on her self-comments, as well as on the tutor comments.

The promoter and Mr B (a lecturer in the Department of New Testament and an ex-tutor) were recorded (on video) discussing and commenting on Ms A's video and on her self-comments, as well as on the comments from the tutors.

Finally, the promoter and Ms H (from the Department of Student Support) were recorded discussing Ms C's video and her self-comments, as well as on the comments from tutors.

In addition, the promoter and Ms I (lecturer in psychology) were recorded (on audiotape) discussing Ms C's video presentation. This recording was not planned, but the comments were considered important enough to include.

All audio, video and written material is available from the author upon request, but subject to the written approval from the research participants in question. Transcriptions of all the material is available in Appendix 4, 5 and 6 of this study.

In conclusion, it must be noted that, by including the author and her promoter as part of the field of observation, the research procedure created a research ecosystem that adheres to the notions of a circular epistemology, where there is an awareness that all participants in the research are part of an organised whole.

Data Collection

The video footage was the primary method used to generate information. The video (or audio or written material) was never more than an *aid* to the author-researcher. It was never the objective of the exercise. The audio-visual medium, in particular, simply served as a stimulus, and was seen to be *one* way (among many) to record examples of tutorial classes. This point was emphasised in the section on ecosystemic epistemology and bears repeating: An ecosystemic epistemology involves more than mere academic recording and understanding of material. It includes, at its deepest level, a conversation of the mind with others in the service of creating new ideas and meaning, in this case around tutoring and training.

The video provided a context for a relationship to develop between the participants and the author. This interaction was assumed to reflect something about the participants' unique patterns of relating, as it provided useful information about the way the participants in the study

related and interacted, as well as the effect they had on the author.

Data Analysis and Research Results

Data analysis is taken to refer to the meaning that is imposed on the mass of data that is generated in a qualitative research study. It has sometimes been described as a fascinating and time-consuming process that yields rich and diverse descriptions (Firestone, 1993).

An interpretive approach will be selected. Interpretation of the data will be done in such a way as to discover meaning. This will necessitate a detailed reading and examination of the text, which has been transcribed from the video footage (see Appendix 4, 5 and 6). The reading is in order to discover embedded meaning. Ecosystemic frames of reference will then be used to analyse the data.

The aim of an ecoystemic epistemology is to discover, rediscover or deconstruct meaning in order to achieve understanding *AND/OR* to reconstruct new or alternative understanding, and will be based on some of the following tenets, following Deely (1990):

- Participants in any research give meaning to what they are doing, which is important if researchers are to understand their constructs.

- Meaning can be expressed verbally, non-verbally and in interaction with others.

- The meaning of human (inter)action is constantly under revision, and may change or evolve over time. There are no fixed entities as meaning is informed by context, personal histories and shared language.

These tenets are not to be read as instructions. Keeping Deely (1990) in mind, the author will adopt the following practices:

1. The author will read the transcribed material as a whole in order to immerse herself into the texts so that she can begin to get a feel for, and attempt to make sense of, the world of 'captured' material. This reading will focus exclusively on content.

2. The author will then carefully re-read the transcriptions, in order to elicit ecosystemic descriptions, which are relevant to the research context. This 'dialogue' between the author and the texts (based on multiple dialogues between the research participants) will aid the author to move the analysis from a content level, to one of process and meaning.

3. The author will maintain a searching attitude, looking for deeper or alternative meanings and useful constructs (in terms of ideas pertaining to tutoring and tutor training) as she moves back and forth between part-text and whole-text.

4. The author will undertake to integrate the material pertaining to the analysis of data. This will be done by ordering the discussion on results into manageable part-wholes.

5. In the conclusion, the study will be evaluated and its contribution to the envisioned training package will be included.

Reliability and Validity with Reference to this Study

Reliability will be achieved as follows:

- The author will disclose her orientation, as well as how the investigation will impact on her.

- The author will dialogue with the text and her investigation will evolve in the process of finding new meanings. Interpretations will be linked to excerpts from the transcribed text. Reliability will thus be achieved with reference to iteration, conceptualisation, re-conceptualisation and evolution.

In conclusion, the author aligns herself with this position: she is left hoping that parts of this study remain unreliable in the sense that they cannot be replicated. The unique contributions of the participants are a gift of a moment in time and such moments cannot be replicated or cloned.

Validity will be achieved as follows:

- Validity will be achieved from the multitude of data sources, especially in view of the 'cacophony' of voices in the text. Lucid and epistemologically informed interpretations will be offered.

- It is hoped that these contributions will enrich the appreciation of the reader, aiding him or her to make sense of the world of tutor training as proposed in this study.

- Reflexive validity will be achieved as the author's interpretations will keep evolving as she engages in the world of text and meaning.

A community of individuals (markers, readers) will exist, for whom the research will be important. Interest in the research makes the interested party a stakeholder in determining its validity. Dialogue and consensus become useful indices for the author as she immerses herself in the research and tries out interpretations, so that colleagues and the community of readers can also try them out and evaluate them for themselves (Deely, 1990).

Limitations of the Qualitative Paradigm

The author is aware that qualitative research, because of its uniqueness, cannot be replicated, nor can its findings be generalised to larger populations. It does not allow for the test of particular theories, nor the acquisition of at least probable truth claims to the existing body of data in the field. The qualitative research paradigm is not a matter of manufacturing, but rather of hunting and gathering. In other words, the qualitative researcher is not trying to test the veracity of a theory via a design process. Instead, he or she is more interested in looking at observations as *evidence* of ongoing processes and relations. The above limitations are neither good nor bad. They are simply limitations.

Conclusion

Training in the context of this study is taken to mean that a training context is provided in order for the trainee tutor to develop his or her ideas about tutoring. This process may be termed learning. Bateson (1972) distinguished between various orders of learning. He named these orders 'Zero learning', 'Learning I', 'Learning II or Deutero-learning', and 'Learning III'. These orders of learning, following Bateson, have the following implications for this research study:

Zero learning refers to when a particular event is ascribed a meaning, and any similar event in the future will be ascribed the same meaning. This type of learning is about assimilating information, but the learning itself is not subject to any kind of correction: A tutor who (for example) encounters stony silences from his students in a tutorial class understands that these situations convey a meaning or message. The tutor then knows that, whenever students resort to

silence, they are conveying some message or meaning. Zero learning, however, does not involve

a trial-and-error process as the behaviour of tutors is not *revised or rectified* in order to respond

or in order to attempt to redress the behaviour of the students.

Learning I refers to the learning of a particular simple action within a given context. In

light of the above example, and in the context of training, tutors can be engaged to reframe the

silent behaviour of their students in a positive way. The requirements are essentially that the

trainee tutor search (by means of trial-and-error) until she or he finds a positive reframe for the

silence that students resort to.

Learning II, also known as Deutero or meta-learning, refers to learning about a particular

context of learning. Bateson (1972, p.300) proposes that "What is learned in Learning II is a way

of punctuating events" rather than a specific behavioural response. Learning II can therefore be

regarded as a second-order change process (Keeney, 1983). Here the trainee tutor may learn to

describe the training process in terms of recursive interactional patterns with one set of role

players (the psychology lecturers), and in terms of student support needs with another set of

"trainers" (students, fellow tutors).

Bateson (1972) contends that a context, in which the trainee has to deal with this kind of

larger context, may even promote his or her creativity as she or he is learning *ABOUT* a particular

context of learning. In Chapter 2 it was mentioned that Learning II indicates that learning has to

mean something different from just responding to student behaviour, or learning tutoring skills

in order to impart subject knowledge in the tutorial class. In Learning II, tutors need to be aware

of how they personally tutor and what alternatives there are to their current thinking patterns.

In this way they have the freedom to choose for themselves *what* they want to learn about

tutoring, *how* to respond to different role players who are part of the training process, as well as

in *what manner* they want to respond (Cunningham, 1986).

Learning III represents a corrective change in the system of sets of alternatives from which the choice is made. Here change does not refer to change of a specific response, as in Learning I, or contextual punctuation as in Learning II, but to change of the premises underlying an entire system of punctuating habits (Keeney, 1983). Bateson (1972) notes that this order of learning is rare and the problem with aspiring to it is that "we tend to overlook that most of our punctuations arise from the same premises for punctuating" (Keeney, 1982, p.159). Learning III thus embodies a change in epistemology where trainee tutors over time would evolve from traditional lineal reasoning towards an epistemology that goes beyond theory, beyond merely shifting from one theoretical orientation to another. Learning III can thus only emerge when different epistemologies are discerned.

Whilst the research approach to tutor training in this study may certainly *ASPIRE* to Learning III, this thesis will attempt to define itself in line with Learning II (Cunningham, 1984). The notion of Learning II engenders an awareness in trainees about how they personally tutor or punctuate events, as well as what alternatives there are to their current mode(s) of thinking. Trainee tutors will be able to express their ideas on tutoring and training which, might then lead to an increased awareness, which, in turn, might enable tutors to increase their capability for system awareness. As such, this research approach is, at best, an evolution towards Learning III.

CHAPTER 7

MS A'S VIDEO DEMONSTRATION

OF A FIRST TUTORIAL OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

Identifying Data of the Various Role Players

Table 7.1

Information on the Various Role Players

Name:	Role and function in this study:	Job description:	Year in question and place of work:
Ms A	Tutor in the video demonstration and commentator on her own work	Tutor for third year Research Methodology (PSY 314-E)	UNISA, Pretoria Learning Centre, known as "Thutong" (1999)
Students in Ms A's video demonstration	Commentators		
The author and Mr A	Commentators in discussion with one another	**Author:** Tutor for Social Psychology and Psychopathology (PSY 313-D; PSY 311-B) **Mr A:** Tutor for Personology (PSY 211-8)	UNISA, Pretoria Learning Centre (1999)
The promoter and Mr B	Commentators in discussion with one another	**Promoter:** Academic tutor coordinator and lecturer at the Department of Psychology **Mr B:** Lecturer at the Department of New Testament	UNISA (1999)

Introduction

The author now enters the section of the study dealing with the analysis of data and she can only claim to be a participant-observer, as any description or comment offered will naturally be qualified by her own world view. The implication here is that all observations involve self-reference, and any comment, interpretation or suggestion made will say as much about the author as about the subject of description.

The reader is alerted to the fact that this section of work is based on the transcribed (from video) material of Ms A giving a demonstration of a first tutorial of the academic year. The transcription is available in Appendix 4 of the study. This chapter draws on, as its source, the transcribed material, and will specifically cover the following areas:

- The impact of the video setting on Ms A and her students.

- This will be followed by two subsequent sections -- the one dealing with the author's general impressions of the various role players, and the other with the author's comments on the role players' comments.

- In the next to final section, the author will discuss aspects of commonality amongst the role players' comments (the consensual domain), as well as areas of difference (news of a difference).

- In conclusion, guiding principles in relation to a first tutorial, and in relation to the approach to training, will be summarised.

For ease of reference, all participants will be addressed as follows: Ms A, Mr A, author, promoter, and so on. In addition, the various role players will be addressed as part-whole systems

where necessary. Ms A and her students will be referred to as the 'A-student' subsystem. The author and Mr A will be referred to as the 'tutor subsystem' and the promoter and Mr B will be referred to as the 'lecturer subsystem'. The reader is encouraged to refer to the table at the beginning of the chapter for clarification on the role and function of the various role players 'featured' in this chapter.

The Impact of the Video Setting

Ms A and her students were videotaped in the small, compact room (no 5-155) at the Department of Psychology at UNISA. A camera is present in the venue and is inconspicuously placed in the top right hand corner of the room. In spite of its discrete placement, Ms A appeared to be adversely affected by the camera's presence. In her own words: "I am totally unable to function really well if I have the feeling that I am watched".

The students in the demonstration also appeared to be struggling with the presence of an 'intruder' or 'perturbor', but seemed to have a different perspective on the perturbation, as becomes clear in the following comments:

I believe that we all have something important to learn about evaluation, as the camera cannot be blamed. In fact, it highlights a weakness, namely we are uncomfortable with evaluation. That must mean something important for all of us to work on.

I think that the tutor may be insecure about her abilities. Maybe other tutors could help her out.

We should work on being comfortable with an observer.

I liked the video situation as it forces you to look at how you participate.

√ In the context of (an ecosystemic approach to) training, the above comments can be considered to be metaphors about the relationship between the author, the tutor, the students and the context of observation, to mention only a few. Ms A does not seem to be aware of this and thus resorts to a linear perception of the problem, that is, the presence of the camera makes her or causes her to function poorly. An ecosystemic view on this matter would be markedly different as Ms A would be encouraged to change her metaphor(s) of relationship, that is, the camera is merely a perturbation, and only serves to highlight the constraints in the A-student subsystem, as alluded to by her students (see their earlier comments). In this way, the presence of a camera is seen merely as a means of generating information about how the tutorial is being conducted, and about how the various role players are achieving or not achieving an adequate enough fit with each other. It is then up to the subsystem in question to decide what they wish to discuss, change or keep the same in terms of their 'findings'. They may even decide (as suggested by one student) to invite other role players to offer their comments, thereby creating an open system. An open system refers to one where information or feedback is allowed to enter and exit the system on its way to achieving optimisation. In optimisation, humans actively orient to, operate on, and evaluate the quality and conduciveness of their environment as a context for future goals and activity (Hoffman, 1985). ∻

General Impressions

<u>The Author's General Impressions of Ms A and Her Students</u>

The author's first impression of Ms A (with regard to the demonstration) is that she presents herself in formal terms. She introduces herself as *Dr* A and lays emphasis on the fact that she is a *professional* researcher. It has occurred to the author that Ms A may have chosen these formalities in order to convey credibility. But they may also be betraying her anxiety about being videotaped and her concern about who might be viewing the video material afterwards. In order *not* to reify the concepts of 'credibility', 'anxiety' and 'defensiveness', the author would like to offer a positive (to the usual negative) interpretation to symptomatic behaviour, not just as a strategy for change, but because doing so adds a layer of complexity that guards against linear thinking:

The author's interpretation of Ms A coming across formally is that it is a comment on her reticence to do the video demonstration. Ms A did not fit with the author's ideas on developing an approach to tutor training, but she agreed to do the demonstration because, as a researcher, she values the importance of research of any kind. Ms A's formal manner is thus being conceptualised as a metaphor for her relationship or fit with the whole research system.

If to establish credibility was her intention with the viewer of the video, then Ms A's approach to her students seemed to be a blend of the need to reassure them that the subject of Research Methodology was not be feared, and clarifying aspects of the subject matter in more general terms:

Ms A may have started out this way, but opted to, or ended up, taking on the role of a lecturer. It is not clear to the author why Ms A did this. Perhaps she felt that she had much to

convey in the demonstration, and lapsed into lecturing, or it may be that lecturing was considered by her to be the most appropriate response to a situation that she felt uncomfortable in. Whatever the reasons, Ms A worked very hard in the demonstration and appeared to make herself vulnerable. In particular, she attempted to allay students' fears about statistics, but perhaps this discussion on fears was more indicative of *her* fears than those of her students, as she imposed this discussion on her students without them saying that they had a need to discuss this topic. Another possibility is this: The author had mentioned the importance of the topic of allaying fears to Ms A, and suggested that she (Ms A) use it in the tutorial if the need arose. Ms A may have interpreted the author's suggestions as a prescription, and thus imposed it on the students.

After reassuring students, Ms A proceeded to explain the role and function of Research Methodology by means of innumerable and varied examples. The students were not invited to participate. Instead, they appeared to be cued, in that they were simply prompted to answer questions, and the process of interaction between Ms A and her students remained a series of monologues, followed by a brief question from Ms A and an even briefer answer from the student or students. These self reinforcing or redundant cycles, in which the actions of Ms A would trigger responses from the students, which would then trigger an even more intense reaction (lecturing) from Ms A, needed to be broken down.

The author and the promoter of the study were watching the proceedings behind a one-way mirror at the time of the taping, and agreed to sound a bell (which Ms A was expecting) to denote to her that time was up. It was thus not a strategic intervention at all, but brought about an unexpected outcome. Ms A and the students relaxed visibly and began discussing matters more animatedly. They were under the impression that they were no longer being videotaped. But the author elected to continue taping the tutorial proceedings, as some kind of breakthrough seemed to have happened. It is as if the A-student subsystem had reached a homeostatic plateau,

characterised by pattern, structure and regularity. With the sounding of the bell, a positive change in the structure and pattern occurred.

One can say that no living system can survive without pattern and structure. On the other hand, too much of it will kill it. This is why there must always be some source of mechanism for variety, to meet the problem of mapping new states of being. This has an important implication for an approach to training: a tutorial depends on two (amongst many other) important processes. One is that the tutorial must maintain constancy (morphostasis). The other process is morphogenesis, which means that, at times, the tutorial system must change its basic structure.

The author concludes this section with a final remark: Ms A's apparent stuckness, fears and vulnerability in front of an evaluator are not about her personally. She *represents* the vulnerability that is present in every tutor, irrespective of perceived level of competency. In addition, it highlights the intricacies of evaluation and the observer effect. These are issues of concern for all involved in any training process, and is not solely the concern or problem of the individual tutor.

<u>The Author's General Impressions of Herself in Discussion with Mr A</u>

The author remembers the ease with which she related to Mr A and the coherence achieved in the discussion with him. It is an inevitable fact of life that it is far easier to be a commentator than to be a 'player'. The coherence achieved in the discussion had largely to do with how the pieces of this tutor subsystem managed to fit together in a balance internal to itself (between the two) and external to the environment (the topic in question). This comes as no surprise. The psychology tutors at the Pretoria learning centre (where the author and Mr A work) have managed to forge close ties with one another. This may be attributed partially to the learning centre, which encourages and promotes tutor interaction, and partially to the commitment from the tutors.

The interplay of movements in the discussion with Mr A seemed to have a pattern: The author lead the discussion by *inviting* comments from Mr A, who would accept the invitation and respond in turn. Overall, the tutor subsystem related to one another either by responding with mutual empathy for the position of the tutor in the demonstration, or critique, both positive and negative, as well as consensus or agreement about a proposed idea.

The outcome of this interaction proved to be useful. The tutor subsystem's method of mapping the psycho-political terrain of the tutorial with their comments may save the prospective 'trainer' much time. This is because the nature of the tutor subsystem's organisation will give the trainer the clues he or she needs to determine which directions to go in revising patterns of relationship amongst trainees in the training process.

The Author's General Impressions of the Promoter in Discussion with Mr B

The author's overwhelming impression of the discussion between the promoter and Mr B was the manner in which it was conducted: with deference, respect for and intrigue with one another's comments. The interaction seemed to be largely characterised by agreement, with permission given for any disagreement (or a different slant on an idea) to take place.

The promoter thanked Mr B for his participation in the study and invited him (in a similar manner to the author in relation to Mr A) into the discussion. Mr B appeared to be economical in his responses, and traced out only as much as he needed to put his point across. The promoter attempted to, and succeeded in, drawing out Mr B by reflecting and reframing his responses, as well as contributing ideas of her own.

The interaction between these two professionals was pleasurable for the author to watch on video. The interaction was enjoyable precisely because it was not a static conversation, but

in a constant state of flux. In addition, the promoter and Mr B appeared to be enjoying the interaction.

It occurred to the author that there would be an easy fit between this subsystem and the tutor subsystem described earlier. Both these subsystems functioned synergistically, that is, the subsystems had an impact greater than the simple sum of the individual contributions. This realisation alerts the author to a very important aspect in training, that is, the synthesis of all contributions is the necessary final step in understanding all the partial information gained from the analysis of each level or subsystem. In the end, the whole *is* deemed greater than the sum of its parts.

The Commentators

The Author Discusses and Comments on Ms A's Comments

Ms A's comments appear to commence with her describing a problem-determined system. Anderson and Goolishian (1988) use this term to refer to those individuals (like Ms A) who, through their comments, criticise themselves and others because they believe that a problem or a number of problems exist:

I am a terrible introvert (problem with self).

I heard about five minutes before the start of the presentation that I had really been expected to present an introductory lecture in which students' anxieties with regard to research and statistics had to be defused (problem with understanding the author).

I am totally unable to function really well if I have the feeling that I am watched (problem with setting or context).

If Ms A believes there are problems, then she seems to dissolve them through assumptions, justifications and promises. First, she seems to assume that something very specific is expected of her in the demonstration (is this not how many people react to the notion of evaluation?), and she appears eager and anxious to please the 'evaluator'. When she thinks she may have failed in this regard, she justifies her (perceived) failure by saying that she honestly does spend considerable time in the first tutorial of the year on the issues that she has 'failed' to demonstrate on video. In conclusion, she promises to improve in these matters.

Ms A then proceeds to appraise her repertoire of behaviour in a tutorial in terms of successful measures taken by her (on a content level) and negative 'outcomes' that have occurred in terms of the process. On the negative side, she tells us (see Appendix 4) that she usually writes continuously on the board, whereas in the video she could not do that. She appears to be acknowledging that this linear way of interacting with students is a limitation on her part because it betrays her comfort with 'hiding behind writing', and does not result in a tutorial process where she and the students are interacting. She concludes by saying that "I have to give attention to this matter also".

On the positive side, Ms A offers the reader an idea or glimpse of what she believes she does manage to do well: She takes time to defuse students' anxieties and offers her enthusiasm and commitment as a tutor. She attempts to deconstruct Research Methodology by linking it to everyday experiences. She assures students that research is not a series of part-whole sections, as statistics and methodology are part of a whole system known as human behavioural research. Finally, she reinforces that it is necessary to study Research Methodology because it will help

students to evaluate other people's research critically, and interpret research results creatively in their own environment, either at university, or in the work place one day.

After her appraisal Ms A reverts to self criticism: "I went totally blank when I had to make the transition to the methods of knowing. I was very relieved when it was all over".

Ms A appeared to be stuck. She believed that she could not solve her problem and thus ended her comments with an invitation to others to offer her possible suggestions in relation to improving her performance.

The author wishes to withstand Ms A's plea for aid (from others) for an instance, and posit instead that a unique outcome has taken place. A unique outcome is taken to refer to the fact that Ms A has resolved her problem, but does not realise, or is not aware, that she has done so:

The author suggests that, if Ms A is to receive *any* suggestions from an audience of trainees at all, it should not be to tell her what to do and what not to do. Instead, her own commentary could serve as a useful point of departure. Does Ms A not say that research is important precisely because it enables students to evaluate work done by others? Does she not say that the ability to interpret and use research results creatively in your own environment is of paramount importance? And does she not promote the development of research skills so that students can one day use these skills when they are applying their trade in the work place? One needs only to substitute training for research in this argument, and in so doing, facilitate a process whereby Ms A can engage with others in such a way that she can begin to discover positive meaning in a training situation so as to develop *her* skills, promote *her* creativity and evaluate *herself* openly, and not only critically.

This is one way (amongst many) in which a so-called subjugated story can emerge. This term is used to refer to (the facilitated emergence of) alternate stories of success, alternative options, or different ways of viewing a problem, that is obscured by the dominant story. In this

case, Ms A's dominant story or preferred frame of reference appears to be criticism. Helping the family (substitute trainee) see subjugated stories enables them to feel more powerful and exert more control over their problem. Suddenly where there was a problem, there is now an alternative way of viewing the problem, one where the alternative was present all along (White & Epston, 1990).

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments from the Students

There are an infinite number of subjugated stories or comments to describe a situation such as the one of Ms A's video presentation. Some of them have the potential to be helpful, while others do not. The comments from Ms A's students appear to fall in the former category:

Student 1 points out that Ms A's nervousness influenced her in that she too became nervous, but unlike Ms A, the student enjoyed the experience. (Although the student appears to be using linear thinking in her comments, she is not saying that Ms A's behaviour *caused* her to be nervous. She is saying that Ms A's behaviour *influenced* her behaviour). This student appears to be aware, albeit in an indirect way, of the recursiveness of interaction and of the circular patterns that are characteristic of cybernetic feedback. One could even say that she is calling for the focus to be on the wholeness of the tutorial (the interaction), and not on its discrete (student or tutor) elements.

Student 3 extends the cybernetic metaphor above by including other tutors into the system of feedback: "Maybe other tutors could also help out".

Students 4, 5 and 6 establish a positive, hopeful atmosphere in their comments. They reframe the presence of the camera from it (the camera) initially being the cause of everyone's nervous behaviour in the tutorial, to a suggestion that it is a metaphor for their discomfort with

evaluation. They suggest that this should be seen as a challenge, and that it could help them find creative ways of working on becoming more comfortable with an observer.

It is clear from the above comments that a co-constructed meaning between Ms A and her students (to name only one level of the system) can be easily established during training simply by encouraging them to share each other's constructions of meaning. This would be preferable to deciding that the trainee should be forced (by the trainer) to bring about necessary changes.

The use of externalisation, to separate the system from the symptom of nervousness, is another suggestion that the author would like to make. Rather than viewing Ms A as nervous and unable to function, the A-student subsystem might discuss the times when nervousness takes control of all of them. By externalising the problem in this way, the tutor and the students may stop viewing themselves as existing in a stable state of tension. This enables them, and those around them (fellow trainees), to discover times when they have fought off nervousness successfully.

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments of the Author and Mr A

The author started her conversation with Mr A by meta-commenting on the importance of a tutor defining his or her relationship with a body of students. In particular, she suggested that one cannot *not* define a relationship. Mr A agreed with the author, but appeared to do what Ms A had done, that is, he viewed Ms A's way of relating to her students as less than satisfactory.

The tutor subsystem then achieved consensus around the so-called problems and appeared to be doing nothing different to Ms A: The author, for example, attributed Ms A's behaviour to nervousness. Mr A appeared to accuse Ms A of lecturing and 'overkill'. The tutor subsystem then referred to things having gone wrong, with the (perhaps arrogant) implication that it should

have been conduced in another way. (This seems to lend greater validity to Ms A's perception that certain things were expected from her -- see Appendix 4.)

As if realising their epistemological error, the tutor subsystem self-corrected. This is characteristic of ecosystemic health. Mr A began this process of self-correction by using empathy: "Well, if I put myself in her shoes, I would suggest ....". The author followed this up by a suggestion of her own, that is, tutors need not accept (the structure in this case) matters as a given reality. Ms A's tutorial class was set up by the author as a lecture (rows of chairs), because this is what happens in the natural setting (the learning centre) at the beginning of each academic year, but Ms A could have elected to work (i.e. there are always alternatives) with the setting in a creative fashion by shifting the chairs or (if the chairs could not be moved) by ensuring that the discussion in the class circulated amongst all involved. Mr A then pointed out something valuable, that is, the tutor is a leader in the sense that he or she leads students into discussions by means of an invitation, and through example.

The tutor subsystem (by means of their suggestions) acknowledged that health and 'pathology' are sides of the same coin. No tutor will ever be completely symptom free (get it all right), but as humans, tutors have choices like anybody else. The tutor subsystem also acknowledged that it was a part of (and not apart from) the happenings in Ms A's video in the sense that all tutors share Ms A's concerns. Mr A suggested that tutors should therefore get together and share their experiences. In this way they could help to build up each other's self confidence.

At this stage, another (unexpected) outcome occurred: The author commented on the students picking up on Ms A's anxiety and defined this as mutuality, that is, a reciprocal relationship. By the end of their discussion, the tutor subsystem did not revert to blame and criticism. Mr A found the author's comments on mutuality interesting and said:

"So, the students were already exhibiting signs of empathy. So that was a kind of good start ...".

This shift seems to indicate that the tutor subsystem did not remain stuck by portioning blame. It realised that Ms A had the solutions to her problem. She had basic empathy. The tutor subsystem also acknowledged that problems will always be encountered during any process, whether in tutorials or during tutor training, especially as tutor trainees might ascribe less than positive connotations to training, for example, they are not good enough and that is why they need training; trainers conspire to break down the confidence of trainees, and so on. These feeling states can be reframed, that is, the goal of training can be reframed as constructive because it seeks to encourage trainees to reflect on themselves, and to learn from other role players.

The tutor subsystem concluded by pointing out that the above reframes are not prescriptions that should be imposed on a trainee, they are merely suggestions. The author and Mr A then opted to reframe the word training from their perspective, and decided on the notion of a support group, where tutor trainees can feel free to admit to not coping, and where fellow tutors can practice desired scenarios together. In this way tutors may be able to reinvent and re-invigorate themselves. This ensures continuity of learning, the implication being that you never really 'arrive' as a tutor. Learning is lifelong, and significantly less lonely when others are with you in the learning process.

Here learning was not taken to mean learning a specific response (Learning I) or contextual punctuation (Learning II), but referred to learning to change the premises underlying an entire system of punctuation habits. Bateson (1972) noted that this is Learning III and occurs in sequences in which there is an investment in examining punctuations. The tutor subsystem appeared to achieve this, and were prepared to go beyond theory, as well as examine their own punctuations.

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments of the Promoter and Mr B

The lecturer subsystem appeared to nail its colours to the mast from the outset. Mr B, in particular, acknowledged his bias, namely that his special field of interest was on the role of didactics and on the facilitation of learning. The promoter exhibited empathy and acknowledged her appreciation of Ms A's contribution to the study, as well as her appreciation for the comments made by the tutor subsystem. Both lecturers imparted something valuable from the outset: it is always helpful to acknowledge people's contribution to a study or a programme. This acknowledgment conveys respect for the trainee, and may help to start training proceedings in a relatively non-threatening way, where goals can be clearly spelt out without undue concern from the trainee that they (the trainees) are not appreciated. Put differently: the focus of training will not be on the trainee's faults, but on the contributions that the trainee is making. This has been referred to as a strengths, rather than a deficit model (Zeleny, 1998).

The lecturer subsystem furthermore managed to reframe the notion of training as being about being prepared to look at oneself (self-reflect) as a tutor, and to learn from one's experience in dialogue with other significant role players. Ms A seemed to equate training with evaluation. The tutor subsystem relabelled training and called it a support group. And the lecturer subsystem reframed it as an *opportunity* to engage in meaningful dialogue with others.

The lecturer subsystem appeared to achieve a synthesis of the whole:

Self evaluation is very important, the peer evaluation is very important and I think we should move one step further and educate our students to evaluate our ways of doings things.

The lecturer subsystem adds a much-needed note of realism in their aforementioned comment. They seem to be alerting the tutor, as well as the trainer-to-be, that tutorials and tutor training should be *student centred*. Student centred refers to the fact that tutors should be asked or shown how to discover where their students are at and what their expectations are. This is what it means to be a facilitator. (The author believes that it is possible to be both tutor and student centred. If a tutor can reflect on themselves, they may be in a better position to facilitate or elicit reflections from students on what their needs and expectations are regarding the tutorial or the course as a whole.)

It seems as if a great deal of the comments from the lecturer subsystem about the role of the tutor in relation to students were useful, as they (the comments) applied equally well to the role of the trainer in relation to the trainee. This is shown in the following quote:

And the learner (substitute tutor) is there to experience, we are there only as tutors (substitute trainers) to create an environment, an atmosphere where the learning can take place through talking. I think this whole idea that meeting the student (substitute trainee) where they are at is so important. We have to realise, I think, that students (substitute trainees) are also scared. I think we need to recognise that the students (substitute trainees) are in fact insecure and that they like the old school, they like getting some structure ... where they can just sit back and be passive.

The lecturer subsystem did not simply offer insights, but they also managed to build in examples of correction. Mr B, in particular, achieved this by first conveying his appreciation of Ms A's use of many examples in her tutorial, and then discussed how self-reflection could help a tutor assess when the use of everyday examples in a tutorial are relevant (at opportune moments)

and when irrelevant (when too many examples become the exercise or the issue of the whole tutorial.)

Another built-in correction or suggestion from the lecturer subsystem was their focus on levels of complexity, that is, the tutor should give simple and exact examples when dealing with a complex term or section of work that students appear to be struggling to grasp.

They conclude by saying that the content and process of the tutorial has to be foreground, and any examples given need to be considered as background.

The lecturer subsystem also highlighted the importance of diversity in a tutorial. The author spoke of the need on the part of the tutor to increase his or her repertoire of behaviour, and the lecturer subsystem calls this very idea diversity: When Ms A, for example, thought that she was no longer being videotaped, she managed to relax and this facilitated a great deal more diversity in terms of her behaviour, and also facilitated more interaction between her and the students. Diversity in a tutorial is crucial to its success. The lecturer subsystem pointed out that anyone's concentration span is limited, and if tutors bombard students with one thing (examples) for sixty minutes, students may become bored. By diversifying, doing this, then that, the tutor's own atmosphere of learning is likely to be enhanced:

> You have a diversity in front of you, eight students, hundred students, use it, use their worlds, it is diverse, it is from all over, use their diversity to enhance your own atmosphere of learning.

The promoter concluded with this remark: A tutor is a model in all respects. They are, after all, modeling human behaviour. The lecturer subsystem acknowledged that the function of a tutor as a model can be both a challenge and a responsibility.

The lecturer subsystem posited an ecosystemic approach to training that is based on cybernetics, that is, there will always be major and minor gradual shifts through which all tutors will need to pass. The ability to change one's constructs or patterns will always be useful. These changes, suggestions or built-in corrections have the capacity to help trainees to take up adequate new roles. When the person or whole system has access to certain sorts of information (such as the ones mentioned), then definitions of itself truly become news of a difference.

The Consensual Domain

Areas of Consensus in Relation to a First Tutorial

The tutor and lecturer subsystem emphasised the importance of *facilitation* from the outset, that is, from when a tutor conducts his or her first tutorial. The tutor's task is to promote skills among the students and invite them to participate actively in the tutorial so that they (the students) are able to learn independently in a way that is both effective and efficient. Students are expected to acquire knowledge by means of their own learning endeavours, resolving conflicting opinions and solving problems through discussion with their peers and the tutor, rather than seeking a solution from the tutor.

Another (related) concept that is raised by the students and the lecturer subsystem is the value of a positive role model. If students are expected to become increasingly independent of their tutor, then the example that the tutor sets to students, is of paramount importance. Learning by example *(modeling)* is regarded by many to be the fundamental learning process involved in socialisation. Socialisation in the context of a tutorial (gleaned from the comments made) is the process whereby a student acquires the knowledge, values, facility with language, social skills and

social sensitivity that enables him or her to become integrated into the tutorial and behave adaptively within it.

All the commentators emphasise the importance of *self-reflection*. Ms A refers to the importance of being able to evaluate oneself critically. The students refer to the importance of being comfortable with an observer, be it a camera or a person. The tutor and lecturer subsystem defines self-reflection as a thinking about a thing, particularly with the notion of meditation upon a previous experience or tutorial event and its significance.

These three areas of commonality, namely the emphasis on (the importance of) facilitation, modeling and self-reflection, reveals that most role players agree that the tutor should set his or her tutoring approach right at the beginning of the year by means of his or her personal example. Consequently tutors' first encounter with students must reflect the facilitative style. The tutor must have a picture of what the process of the tutorial will be. The facilitative style requires adequate preparation from the tutor on a number of levels, and the tutor needs to be aware of the variety of facilitation techniques that he or she can use, and must be courageous and prepared to use these techniques in the tutorials.

Areas of Consensus in Relation to Training

Ms A and the tutor subsystem start out, at least initially, by equating the notion of training with the notion of evaluation. *Evaluation* essentially refers to the determining of the value or worth of the tutor. More specifically, the determination of how successful the tutor is in his or her practices in the tutorial. This way of thinking is problematic in that it is judgmental, that is, it juxtaposes good and bad practices and assumes that there is always a better way of doing things, as opposed to a different way of doing them. In addition, it seems to imply that if the tutor does

things "right", they are a good tutor and deserve praise from the trainer. This is an altogether unhelpful way of thinking in terms of ecosystemic thinking. Informed by an ecosystemic and postmodern philosophy, the training process should be collaborative. The tutor may be an expert in their field, but the student is an expert on his or her problem, the expert of what he or she wants to learn. In this view, both tutor and students are learners during the process of training, as are fellow tutors and the 'trainers' themselves.

The role of other significant *role players* in the process of training is raised by the students, as well as by the tutor and lecturer subsystem. The students urge the tutor to reach out to "fellow helpers" and the tutor and lecturer subsystem emphasise the availability of peers and lecturers that would be only too keen to practice and role play with the 'trainee'. Trainee has been placed in quotation marks as there is no trainee as such. Only a trainee or training system that understands that, in the process of training, knowledge and knowing are constructed by all participants through language and discourse.

In the end, all the commentators agree that the prospect of being trained as a tutor is fraught with difficulties, but that a correction can be achieved. A tutor may start out with trepidation and feelings of vulnerability: Are they doing things correctly? Are they good enough in the eyes of the trainer? Once they understand that the outcome of training is not their responsibility alone, they can call upon the help of their students and fellow tutors. In the process of training, all levels (students, tutors, trainers) interchange with each other, and each level can be viewed as an open system in that role players affect and are affected by each other through the active exchange of information.

News of a Difference

News of a Difference in Relation to a First Tutorial

A number of useful, sometimes novel suggestions are posited by one commentator or one subsystem that is not mentioned by any other commentator or subsystem:

Ms A is the only one who highlights the importance of stating the *purpose* of a tutorial with students, that is, that it can help them with evaluating knowledge both critically and creatively. By making the purpose and rationale of a tutorial known from the start, it obviates guesses and alerts students to the fact that a tutorial has a purpose, one that needs to be spelt out clearly.

The student subsystem is the only one to raise the point that *context does not determine behaviour.* Student 1, for example, speaks of being nervous, but she states that she enjoyed the tutorial class anyway. Determinism assumes that every event has causes. Circularity, as alluded to by the student, posits that an individual's behaviour is part of a sequence of behaviours or cognitions, and is not caused by anything. Every person in the tutorial class has a measure of free will.

The tutor subsystem offers its own set of ideas. They suggest that a tutorial is about relationship, especially about *defining* one with students in the first tutorial. If a *relationship* is defined as participatory, then the tutor and the students have a joint responsibility to be actively involved in the process of a tutorial. They also suggest that one need not accept definitions of situations or relationships as fixed realities. Choices can always be exercised. One can change the definition, keep it the same, *OR* change some things and keep other things the same, and so on. This is especially relevant in their comments about the setting and the structure of the chairs

in the tutorial. If a tutor is faced with a setting, where students are sitting in a row, as if awaiting a lecture, a tutor can work with the *structure*. They suggest that the tutor can move the chairs into a circle. If a tutor cannot change the structure (and by implication the definition of the relationship), then students can be co-opted to help the tutor out in his or her 'dilemma'. In this way, everyone is involved at many levels, for example, at the level of defining a relationship and at the level of problem-solving together.

The lecturer subsystem spells matters out as follows: Educate the learner and facilitate a process whereby the learner understands what you are trying to convey by facilitation. The lecturer subsystem seems to be calling for greater *systems awareness*, the system in question being UNISA. In so doing, the student becomes aware of where they slot in and what they can expect from their experience as a student of the university. In addition, it conveys to them that the university is *learner centred,* in that the needs and expectations of students, is of paramount importance to the institution.

The lecturer subsystem also highlights the importance of *diversity* and *simplifying* matters in a tutorial. Diversity is taken to refer to the tutor instituting a number of diverse practices (writing on a board, then having a discussion, then taking a break, etc) in a tutorial in order to maintain every one's level of interest, and is the opposite of sameness, that is, too much of one thing that may contribute to feelings of boredom or loss of concentration. The suggestion of simplifying matters, as opposed to complexifying them, is a refreshing idea. The lecturer sub-system is alluding to an age-old truism or paradox: sometimes less is more. They conclude by asking the tutor to distinguish in their tutorials between what is *foreground* and what is *background.* Foreground is taken to refer to the importance of establishing what it is that students need and expect from a tutorial, and background refers to any techniques or strategies that a tutor may employ to implement the needs in question. If students have a need to construct an idea

(foreground), this may be done in a number of diverse ways: a tutor can use everyday examples to start the process off, or they may use a clipping from a newspaper to generate a discussion. The example or the stimulus (newspaper clipping) is not the object of the exercise. It will always remain a corollary of the overall process.

News of a Difference in Relation to Tutor Training

The tutor subsystem achieves an important *shift* in their discussion. They start out by defining training as evaluation. In the course of their discussion, they realise that training is a process, one where shifts in perception occur. Their particular shift in perception is that training is about working with other tutors in a supportive environment, one where a tutor can feel safe and free to voice their opinions, re-invent themselves and try out different strategies. They also realise that any *suggestions* that emerge from the pool of ideas are just that: suggestions and *not prescriptions*. Prescriptions would imply that one or other role player knows more or better than another. Ecosystemically speaking, there is no better than or less than. All constructions of meaning carry equal weight.

In conclusion, this is what the lecturer subsystem has to offer: Whether one is suggesting something for a tutor to try out or simply discussing something with them, *acknowledging their contribution* in the process of training is very important. In this way, one is conveying to the tutor that they are respected and that they are a valuable resource in the tutorial programme. The foundation of training is based not on evaluation, not even on co-construction, but on something far more fundamental -- empathy. With the use of empathy, the role players involved in training are given the opportunity to convey their conceptual grasping of the affect or feelings of one for another. Such respect alerts the trainee that training is a constructive process, and not one

whereby everyone is invested in breaking one another down in order to build one another up afterwards.

Summary

<u>Guiding Principles in Relation to a First Tutorial</u>

In summary: Guiding principles (not to be read as prescriptions) for tutors in relation to a first tutorial:

- State the purpose of the course and of the tutorial. It helps students understand the nature, rationale and methodology of a tutorial. It also alerts them to the fact that you are prepared at all levels.

- Define a relationship with students in such a way as to promote participation by all. If everyone has a stake in the success of the tutorial, everyone will assume responsibility (or at least be aware that they have one.)

- Help students to feel free about participating. Try to convey to them that the context does not determine their behaviour. A tutorial need not be intimidating. Every student is welcome and belongs in the tutorial programme (systems awareness.)

- Structure the tutorial (chairs, overhead projector, white board) in such a way as to facilitate the free flow of information.

- A tutor is a facilitator and a model who supports students toward becoming independent learners.

- A tutor encourages self-reflection, as well as reflection from the students on troubling or interesting aspects relating to the experience of participating in a tutorial. A tutor should also invite students to problem-solve together with him or her.

- A tutor should employ various methods and techniques to accommodate student needs. Of particular importance is the ability of the tutor to expose students to diverse experiences and methods, and to simplify matters so that all students understand the phenomenon or concept in question.

- A tutor should always be able to distinguish between essential (foreground) and non-essential (background) information.

In the end, one can sum up by saying that a tutor should (from the outset of the academic year) state the purpose of the tutorial, back this up in their behaviour, as well in the way they conduct themselves as a professional. Such a tutor is a valuable resource to the student and to the learning centre.

Guiding Principles in Relation to Tutor Training

In summary: Guiding principles for trainers and trainees in relation to an approach to tutor training:

- Prospective trainers should (from the word go) acknowledge the contribution that the tutor is making. If a tutor feels cherished, they are more likely to be open to the ideas of a training approach. Training proceedings could start by giving tutors the opportunity to

say what they think they could bring into the training context, for example, their characteristics, skills, years of experience, and so on.

- A trainer should guide tutors to distinguish between evaluation and training. Whilst some form of evaluation is an inevitable part of training, it (evaluation) usually carries pejorative connotations. Evaluation is usually about good versus bad, right versus wrong. Training defined this way may lead to feelings of trepidation amongst prospective trainees. Tutors could thus be asked to discuss the difference between evaluation and training with the view of exploring it together.

- A trainee should be encouraged to examine their assumptions about a first tutorial, that is, how is a first tutorial different, or is it any different to other tutorials? If it is different, why is it different? If it is not different, why not?

- A trainee is not being trained by anything or anyone. All role players, including the trainer, are self-directing and co-learners at the same time who through dialogue, achieve shifts in perceptions and in this way encounter something new -- news of a difference. All role players are furthermore concerned with any problems encountered with the training process. These problems are everyone's concern and not the problem of the individual trainee alone. In this way, a space is created where tutors can voice their fears or their problems. In addition, those tutors that have successfully managed certain problems, can help by offering or sharing their solutions with their colleagues.

- Any suggestions that emerge from the role players are simply suggestions and not prescriptions. Suggestions are inroads that serve to promote further discussion and help the trainee explain their dominant stories and construct alternatives, or so-called subjugated stories.

From the aforementioned tenets, it can be concluded that training is essentially about the co-construction of meaning over time and in interaction with others. It also involves (ideally speaking) the synthesis of everyone's contributions, and is a necessary step in understanding the partial information gained from each contributor.

CHAPTER 8

MS B'S VIDEO DEMONSTRATION

OF A MIDDLE OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR TUTORIAL

Identifying Data of the Various Role Players

Table 8.1

Information on the Various Role Players

Name:	Role and function in this study:	Job description:	Year in question and place of work:
Ms B	Tutor in the video demonstration and commentator on her own work	Tutor for first year Psychology (PSY 100-X)	UNISA, Pretoria Learning Centre, known as "Thutong" (1999)
Students in Ms B's video demonstration	Commentators		
Ms D, Ms E and Ms F	Commentators in discussion with one another	**Ms D:** Tutor for Personology and Developmental Psychology (PSY 211-8 and 212-9) **Ms E:** Tutor for Research Methodology, Social Psychology and Psychopathology (PSY314-E, 313-D and PSY 311-B) **Ms F:** Tutor for first year Psychology (PSY 100-X)	UNISA, Durban Learning Centre (1999)
The promoter and Ms G	Commentators in discussion with one another	**Promoter:** Academic tutor coordinator and lecturer at the Department of Psychology **Ms G:** Lecturer at the Department of Psychology	UNISA (1999)

Introduction

The author has already begun the section of the study dealing with the analysis of data in Chapter 7 of this thesis and she has claimed to be a participant-observer, as any description or comment offered will naturally be qualified by her own world view. The implication is that all observations in this chapter involve self-reference, and any comment, interpretation or suggestion made says as much about the author as it says about the subject of description.

The reader is alerted to the fact that this section of work is based on the transcribed (from video) material of Ms B giving a demonstration of a middle of the year tutorial. The transcription is available in Appendix 5 of the study. This chapter draws on, as its source, the transcribed material, and will specifically cover the following areas:

- The impact of the video setting on Ms B and her students.

- This will be followed by two subsequent sections -- the one dealing with the author's general impressions of the various role players, and the other with the author's comments on the role players' comments.

- In the next to final section, the author will discuss aspects of commonality amongst the role players' comments (the consensual domain) as well as areas of difference (news of a difference).

- In conclusion, guiding principles in relation to a middle of the year tutorial and in relation to the approach to training will be summarised.

For ease of reference, participants in this chapter will be addressed as follows: Ms B, Ms D, author, promoter, and so on. In addition, the various role players will be addressed as

part-whole systems where necessary. Ms B and her students will be referred to as the 'B-student' subsystem. Ms D, Ms E and Ms F will be referred to as the 'tutor subsystem', and the promoter and Ms G will be referred to as the 'lecturer subsystem'. The reader is referred to the table at the beginning of this chapter for clarification on the role and function of the various role players 'featured' in this chapter.

The Impact of the Video Setting

Ms B and her students were videotaped in the small, compact room (no 5-155) at the Department of Psychology at UNISA. A camera is present in the venue and is inconspicuously placed in the top right hand corner of the room.

Ms B appeared to be neither perturbed nor concerned about the presence of the camera. In fact, she seemed very relaxed. In her own words:

Well, I experienced the demonstration to be relaxed, the atmosphere was relaxed.

Her students were not as relaxed as her, but appeared to enjoy the experience tremendously:

It was nerve racking at first, but as I watched the tutor, I began to gain confidence.

My self confidence was helped to grow.

I was helped with socialisation.

The difference between whether or not someone perceives an experience to be helpful (as seemed to be the case with the B-student subsystem) versus unhelpful (as seemed to be the case with Ms A) is often simply a case of fit with the ecology of relationships. If we direct our attention to the total field, including the research study, the author, the context, as well as fellow tutors and lecturers, then we can acknowledge the overlapping influences at play that help us to understand the positive outcome in Ms B's video demonstration:

First, Ms B was (from her own account) comfortable with the context or setting in question. She was a Master's student in Clinical Psychology at the time of the taping (1999) and was very familiar with the role and function of the one-way mirror and the procedure of evaluation.

Second, Ms B and the author are good friends. There has always been an ease of relationship between the two and the author had numerous opportunities to discuss the study with Ms B, who was always enthusiastic (albeit not always in agreement with the author's view points) about the training endeavour.

Third, it is the author's observation that very little appears to excite Ms B to a point of reaction or overreaction. The author experiences Ms B to be (largely) even-tempered by nature, confident in her abilities as a tutor and enormously likeable as a human being. One feels at liberty to agree or disagree with her, or to simply not say anything at all. This was also evident in the way in which she interacted with her students in the video demonstration: no-one was admonished for thinking something different, and no-one was lauded for thinking the same as her. Finally, no-one was forced to participate. The author would say that this communicates respect for and empathy with another's position, and is a valuable quality to have as a tutor.

Fourth, is the example that she set. Ms B's relaxed manner and ease with herself are laudable. Her students were clearly affected by her relaxed manner, and even though the situation

of being videotaped was "nerve-racking" (in their own words) for the students, they enjoyed the experience and even agreed to do it again. Ms B had this to say to her students in this regard:

So you would like to do this again? You have enjoyed it. Good for you.

These positive and mutual reaction processes might help to explain how a movement by one party (Ms B, the author) changed the field of the second, third and fourth party (students, fellow commentators, etc.) The symmetrical escalations in which all parties intensified affinity, but also allowed for difference of opinion or complementarity to emerge, is an 'arrangement' commonly referred to as a pattern of circularity. These patterns allowed for sameness and difference, and acknowledged the importance and value of interdependence and inter-connectedness. Bateson's (1972, p.23) phrase, "the infinite dance of shifting coalitions" seems applicable to the system described here, composed of many parts and subparts, all linked together in an interdependent way.

General Impressions

<u>The Author's General Impressions of Ms B and Her Students</u>

Ms B presented herself in a relaxed and informal manner in the video demonstration. She achieved this through the use of informal language and by introducing herself by name: "Hi everyone. My name is "Meli" *(pseudonym.)* In addition, she was keenly aware of the important correlation between structure and relationship, and elected to sit with her students in a circle. She furthermore introduced huge sheets of paper which she placed on the table in the middle of the

circle, as a stimulus for discussion. These measures seemed to contribute to and were a comment on her relationship with the author, the research study and her students. Ms B clearly regarded herself as a participant-observer in the proceedings, one who was furthermore enjoying the opportunity to demonstrate her skills and qualify her relationship with significant others in a positive way.

Ms B started her tutorial formally by asking students whether or not they had any burning questions from the last tutorial. This impressed the author as it accentuated Ms B's appreciation of continuity, that is, tutorials are not one-hour brackets in time. Rather, the content of one tutorial is interrelated to the content of another tutorial. By accentuating this, she gave students an appreciation for the notion of a syllabus, as opposed to bits and pieces of it. After addressing questions from the previous tutorial, she set the topic of the day in clear terms and left nobody with any uncertainty about the object of the day's proceedings:

> Okay, and, um, today we will be looking at what? Self-evaluation and self-image which means that we will be basically evaluating ourselves, isn't it?

The topic of self-evaluation and self-image lent itself to discussion , but also served as an opportunity to get the students to talk about evaluation pertaining to the experience of being videotaped. Ms B, as evidenced by the above quote, subtly and skilfully pointed out the relationship between the content of the tutorial and the process in the here-and-now. It is as if she was saying that students had an opportunity to discuss the topic both theoretically and personally, and the students took her up on the challenge by offering both their knowledge on the topic in question, and their personal feelings about the experience of being videotaped.

Once having set the agenda, and once having elicited a dialogue, Ms B used a variety of

very useful questions, techniques and approaches to flesh out the students' thoughts on the topic

in question:

She tested to see if students understood the specific meaning of words or phrases. Once

she had a response from a student or a number of students, she committed the responses to the

sheet of paper, as if to validate the noteworthiness of the responses that she was getting. She cued

every student present to participate (this became the norm) and helped each student to deconstruct

their own meaning systems:

Now, what do we understand by the concept self? What is self? You say it's you, right.

When you say me, what is you?

In addition, she helped students to use both inductive and deductive reasoning to aid them

to think through their responses. When she encouraged students to reason in such a way as to

infer general principles from specific cases (inductive) and to begin with a specific set of

assumptions in order to draw conclusions (deductive), she succeeded in facilitating concept

formation and problem-solving in the tutorial. Not only were students invited to examine their

answers, but they were also encouraged to qualify them with relevant examples:

Can you give me an example of what you mean by interactions?

Ms B used a number of diverse (ecosystemically healthy) means in order to skin the

proverbial cat. One of the most notable examples was when she posed a question and gave

students a number of alternatives, and then asked them to comment on the alternatives that she

had provided them with, thereby giving them a further opportunity to evaluate the options and

decide on an answer.

Ms B also used a number of 'techniques' to enhance the process (the relationship) which was, according to the author, as exemplary as her attempts to enhance matters at a content level:

The author enjoyed the way in which Ms B responded to students who were either incoherent or floundering for an answer. She commonly reassured them that they were not solely responsible for the answer and suggested that other students could help out too. She also managed to allay fears indirectly, that is, by using the topic in order to get students to discuss their personal fears. She seemed to be implying that answers need not always be academic to be considered worthy. In order to endorse this, she was not afraid to use examples from her own life to qualify material at appropriate times, and to encourage students to share their experiences. She continually encouraged students to become more self-aware, self-accepting and respecting. Towards the end of the tutorial, she seemed to be rewarded by her students for her efforts:

This tutorial has helped me to cope.

I accept the way am I. *(This is not a grammatical mistake. See Appendix 5.)*

I feel more confident.

The outcome of the tutorial was (without doubt) positive. Ms B and the students pointed out how a shift had occurred in their thinking during the tutorial. In addition, students appreciated the parallel thread between the topic in question and the value of experiential learning. Each student reported that they had learnt something. Student 5 was appreciative of book knowledge that he had accrued. Student 3 believed that she had learnt to cooperate with others. Student 1

had learnt to voice her opinions without fear. Finally, Student 2 and 4 reported that they had learnt to interact with people and were encouraged by their performance in the tutorial.

All in all, the tutorial was a pleasure for the author to watch. Ms B's use of empathy, respect, diversity, circularity, process commentary and structure, made the tutorial coherent and an excellent example of congruence.

The Author's General Impressions of the Discussion

Between Ms D, Ms E and Ms F

The author was deeply perturbed at first by the comments from the tutors at the Durban learning centre. Ms E seemed reasonable, but Ms D appeared to be very negative and Ms F seemed reserved. The difference in ethos between the Durban tutors (which the author has never met) and the Pretoria tutors (which is where the author works) seemed marked. The author watched the videotaped comments of the Durban tutors and felt as if they were coming from strangers, and not fellow tutors in the tutorial programme. The author felt that the Durban tutors did not grasp the value of the research. Ms D, in particular, appeared to be scathing and also under the misguided impression that Ms B was the researcher. Ms D appeared to enjoy spoiling Ms B's excellent demonstration with the following diatribe:

I think what bothers me more than anything else about this, is, I don't actually understand what she was trying to do. She was, she was doing research on what? And trying to gain what out of it?

From the above quote it was clear to the author that Ms D did not understand the purpose

of the video demonstration. Perhaps she did not understand that she was being asked to *contribute* to the research project. Instead, she might have been under the impression that she would be *learning* from the video and that it (the video) would be helping her address her specific problems and frustrations with students. The author is willing to take some responsibility for the misperceptions, perhaps she had not spelt things out clearly enough. On the other hand, one thing does remain curious throughout the author's experience during the course of conducting this research. The observation is this: How is it that she (the author) attempted to explain the goals and rationale of this study to everyone in the finest of details, only to discover that some understood immediately (some Pretoria tutors, the promoter), whilst others (Durban tutors) seemed not to understand? Psychoanalytically speaking, the defense mechanism of resistance is not an adequate explanation as it only refers to the opposition against accepting the efforts made by another due to one's own envy and hostility. Ecosystemically speaking, one could hypothesise that the fit between the Durban tutors and the research project was inadequate, and that the comments from the Durban tutors allude to the constraints in the relationship between tutors from the various learning centres.

At this point, a shift in the author's perceptions occurred. The Durban tutors seemed to be overwhelmed. They complained about poor preparation on the part of their students and about the problem of having too little time during a tutorial to address pertinent issues. They said that they did not even have time to learn the names of their students, or to cater to their individual needs. The Durban tutors seemed to be genuinely struggling with some of these age-old dilemmas.

Annoyance from the author toward the Durban tutors turned to deep empathy at this point. The author finally saw through the scathing comments. Ms D seemed to be bitterly frustrated with poor student preparation and large numbers of students to work with. Ms E seemed to be more

overwhelmed by the pressure of having to learn the names of students and to get through an entire syllabus, which she felt was what was expected from her. Ms F was also concerned about the shy nature of students, and felt that their lack of confidence impeded their progress.

In general, the author felt that Ms B's video demonstration might have been painful for the Durban tutors to watch. Instead of being able to use Ms B's tutorial demonstration effectively, it seemed to highlight their worries and concerns, and possibly left the Durban tutors feeling inadequate. In order to counter such feelings, they (appeared to) attack Ms B's demonstration and attempted to nullify her contribution by pointing out that the video was not a real situation, it was only a demonstration. (Perhaps it did not occur to them that a demonstration is a slice of reality and can therefore not be invalidated.) In fact, qualitatively speaking, Ms B commented that the video demonstration, and her performance in the natural setting, were similar. She could not, not be herself, she said. The demonstration seemed to confirm this because her performance never looked contrived.

Once again, the author wishes to say that yet another unexpected outcome has occurred. The author has one of two choices. She can either 'trash' the comments from the Durban tutors *OR* she can elect to meta-comment. The second option seems more useful: The Durban tutors may be said to be indirectly affirming the need for a training programme, one that will encourage more active dialogue between tutors from the various learning centres, and one that should attempt to address the varied needs and problems of tutors as they see and experience them.

The Author's General Impressions of the Promoter in Discussion with Ms G

The author was relieved to view the comments from the promoter and Ms G after viewing the comments from the Durban tutors. Both the promoter and Ms G entered the video room

armed with the comments that they had jotted down during the process of watching the video demonstration. The author felt that the lecturers were (in one way) cueing each other about how to behave: The promoter began to comment on what she liked about the demonstration, after which Ms G would respond in turn and in like. Almost all the time their comments began with: "I liked the idea ...". "Another thing that I picked up on is ..." "I noticed how she used ..." and so on. It was clear that the lecturers had joined with Ms B strongly. *Joining* refers to their accommodating manoeuvres in which they managed to establish 'rapport' with Ms B and the research, and temporarily became part of the exercise. The promoter and Ms G also seemed to employ a great deal of curiosity. Hoffman (1985) used the term curiosity to deal with misconceptions about the concept of neutrality. (*Curiosity* refers to the stance of being open to multiple hypotheses about the behaviour of another. By limiting one's hypotheses, one constrains the number of options that can lead to further discussion.) The lecturer subsystem's curiosity or appreciation for Ms B's demonstration and for each other's input, was exemplified by the use of many and varied positive connotations. *Positive connotation* expands on the notion of a reframe in that, rather than relabelling a behaviour, the promoter and Ms G positively described the entire interaction (or almost) between Ms B and the students. The promoter and Ms G also seemed to be experiencing the tutorial with Ms B. By *experience* the author means the intimate experience that brought with it new awareness, and helped the lecturers get in touch with, address and discuss the material in the video.

In conclusion, the author was left with the impression that the encounter between the promoter and Ms G was a professional experience between two colleagues who approached their task with diligence, dropped their defenses and interacted with one another honestly.

The Commentators

The Author Discusses and Comments on Ms B's Comments

Ms B began her comments on a positive note:

Well, I experienced the demonstration to be relaxed, the atmosphere was relaxed.

Students were comfortable and they were able to express themselves, but what I also

experienced was the fact that our relationship was complementary to a certain extent

because I had to be pro-active. I had to give them direction .... sort of create and

choreograph a situation where they were able to express themselves.

Ms B was acutely aware of her role as a tutor and a facilitator. She also added to her role

that of being a choreographer and a director. These multiple views of self convey that she was

aware that one needs to define one's relationship with a group of students from the outset, and that

it is a positive thing to keep one's role as fluid as possible in order to meet the (process) demands

in a tutorial. In addition, she felt that a tutor should be pro-active and not wait upon students to

'happen upon' any message about relationship that she was trying to convey.

Once having defined her relationship with students in this (flexible) way, Ms B

commented on the communication that was taking place in the tutorial. She described it as

"communication at different levels". By different levels she was referring to the fact that she was

communicating with the students directly, and they with each other. This interactional, circular

sequence of behaviour was helpful in that if somebody was stuck or struggling to voice their

opinion, someone else in the class would be waiting to come in with a comment or remark. In this

way, the responsibility for leading and maintaining the discussion was subtly removed from the tutor and was transferred to everyone attending the tutorial class.

Ms B's next comment was on the context, and in particular, about how her (established) relationship with the students helped them all to utilise the context effectively, even positively:

> What was happening in the tutorial demonstration was basically an extension of how we relate to one another at another setting, which is Thutong. There is the relationship that I have built with them so far, and it has actually helped us to relate the way that we were. And I found it interesting when they expressed how they view the context, ... how it has helped them to be able to express themselves, to share their views, to be confident ......

In addition to the similarity between her performance in the natural setting and the video demonstration, was the fit between the topic itself, namely self-image and self-evaluation, and the process (in the demonstration) between the tutor and the students. They were not only talking about self-evaluation, but they were also evaluating themselves and their performance in the present. Ms B believed that the topic created an opportunity for them all to relate to each other in the self-reflective way that they did, and may not have occurred as easily had the topic been on something different. This is an interesting comment in that it offers tutors something valuable to remember: There will always be topics that lend themselves better to discussion and self-reflection, and one can utilise these topics optimally, but this is not to say that more factual information should be imparted linearly, that is, that the student should be lectured to. The tutor will always need to find a way to be a facilitator, irrespective of context and irrespective of the topic of the tutorial.

Ms B also alluded to the importance of experiential learning. She encouraged students

to use the personal pronoun "I" when trying to make sense of a topic, but this did not imply that students were not expected to prepare and read whatever was assigned to them the previous week. Ms B took great pains to highlight the importance of both personal experiences and academic knowledge, and saw the two as complementary. Once students owned the experience at both a personal and academic level (at least in principle), she then commented by saying that she asks a lot of questions and gives students key words, which she expects to have explained to her and to the class. This she does in order to gauge how much students understand about the work and is (according to her) a very useful 'technique' to use.

It seems to convey that Ms B was ready to change tack if she discovered that students were either struggling to understand the concepts, or as is sometimes the case, have grasped the material really well. In the latter case, it would not be necessary to keep belabouring points, something new must happen, the process must suggest a new outcome. In Ms B's words:

The process it emanates from what the students are giving me.

Ms B concluded by summing up the factors that contributed to the success of her tutorial demonstration: The sitting arrangement (everyone sat in a circle), a select number of students (with whom she was able to maintain good eye contact) and the fact that they all had an established relationship, facilitated a process whereby everybody felt comfortable enough to participate. In Ms B's final words, she compared the natural setting with the setting in the demonstration, and only lamented the fact that (in the natural setting) she was working with a large number of students and that (as a result of the numbers) some students were always more vocal than others. (This alerts us all in the tutorial programme that small group discussions can and should be used in the natural setting in order to encourage all students, both the quiet ones and

the vocal ones, to participate.)

In conclusion, it is interesting to note that any problem that Ms B posed in her commentary (large number of students, for one), was also followed by a solution from her. This ability to change the referent point, or carry something forward in a relationship, is the mark of a tutor who is able to work with limitations, and is another laudable quality for a tutor to possess.

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments from the Students

Ms B's students appeared to have great awareness. Awareness is taken to refer to processes where a kind of re-minding or realisation is brought about, that leads to self-responsibility and growth:

Student 1 and 4 felt that the whole procedure of being videotaped was nerve-racking at first, but then realised that these feelings propelled them to get involved, and as a result, their confidence grew.

Student 2 and 3 felt that they had acquired knowledge of how to be and how to cooperate with other people during tutorials. They found the experience to be valuable as they had been struggling with the social and interpersonal aspects of a tutorial.

Student 5 ended the comments on an interesting note. He felt (at first) that he had learnt nothing new because, for him, knowledge was equated with academic knowledge. Then he realised that experiential learning is as valid as any kind of academic exercise.

All the students, with no notable exceptions, experienced a shift in their perceptions. This usually occurs in relationships when people have a moving, present-centred and person-to-person encounter. Such a positive experience goes beyond the ability to describe it and often results in a marked change in how one perceives and acts in the world (Zeleny, 1998).

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments of Ms D, Ms E and Ms F

Ms D took the lead in the discussion by commenting on Ms B's comfort with the experience of her demonstration:

Of course the atmosphere is going to be more comfortable because all those students that showed up were prepared. They knew they were being filmed, of course.

Ms D was wrong in this regard. She seemed to be saying that the students were prepared because they knew they were being filmed. The students were in fact randomly chosen on the day of the taping, and could only be briefed (due to unanticipated circumstances) about the research after the tutorial demonstration. One needs therefore to see Ms D's communication as being about *her* frustration with students in *her* class that arrive for tutorials unprepared. A little later in her commentary she cited further problems that she was encountering, namely, she was unable to foster a personal relationship with her students (unlike Ms B) because she did not seem to have the time to get to know her students by name, or to assess what their individual needs might be. In addition, she seemed to be battling to cope with students who were not expressing themselves in her tutorials. Ms D felt that it was not right to force these students to participate and concluded (by saying) that there was nothing that could be done about the situation as she did not have the time to address these issues. The cycle here appears to be a self-reinforcing one: The more Ms D did not have time to address her frustrations, the more stuck she felt, and the more stuck she felt, the less time she had to address her frustrations, and so on.

Ms D seemed to have set the tone for the discussion in the video, as Ms E and Ms F also resorted to sharing (only) the problems that they were facing: Ms E had tried to encourage her

students to do group work, but she was facing (in her words) "huge resistance". In addition, she

felt that certain topics (like research) do not lend themselves to discussion and her job in this

regard was simply to impart facts. She said that she did not have the time to explore different

learning styles with students in order to address this problem. Finally, Ms F complained that

student numbers in tutorials were too big and that a great number of students were difficult to

encourage (to participate) because they were "naturally shy".

The Durban tutors did not appear to have a way around their problems. They seemed

stuck. It is as if they accepted the status quo and felt that, apart from springing group work

(unannounced) on students, and thereby getting them to participate, there were no alternatives.

None of the tutors explained why their students resisted group work or why they arrived for

tutorials unprepared. It also struck the author that the Durban tutors concentrated on their

problems, but did not seem to be able to identify the sequences of behaviour in their situation that

circled around the problem. Most problems consist of self-reinforcing cycles. It is not

satisfactory to say that you do not have the time to learn the names of your students, and it is also

not satisfactory to complain about poor preparation and the vast content that you have to cover

during the tutorial year, without having some insight or understanding of how you, as the tutor,

may be helping to maintain, possibly even reinforce, these cycles of behaviour. Poor preparation,

for example, is not solely a comment on the student. It is a comment on the relationship between

the tutor *and* the student in the context of a tutorial class.

The Durban tutors' dominant view of problems may have been serving to maintain their

problems. This has been commonly referred to as a standstill system (Zeleny, 1998). One

possible way out of these problems is for these tutors to engage in dialogue with tutors from other

learning centres and to (possibly) gain an appreciation for the fact that a multitude of ideas and

alternatives exist. Systems become stuck when they limit the number of views they hold about

a problem (Hoffman, 1985).

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments of the Promoter and Ms G

The promoter and Ms G offered Ms B a substantial amount of compliments. *Compliments* are used to establish a positive, hopeful commentary within the training process (Hoffman, 1985). These compliments appeared to be genuine and emerged during the process of the feedback:

The promoter enjoyed the way that Ms B waited for the students to start the process and Ms G noted that Ms B's easy-going nature encouraged students to participate. The promoter also noted that Ms B linked the tutorial topic in the demonstration to the one that she had given a week before, and in so doing, put the responsibility on students to comment on the link. Tutor and students were thus actively involved in discussion from the outset.

The lecturer subsystem commented that Ms B was not solely meta to the process. In fact, Ms G noted that Ms B was actively involved with the students and used a sheet of paper to commit students' responses down, as if to validate their contributions. Students could thus own the experience as they were encouraged to think, feel, experience, and share personal anecdotes. By allowing students to be themselves, the lecturer subsystem felt that they (the students) did not feel pressurised or threatened by the tutor, the context or the video camera. Ms B displayed sensitivity and used affirmation (verbal and nonverbal) when she tried to draw the quiet students out. The lecturer subsystem felt that she had respected everyone's boundaries.

The promoter felt that (overall) Ms B was flexible and confident because she was able to use whatever students had to offer. In addition, she was successful in getting students to expand on their ideas, opening up the conversation with questions and her persistent probes. She did not

give up on the students at any point in her demonstration. In fact, even when one student understood a concept, she did not stop and agree with that student, but encouraged other students to join the debate. She always, according to Ms G, made things clear and used clarity as a means to extend the conversation, which is a strategically clever manoeuver.

All in all, the lecturer subsystem appreciated that Ms B did not abscond in the realm of facilitation. She was in touch with where the students were at in their understanding, and she was able to simplify or complexify matters at appropriate times, using the principle of immediacy, also commonly referred to as the 'here-and-now'. The here-and-now then became an opportunity to discuss what is happening out there, namely, in textbooks and to link the two domains of experience, the one domain being academic, the other one being personal.

The only points of criticism that were offered by the lecturer subsystem was that Ms B could have belaboured certain points or concepts less, and that she could have encouraged students to take a short break during the demonstration, as some of them had begun to 'wilt' towards the end.

The lecturer subsystem ended with a most interesting point, one that has also been raised about psychotherapists in supervision, and the point is this: People on the outside (commentators or supervisors) or people outside of the conversation or demonstration can only comment from the outside, as they were not part of the original conversation. Any comment, good or bad, from an outsider is simply that. A comment. Ultimately, the tutor's reality and the experience of the tutor and the students should be the starting point in any training process. Outsider input is simply a means to generate further discussion and possibly arrive at new, co-constructed meanings. (The author agrees with this viewpoint.)

The Consensual Domain

<u>Areas of Consensus in Relation to a Middle of the Year Tutorial</u>

Ms B and the lecturer subsystem both emphasised the value and importance of *preparation*, that is, the students must be encouraged by any means possible to read and prepare for tutorials. In the same vein, the tutor must enter the tutorial class, ready and prepared to make their contribution. In this way, both tutor and students are taking responsibility for the outcome of the tutorial. Each has prepared something of value for the discussion and thereby ensured that the proceedings in the tutorial will not occur in a haphazard way.

Another point that is raised by Ms B and the lecturer subsystem is the importance of *pro-activity* on the part of the tutor. Ms B believes that the tutor can be pro-active from the outset by asking questions that typically engage or provoke a response from students. The lecturer sub-system referred to the tutor taking the initiative. By this they meant leading the students into a discussion, and then waiting for them to respond.

Ms B and the lecturer subsystem both commented on the role and function of *structure* in a tutorial. Ms B commented that structure helps the tutor to facilitate the process, and the lecturer subsystem commented on the importance of starting off with little structure, and then building it in systematically. Ultimately, the process should emanate from what the students are giving, rather than what the tutor decides to impose on students. Structure is taken by them (Ms B and the lecturer subsystem) to refer to the sitting arrangement in a tutorial, the use of leading questions and guided didactic conversation, as well as any stimulus material that may enhance the discussion taking place.

Communication at different levels was another area tackled by Ms B and the lecturer

subsystem. They both emphasised the importance of the tutor addressing the students, and the students addressing each other. In addition to this they felt that the tutor's ability to clarify concepts easily with students, to simplify or complexify matters when appropriate, and to change tack when necessary, was of paramount importance. In this way the tutor's style of communication remains flexible. This encourages students to share their meanings with the tutor and with one another, as they are assured that the tutor (by virtue of the example that he or she has set), will tailor his or her behaviour to meet their communication needs.

In addition to the importance of being pro-active, developing structure and communicating clearly in a tutorial, was the emphasis on the *diverse approaches* that a tutor can use to create or enhance the atmosphere of learning:

Ms B and the tutor subsystem commented on the use of the *topic* in the tutorial. If the topic lends itself to discussion, then it can be used optimally to encourage students to self-reflect and evaluate the tutorial, as well as their individual contributions in it.

Ms B and the lecturer subsystem also encouraged tutors to use key words and pertinent questions in their tutorials in order to help the tutor gauge the students' level of understanding. In addition to these measures, which address *mainly content* issues, was the importance of enhancing the *process* or the relationship between the tutor and the students. If the tutor smiles, nods frequently, affirms the responses of students and explores topics with students in greater detail, he or she will be promoting the idea that, as much as a tutor should be gauging understand, she or he must also be conveying understanding, that is, the tutor needs to validate the students and convey his or her appreciation in this regard.

Ms B and the students had the final word. They both commented that the *aim* in any tutorial was to encourage students to share their views, develop and consider their opinions as valid, as well as apply their knowledge to everyday life. This, according to them, makes for a

confident student and a successful tutorial.

Areas of Consensus in Relation to Training

The only point of consensus about training emerged from Ms B and the lecturer sub-system. They both defined training as an *opportunity* for the tutor to engage with significant others in an attempt to arrive at co-constructed meaning. In most traditional cases, the aim of training is to join the trainee in an effort to change, confront or help him or her to cope with conflicts and problems. By defining training as an opportunity, a major shift in perspective takes place. It defines training not as a problem to be solved, but as a worthwhile encounter that the trainee would not otherwise have had access to, and which the trainee is likely to appreciate.

This view of training (as an opportunity) has the potential to lead to *isomorphism*, that is, if trainers and trainees experience training as an opportunity to engage with one another, then this can surely be replicated in the relationship between the tutor and the students.

News of a Difference

News of a Difference in Relation to a Middle of the Year Tutorial

A number of pertinent insights and suggestions emerged from the comments of one commentator, that was not mentioned by any other commentator or subsystem:

Ms B made three pertinent comments: She emphasised the importance of being relaxed as a tutor. In addition, she felt that the tutor needed to play out different roles during the course of any tutorial. In some instances the tutor will need to be a facilitator, but in other instances the

tutor will also need to be the director and the choreographer of the proceedings. This *multiple view of self* ensures that the tutor will never resort to so-called "sameness", but can adjust his or her behaviour according to the demands in the tutorial.

Ms B also emphasised the value of having an *established* relationship with students. If there has been an investment in the relationship over time, then tutor and students will not necessarily be perturbed or derailed when they find themselves in a foreign or unfamiliar context. This has implications for the day when students enter the workforce: If they have learnt to develop and maintain good relationships, then settling into a work experience is likely to be less difficult (although not guaranteed) for them.

Ms B concluded by emphasising the importance of being open, and the importance of allowing *a shift in perception* to take place within yourself as a tutor. In Ms B's particular situation, she was under the impression (at first) that quiet students were quiet because they had nothing to say. She then realised that she had not given these 'quiet' students an opportunity to participate. This shift in perspective allowed her to be considerate to these students, but could have (as easily) led her to feel defensive by virtue of the fact that she had not addressed this dynamic with her students. Ms B, however, was acutely aware of the principle of circularity, that is, everyone affects and is affected by one another, and in order to address or redress a pattern, the tutor must include him or herself in the field of observation.

The students had only one comment to make. They took great pains to comment on the role of the tutor as a *model*. They believed that they had acquired new behaviour and had learnt to weaken previously learned responses as a result of the example of the tutor, who encouraged them to evaluate their responses to questions.

The Durban tutors were the only ones to focus on the *problems* they were encountering in their tutorials, for which they could see *no solutions*. Their problems seemed to be exclusively

focused on logistic and content issues, that is, the vast syllabus, the factual and difficult nature of some courses like the one of statistics, large groups of students to work with, and so on. They seemed to be aware of problems, but felt that there was no time for them to do anything about these problems.

The lecturer subsystem was the last to discuss Ms B's demonstration and a number of useful comments emerged from their discussion:

They appreciated the way in which Ms B *used stimuli effectively* in her tutorial, that is, big sheets of paper and thick marker pens, in an attempt to intrigue students about making a contribution.

In addition, Ms B allowed every student to *be themselves*. She allowed the quiet students to be quiet, until she could gently nudge them to participate. She showed *sensitivity*, and her empathy helped her create a safe atmosphere in the tutorial, where students did not feel pressurised or threatened to participate. Participation was voluntary, and she respected the boundaries of students at all times.

Ms B persevered with her task and *worked very hard* in the demonstration. She also used the principle of immediacy to great effect, by encouraging students to reflect on their experience of being videotaped. All in all, she may have belaboured a few points, and did not take a break during the demonstration (a short break might have been beneficial), but she was *diverse* in her approach. At no point did she allow escalation of one practice over another practice to take place. She read the process in the tutorial accurately, and made adjustments accordingly.

The lecturer subsystem concluded by saying that Ms B's demonstration was a true example of what is often termed *outcomes-based* education. The experience came first, and then students were encouraged to link their experience to theory.

News of a Difference in Relation to Tutor Training

The only news of a difference in relation to tutor training was offered by the lecturer sub-system, in particular by the promoter. She made the point that people (prospective trainers) on the outside of the process or on the outside of the conversation, cannot comment authoritatively on the conversation between the tutor and the students in any tutorial, as they were not really part of the tutorial. The *point of departure* in any training process, then, may begin by asking the tutor and the students to comment on their experiences during a tutorial. After this information is generated, then everyone else can engage in dialogue around the issues of importance.

Summary

Guiding Principles in Relation to a Middle of the Year Tutorial

In summary: Guiding principles (not to be read as prescriptions) for tutors in relation to a middle of the year tutorial:

- Emphasise to students the importance of preparing for tutorial classes. Be prepared yourself. Arrive at your class ready and eager to participate with your students.

- Be pro-active. Lecture if absolutely necessary, but learn to facilitate, direct or choreograph as well. Keep your role as a tutor flexible and be ready to change and adapt when necessary.

- Employ various means of communication, that is, verbal and non-verbal. Positive body language sometimes conveys more than words do.

- Use key words and pertinent questions to *gauge* your students' level of understanding on any given topic. At the same time, *convey* your understanding of students' input through affirmations. Students appreciate feeling validated.

- Encourage students to share personal anecdotes and be prepared to do so yourself. Students are likely to follow your example if it is genuine and appropriate to the topic in question, especially those topics that lend themselves to self-refection and self-evaluation.

- Once students have shared their personal experiences, try to help them link these experiences to the theory or topic that you are addressing on the given day.

- Use a number and variety of diverse practices in your tutorial in order to counter boredom and in order to create an exciting environment for learning.

- Work effectively when tackling problems of any nature. If you are having to deal with a large number of students or you are frustrated with poor preparation on the part of students, address this matter *with* students, rather than *at* them. In this way, everyone is responsible to find a solution.

- At the end of each class, assess whether you have achieved your aims. Encourage students to give you feedback about the class. If you find that students report that shifts have taken place in their perceptions, or if they report having enjoyed and having benefited from the class, you are on a positive track. If not, consult your students and your colleagues, as well as yourself (the internal supervisor) about how to go about enhancing the value of the experience to everyone's benefit and satisfaction.

By the middle of the year, the tutor has an established relationship with students and is able to use a number of diverse means to great effect in order to enhance the experience of learning.

Guiding Principles in Relation to Tutor Training

In summary: Guiding principles in relation to an approach to tutor training:

- Prospective trainers can help encourage trainees to see the experience of training as an opportunity to learn and grow. Trainees may learn to appreciate the efforts of those who have provided the opportunity, and who have assembled a training 'package' together to address trainee needs. In addition, old or experienced tutors should work together with 'new' tutors as they might learn to benefit from and appreciate one another's different input. By defining training as an opportunity, it is implied that trainees will avail themselves of the opportunity and (hopefully) contribute positively to it.

- The perspective of each and every tutor trainee is of paramount importance when they are asked to share their views on their tutorial class(es). Those on the outside (colleagues, trainers, etc) will always be on the outside looking in, and should therefore understand what their role is and what contribution they are making. It is envisaged that all contributions will be co-constructed and a number of realities are likely to emerge. But it is always up to the individual trainee to assess whether or not they find these contributions valid and meaningful enough to institute.

Once again, it appears as if the commentators agree that training is essentially about the co-construction of meaning over time and in interaction with others.

CHAPTER 9

MS C'S VIDEO DEMONSTRATION

OF A TUTORIAL FOCUSING ON EXAM PREPARATION

Identifying Data of the Various Role Players

Table 9.1

<u>Information on the Various Role Players</u>

Name:	Role and function in this study:	Job description:	Year in question and place of work
Ms C	Tutor in the video demonstration and commentator on her own work	Tutor for second year Developmental Psychology (PSY 212-9)	UNISA, Pretoria Learning Centre, known as "Thutong" (1998)
Students in Ms C's video demonstration	Commentators		
The author and Mr A	Commentators in discussion with one another	**Author:** Tutor for Social Psychology and Psychopathology (PSY 313-D; PSY 311-B) **Mr A:** Tutor for Personology (PSY 211-8)	UNISA, Pretoria Learning Centre (1999)
The promoter and Ms H	Commentators in discussion with one another	**Promoter:** Academic tutor coordinator and lecturer at the Department of Psychology **Ms H:** Staff member at the Department of Student Support	UNISA (1999)
The promoter and Ms I	Commentators in discussion with one another (bonus commentary)	**Promoter:** Academic tutor coordinator and lecturer at the Department of Psychology **Ms I:** Lecturer at the Department of Psychology	UNISA (1999)

Introduction

The author reiterates that she is a participant-observer, and the reader is alerted to the fact that any description or comment offered by the author in this section qualifies her own world view. All observations involve self-reference, and any comment, interpretation or suggestion says as much about the author as it says about the subject of description.

This section of work is based on the transcribed (from video) material of Ms C giving a demonstration of a tutorial that is focusing on preparing students for examination purposes. The transcription is available in Appendix 6 of the study. This chapter draws, as its source, the transcribed material, and will specifically cover the following areas:

- The impact of the video setting on Ms C and her students.

- This will be followed by two subsequent sections -- the one dealing with the author's general impressions of the various role players, and the other with the author's comments on the role players' comments.

- In the next to final section, the author will discuss aspects of commonality amongst the role players' comments (the consensual domain) as well as areas of difference (news of a difference).

- In conclusion, guiding principles in relation to an exam preparation tutorial and in relation to the approach to training will be summarised.

For ease of reference, participants will be addressed as Ms C, Mr A, Ms H, and so on. In addition, the various role players will be addressed as part-whole systems where necessary. Ms C and her students will be referred to as the 'C-student' subsystem. The author and Mr A will

be referred to as the 'tutor subsystem'. The promoter and Ms H will be referred to as the 'lecturer/staff subsystem' and the promoter and Ms I will be referred to as the 'lecturer sub-system'. The reader is referred to the table at the beginning of this chapter for clarification on the role and function of the various role players 'featured' in this chapter.

The Impact of the Video Setting

Ms C and her students were videotaped in the small, compact room (no 5-155) at the Department of Psychology at UNISA. A camera is present in the venue and is inconspicuously placed in the top right hand corner of the room.

Ms C did not seem to be particularly thrown by the presence of the camera nor by the confines of the small room. Rather, she seemed more aware of than perturbed by the setting. She also seemed very eager to please everyone by 'getting it right'. It is possible that she saw the video demonstration as an opportunity to do everything 'correctly'. Ms C employed the word 'should' a lot in her commentary, as in, "a tutor should do this, a tutor should not do that", conveying the impression that she saw matters (pertaining to tutorials and tutoring) as either right or wrong:

> I fulfilled a more facilitating role in the group, which is what a tutor should do, but
> also to structure the situation and thus guarantee the clarity of the video.

The words above are touching. The author knows Ms C to be an empathic person. She was acutely aware of the importance of the video's clarity for the author, and was eager to help out the best she could. In the context of training, it is suspected that Ms C would be called (for

lack of a better word) compliant. Ms C is also congruent. The author attended a number of Ms

C's tutorials in the natural setting (as she did with the other two tutors) and could see no visible

difference in her attitude or performance in the natural setting when contrasted to her attitude and

performance in the video setting. Ms C seemed to agree:

> The observer effect is obviously present when a camera is used to record a tutorial, but
>
> although the students and I were aware of the camera, especially in the beginning, one
>
> cannot be anybody but oneself and thus the video represents a fairly accurate perception
>
> of a tutorial.

General Impressions

The Author's General Impressions of Ms C and Her Students

The first thing that struck the author about Ms C was her polite and civil manner:

> Thank you for joining us and we hope you (referring to the viewer) enjoy
>
> the tutorial with us.

In the situation of the actual tutorial, Ms C's students were placed in a big circle. Ms C

elected not to join the circle, but rather to stand, move around and weave in and out between the

students. This does tend to convey the impression that she is the teacher. It occurred to the author

that she may have done this because she was demonstrating an example of a tutorial focusing on

exam preparation. She needed to give out a number of worksheets and this meant that she needed

to move about the room a great deal.

Ms C was also very well prepared and managed to tackle a multiple choice question, as well as two paragraph type questions with the students. It was evident that she had begun preparing students for exams a while back, and was now eager to evaluate the effectiveness of her suggestions to students in this regard:

I told you to try and use study techniques in the last tutorial and I want to know from you, did it help you?

Ms C appeared to guide her students through their answers in a painstaking fashion and encouraged all of them to participate. They (the students) seemed to be very comfortable with her. In fact, a type of sing-song dynamic between Ms C and her students seemed evident as they talked animatedly with and over each other. The students clearly felt free to ask her for clarification or to plead ignorance without fear of recrimination, because Ms C was right there with them every step of the way with her firm, but non-judgmental manner.

In spite of Ms C's thoroughness and apparent confidence, some students remarked as follows:

Ms C was not a very confident lecturer and I thought she was not happy standing in front of people lecturing.

I found Ms C was very nervous and excited. She laughed a lot and jumped around quite a bit.

Me.C het my geleer dat ek alles reg moet doen. (Ms C taught me that I have to do everything correctly).

Ms C is a bit like a teacher.

Ms C teaches a lot, but she is always thorough and well prepared for class.

In conclusion, one could suggest that if Ms C hears (from others in a training programme) that it is quite *okay* not to do everything correctly, then she may feel less burdened by the need to please, which students may be interpreting as lack of confidence. Ms C did say she had fulfilled a more facilitative role in the video, but according to her students, it was not facilitative enough.

The Author's General Impressions of Herself in Discussion with Mr A

The author's first and lasting impression of her discussion with Mr A was that both tutors seemed to be very tentative and hesitant when it came to giving feedback or comments about Ms C's performance in the tutorial demonstration. This impeded honesty to a certain extent and could possibly be attributed to the fact that the author and Mr A know Ms C very well, and find her to be a pleasant person, as well as a hardworking and well prepared tutor.

It is not clear to the author what needs to be done about the observation that, if a colleague is also a friend, then complete honesty may sometimes be difficult in that one is always aware of the possibility that one may be hurting a friends feelings by giving honest feedback. Is it not a good thing, then, that any training programme will be made up of commentators that know each

other well, as well as commentators that do not know each other so well? This might lead to a more balanced view when comments are generated. On the other hand, the issue of honesty is a matter that needs to be addressed in any training programme, that is, when tutors feel like they are compelled to spare the feelings of a fellow tutor, irrespective of how mildly critical their feedback might be, then all involved in training might find it worthwhile to tackle this issue amongst themselves, and develop a satisfactory plan of action in this regard.

If the author could 'redo' her discussion with Mr A, she would still say that she found Ms C to be well prepared and affable, but she would also have mentioned that she found Ms C to be school teacher-ish, and perhaps a little giddy in her demonstration, which may have resulted in her students thinking that she (Ms C) was not confident enough as a tutor.

The above sentiments would not have been expressed in order to launch a personal attack on Ms C. Rather, it would be for the very good reason of making the tutor in question aware of how she is perceived. It would then be interesting to note whether or not the tutor has the same perception of herself. If yes, this would be curious (i.e., to 'choose' to be giddy), but if not, the tutor has identified something to engage with others about. Alternatively, if her behaviour was merely a symptom of something else (such as an over-awareness of the camera), then it would elicit an interesting debate amongst tutors about the relationship between context and behaviour.

In conclusion, any training programme should ideally focus on what needs to stay the same in terms of tutor behaviour and performance, but also on what needs to change. Otherwise, training is an altogether unnecessary endeavour, especially if tutors assume that they have 'arrived' and therefore need not work on themselves at all.

The Author's General Impressions of the Promoter in Discussion with Ms H

and (on a Separate Occasion) with Ms I

The author wishes to explain to the reader that the promoter had a discussion with two separate people (Ms H and Ms I), on two separate occasions, on the subject of Ms C's tutorial demonstration. This was not at all planned, but the author chose to retain both sets of commentary as they make an interesting contrast:

The discussion between the promoter and Ms H was clearly 'on track'. It was obvious from their comments that they were both very involved with and aware of the intricacies of matters pertaining to the learning centres, as well as to matters pertaining to the role and function of the tutor in the tutorial programme.

The discussion between the promoter and Ms I on the other hand, did not appear (to the author) to be as easy and as fluid as the discussion between the promoter and Ms H. This is because Ms I is not involved with the tutorial programme, and she appeared to misunderstand a great deal about the demonstration. In particular, she was not aware that Ms C's demonstration dealt specifically with exam preparation. In spite of numerous misunderstandings, the author found Ms I's comments to be fascinating. She thought that Ms I was a very astute observer and that she managed to say a great deal about Ms C that might not have otherwise emerged.

The contrast between the two commentaries is a useful one to have. It seems to confirm the author's previous stance, namely that those who know the tutor well (such as the author), as well as those that don't (Ms I), can both contribute something different by means of their comments, and also by virtue of their relationship with the tutor.

Those commentators that know the tutor might feel constrained to be totally honest, but on the other hand, know the tutor well enough, and can vouch for him or her if any contentious

issues arise. On the other hand, those who do not know the tutor well (or at all) might feel freer to comment on the tutor's performance, rather than on the tutor as a person, for they do not know the tutor in a personal capacity. This is not to say that these commentators would be ruthless or unfeeling. It simply means that their commentary is not likely to reflect a personal entanglement with the tutor.

Irrespective of the relationship between the tutor and fellow trainees, the ultimate goal in a training programme is to amass as many comments from as many perspectives as possible.

The Commentators

The Author Discusses and Comments on Ms C's Comments

Ms C chose to focus on the content and on the process of the exam tutorial that she had conducted, as well as to compare those aspects of the tutorial in the demonstration that were similar to the aspects in the natural setting:

Ms C first took great pains in her commentary to accentuate the importance of preparing students for examination purposes. She felt that it was essential to provide students with exam-type questions, then to help students identify keywords in the questions, and to warn them about the dangers of digressing from the question. Ms C seemed to feel that this kind of approach was useful because it provided the more anxious students with techniques to cope with their stress.

Ms C also emphasised the importance of discussion, even when conducting a tutorial on exam preparation. If students were encouraged to participate, and if they were prompted to do so on a regular basis during the course of the hour, then this (in Ms C's words) "facilitates learning and a growing independence among the students".

Ms C then mentioned something very interesting. She highlighted the fact that in the natural setting she has more students or groups to work with. She added that (in the natural setting) she was not so intensely involved in the group discussions, and that the groups worked independently and only called upon her when she was needed.

The author was left with the impression that Ms C posited a contrast between the demonstration and the natural setting in an attempt to convey to the reader that (in her words) she fulfilled a more facilitative role in the demonstration in order to:

structure the situation and thus guarantee the clarity of the video.

The above quote may be misleading in that it appears to be saying that Ms C espoused facilitation in order to ensure the clarity of the video. There appears to be a contradiction in Ms C's commentary. On the one hand, she highlighted the importance of facilitation in her commentary. On the other hand, she seemed to be saying that she was more facilitative in the demonstration in order to ensure the clarity of the video. Perhaps she was commenting on degree or extent of facilitation. In other words, the context of the video demanded a more facilitative approach from her, whereas in the natural setting, where there is a large group, facilitation is often difficult to implement. It is furthermore interesting to note that Ms C saw herself as a facilitator during her demonstration, but all other commentators felt that she was teaching more than facilitating. This debate, namely how the tutor perceives him or herself, versus how others perceive the tutor, is becoming an interesting point and has been addressed numerous times thus far in the thesis. All parties could benefit from opening up this discussion further during training and, in this way, address the issue of the use and importance of different perspectives.

Ms C seemed to be specifically saying that (in the natural setting) the discussion was

more between the students and involved her less, whereas in the demonstration she was always actively involved. The author feels that the latter may be preferable, as facilitation implies that the tutor is always actively involved, even when he or she is simply monitoring a discussion taking place in small group activities. This is just something for the reader to consider.

In conclusion, Ms C appeared to offer an explanation for her relative non-activity in the natural setting. She had the following to say:

The tutor should work before the tutorial and the students should work during the tutorial.

No doubt, Ms C was referring here to the importance of preparation on the part of the tutor. This may be an important point to discuss in training. Is Ms C's comment valid, or do tutors also debate the fact that both the tutor and the student should work *before and during* the tutorial? This question and its answer can only be addressed with more discussion, and is left in the hands of the prospective trainer(s).

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments from the Students

Ms C's students had a number of interesting comments to impart:

Student 1 enjoyed discussing her fears about the exam and Student 2 enjoyed the fact that they were afforded the opportunity to sit and talk in a circle.

Student 3 felt that the value of the tutorial was that Ms C confirmed that she (Student 3) was on track for the exams, and was doing everything "reg" (right). Student 4 commented on the same thing, but added that Ms C made her feel like there was only ever a right or a wrong answer.

Most of the students commented on Ms C's teacher style, nervousness and lack of confidence. These comments may appear to be negative, but the author does not feel this. These students felt confident enough to address Ms C's lack of confidence. There is no doubt in the author's mind that the students were identifying with Ms C, and felt free enough to offer these comments to her. This is evidence of an open relationship. When students can engage freely with the tutor at both the content and the process level, then it can be said that the atmosphere of learning is truly open (Ancis, 1999).

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments of Herself and Mr A

The tutor subsystem began their discussion by tackling the way in which Ms C structured her tutorial class. The author then attempted to engage Mr A on any constructive criticism that he had to offer. Finally, the author tried to elicit comments from Mr A on the relationship between Ms C and her students.

The author felt that each of the questions were posed in an attempt to open up the discussion between herself and Mr A. But this did not happen. Here are some of the more typical responses:

Well, I thought she approached it very adequately.

She did very well.

Um, well, I hesitate to criticise because ....

I can't criticise that.

The tutor subsystem appeared to be somewhat handicapped. The author remembers feeling like this very vividly. The tutor subsystem seemed to feel that constructive criticism was out of place. Why would this be? The author has attempted to answer this question before. Both tutors know Ms C well, and appeared to be so touched by her attempts to do her level best, to create exam conditions to the best of her ability in the demonstration, and to encourage everyone to participate, that it would have been impossible to ask her to do more than her best. Clearly this is not possible. But what is possible, is that one can think differently about this issue. It is not so much about asking the tutor to do better than his or her best, but to do something different. The former request is impossible, the latter is reasonable.

In the course of a training programme, nobody should 'take away' what the tutor is doing in the name of diligence and hard work, but that does not mean that such a tutor has nothing else to work on. Fellow trainees simply have to create a good enough climate of trust, so that any comments can be understood in context. After all, all trainees take responsibility for any outcome that occurs, and it is not the responsibility of the individual tutor alone. Furthermore, feedback is not meant to be personal. It will always be interpersonal.

The Author Discusses and Comments on the Comments of the Promoter and Ms H and the Promoter and Ms I

The discussion between the promoter and Ms H was an opportunity to generate comments from yet another perspective, namely that from someone (Ms H) who had been actively involved in the tutorial programme as an assistant coordinator at a learning centre.

Ms H felt that Ms C's way of handling questions, namely in a step-by-step manner, was particularly what students needed at the end of the year. Ms H spoke of Ms C's ability to help

students break down every aspect of the question, and then to lead students through the process of it. Ms H felt that this was not so much about preparing students to amass knowledge. Rather, it was about guiding and helping students to answer questions appropriately in the exam.

The promoter agreed that Ms C was very well prepared on the day and was able and prepared to deal with the expected (what she had prepared) as well as the unexpected. Ms H felt that this was because Ms C had also once been a student herself and was therefore better able to draw students out. Her empathy and her past experience as a student made all the difference.

The lecturer/staff subsystem then raised an interesting point. Ms H noticed that the students in Ms C's tutorial did not refer much to their textbooks. The promoter agreed, but made the suggestion that each student could benefit from putting their thoughts down on paper and producing their own answer. This answer could then be shared with and marked by the rest of the group either verbally, or using a transparency. The lecturer/staff subsystem noticed that Ms C focused exclusively on getting a group answer.

The lecturer/staff subsystem did address Ms C's teacher style, but felt that it went down well and may therefore have been warranted to some extent. In addition, this subsystem appreciated the fact that Ms C did not give students a recipe to help them overcome exam anxiety. Instead, she focused on what the students were experiencing and on how they coped with exam anxiety.

The lecturer/staff subsystem concluded by saying that all aspects mentioned above could and should be practised over and over again, thereby making students feel more comfortable with the prospect of writing the final exam.

The conversation between the promoter and Ms I also focused on Ms C's mastery and intelligent grasp of the content of the course. In contrast to Ms H, Ms I seemed concerned that Ms C's students were continually addressing her as a lecturer. She felt that the students were too

dependent on the tutor for guidance. Ms I also felt that she would have appreciated a slower process, one where the tutor was not so fast and efficient, but prepared to sit down with and allow each student to voice and write down an answer to the question posed. In so doing, the tutor would be in a better position to check on where each of the members of the group were at a given point in time. Ms I felt that Ms C conveyed the impression that the students had to come up with the right answer, or else they would not be affirmed. She felt that this preponderance on how to answer correctly, may have interfered with self-reflection in that students did not have the time to come up with examples out of their own experiences, except when discussing their fears about the exam.

The lecturer subsystem concluded by saying that the old basic principle of providing students with structure, and then allowing each student to move flexibly within the structure, was still the ideal.

The Consensual Domain

Areas of Consensus in Relation to a Tutorial Focusing on Exam Preparation

All the commentators addressed the necessity of the tutor to be *prepared* for class. A tutor who is prepared conveys important messages to his or her class: Ms C felt that it showed that the tutor was committed. Ms C's students felt that it conveyed that Ms C appreciated and respected them. The tutor subsystem felt that a prepared tutor was one who was also trustworthy. And the lecturer subsystem felt that preparation was always the essence of a tutorial. If a tutor was well prepared, then he or she made tutoring look easy.

Ms C and Ms I both commented on the *observer effect.* They both noticed that Ms C's

students were (at first) stiff and uncomfortable, but soon relaxed and were able to tackle the day's work. Ms C and Ms I both felt that it was important for the tutor to address any symptoms of discomfort, or any area that the tutor had not prepared for or anticipated, either by remarking on it or by addressing it indirectly. One way to do this would be to involve everyone in the discussion, and in this way, students might forget their discomfort as they would be actively involved in a debate.

Once the class has settled in, Ms C, the tutor, lecturer/staff and lecturer subsystem all emphasised the importance of the *tutor breaking down* an exam question with students and getting everyone in the tutorial to identify the key words. This practical measure ensures that everyone understands the question both in bits and pieces, as well as on the whole, and therefore any answers that emerge, are likely to be well thought out and coherent.

Ms C and the lecturer subsystem also highlighted the need to *practice*. Ms C (in particular) felt that, when students practice exam techniques or exam questions, they familiarise themselves with how to approach exams, and they also learn how to cope with exam stress and writing.

In conclusion, Ms I and Ms C's students both commented on Ms C's *teacher style*. They both offered recommendations from their own perspective: The students urged Ms C to be more facilitative and Ms I suggested that the tutor should focus less on knowledge and on eliciting the 'right' answers from students, and more on engaging students on their knowledge and personal experiences.

All in all, the emphasis layed on preparation, practice and facilitation seems to indicate that all commentators value the importance of setting goals, especially with regard to a tutorial that is focusing on exam preparation. Without proper goals, an exam tutorial is meaningless because students will not have grasped the importance of being prepared, nor will they be

confident about their ability to tackle a question and provide the examiner with a satisfactory answer (Ancis, 1999).

Areas of Consensus in Relation to Training

No direct comments were offered by the commentators on aspects pertaining to tutor training. However, all emphasised (albeit indirectly) the importance of *preparation, practice and discussion*. A prospective trainer may start off with little structure or preparation and allow ideas to co-evolve amongst the trainees, but there is a fine line between little structure and no structure at all. If there is no structure in the training programme, then discussions are likely to be haphazard, and any role plays that are rehearsed or techniques that are practised, are likely to be confusing to the trainee, as he or she will not understand the value or the context within which these techniques are being practised.

The importance of *co-constructed meaning* during training is something that this thesis has highlighted on innumerable occasions, but these meanings cannot be just anything. They must fit with the ideas of the training programme as well as the participants, and therefore implies that all involved in the training process must have thought about (or prepared) something in terms of the point of departure. All processes need to begin somewhere.

News of a Difference

News of a Difference in Relation to a Tutorial Focusing on Exam Preparation

Some important points of contrast emerged from the commentaries. Ms C (for example)

felt that she had fulfilled a more *facilitative* role in the tutorial demonstration, whereas Ms I and Ms C's students felt that she had adopted a *teaching style*. This accentuates the importance of *having access to the views of multiple role players*. If the tutor can consult his or her students, as well as colleagues, then they can attempt to address or redress matters in the interests of all concerned. On the other hand, if the tutor remains unaware of the perceptions of others, then he or she is likely to perpetuate patterns that have outlived their usefulness. These patterns may even lead to misperceptions (even conflicts of interest) between trainees, as well as between the tutor and his or her students.

Ms C was the only one to make the following distinction: a tutor should work *before* a tutorial, whereas students should work *during* the tutorial. Most other commentators (especially the tutor subsystem) felt that both the tutor and the students should work equally hard before and during the tutorial hour. In addition, roles (or the definition of hard work) can vary. A tutor, for example, can be a facilitator, a choreographer, an affirmer, or a combination of all of these roles. A student on the other hand, is a learner and a participant. Both tutor and student will always have their 'brief' and are likely to define the meaning of working hard in a complementary way.

Ms C's students were the only ones to comment on the role of *humour* during the tutorial. They felt that humour helped them to tackle their fears. Once they realised that everyone has fears about exams, they could relax and joke about them.

The tutor subsystem commented on Ms C's ability to get the students to draw on themes. In addition, they pointed out that Ms C covered a multiple choice and an essay-type question in her tutorial. She also attempted to create exam conditions and to help students address their fears through guided imagery and by encouraging everyone to participate. She *worked very hard*.

The lecturer/staff and lecturer subsystem commented on Ms C's ability to *know what*

students need at the end of the year, by virtue of the fact that Ms C had been a student herself. In addition, she managed to instill confidence in her students by pointing out to them that they had written exams before and therefore knew more than they thought they did.

The only direct forms of constructive criticism came from the lecturer subsystem. They felt that Ms C could have focused more on eliciting *answers from each and every student*, rather than by getting a group answer. After all, a group answer is not possible in the exam. Finally, students should not be given the impression that answers are right or wrong. Rather, students should be directed in such a way so as to be able to see when they are on track with an answer themselves, and when not. Such self-monitoring will help them in the exam.

The author concludes with a final remark: If it is essential to define a relationship with students in the first tutorial of the year, then it stands to reason that one also needs to *terminate* at the end of the year. Termination refers to the timely ending of the relationship between a tutor and his or her students, and should be handled in an appropriate manner. This leads to a sense of accomplishment, as well as to closure. Tutors could be asked to discuss the importance of forging and terminating a good relationship with students, versus simply covering the syllabus.

News of a Difference in Relation to Tutor Training

The importance of *honesty and the importance of varying perspectives* is something that was (indirectly) alluded to by the tutor subsystem. If participants in the training programme do not feel at liberty to share their views about one another openly and honestly, then this is likely to result in dialogues and conversations that are truncated, a poor substitute for the real thing, namely, deep and open sharing of ideas. Tutors could be asked to discuss the desirability or feasibility of honesty and its effects on trainee development. Consensual agreement on this issue

would be important before embarking on such evaluative discussions. In addition, tutors will have to decide on whether they will visit each other's actual tutorials in the natural setting in order to be able to give honest feedback, or whether role plays will suffice in this regard.

In addition, *everyone's perspective* on a given tutor or on a given topic must be encouraged. If a tutor sees themselves one way, but countless others seem him or her differently, this may constitute a problem. With dialogue, and by allowing the opinions of others to matter, the tutor can decide what he or she wishes to do about the way that he or she is being perceived, especially if the tutor is unhappy about the way he or she is being viewed by others.

Summary

Guiding Principles in Relation to a Tutorial Focusing on Exam Preparation

In summary: Guiding principles (not to be read as prescriptions) for tutors in relation to exam preparation:

- Come to class prepared with multiple choice and essay-type questions. Students need the practice.

- Address the topic of exam stress and anxiety with students. Many students feel acutely anxious at the end of the year.

- Equip students with any exam techniques that you are familiar with. Tell them what you did during exams and how that helped you. Then encourage students to do the same, that is, share their insights, techniques and personal experiences with the rest of the class.

- Be aware of your tutoring style. By the time students reach the end of the year, they need to feel confident about their abilities. If you rely on teaching too much, students may still need or depend on you too much for direction or the answers to practice questions.

- By the end of the year, students should rely less on the textbook and more on their own knowledge. Encourage this practice.

- Aside from the usual approaches and practices, employ humour. Students who can learn to laugh at themselves may also learn to appreciate that everything about exam writing is not serious. Humour is sometimes the best medicine, especially as an antidote to anxiety and fear.

- Before your last tutorial, create exam conditions and use a variety of techniques (e.g. guided imagery) to help students prepare for the big day.

- Terminate your relationship with your students on time and in a way that does not constitute abandonment. Saying goodbye is acknowledging that your time together is up.

Guiding Principles in Relation to Tutor Training

In summary: Guiding principles in relation to an approach to tutor training:

- Emphasise the importance of honesty. If all trainees are honest, this will lead to a training programme that is founded on openness. Openness is crucial if the trainees want to telescope in on any level or subsystem with the overall training system, as well as telescoping back out to understand the training system in its entirety, and how a sub-system of particular interest is embedded in the larger system of training.

- In the training system, the perspective of each participant must fit or at least be congruent with the perspective of another, in spite of allowing for individual differences. Moreover, the individual parts of a particular level (e.g. tutor and students) must also be analysed according to their perspectives. This model of congruence is proposed because the perspectives of all the role players is regarded as valid.

In conclusion, the end of the year usually brings with it the need to address matters pertaining to closure. Tutor trainees will need to find a way to approach this aspect without instilling undue fear in their students about examinations, not undue concern about their performance (during the year) in themselves.

CHAPTER 10

DISCUSSION ON THE FINDINGS IN CHAPTERS 7, 8 AND 9

Introduction: An Approach to Training

In Chapter 5 it was stated that a linear epistemology orients the trainer to focus on discrete sequences, whereas a circular epistemology orients the trainer to focus on recursiveness in the interaction between parts of the system, and to hypothesise about holistic patterns.

In the process of analysing the data in Chapter(s) 7, 8 and 9, the author made some observations which she believes will prove useful to those interested in an approach to tutor training:

First, then, the author did not take an over-controlling stance as the researcher, with the idea that it was her responsibility to analyse the data in any conclusive way. Conversely, it was found that redefining the analysis of data as one where the reader (in a sense) is acknowledged as a co-researcher allowed for greater flexibility, for the author was not concerned with a readership that was waiting for a script to be read out to them.

Another observation was that the differences between the 'results' pertaining to tutoring and to training seemed indistinguishable. This was predicted in Chapter 2, where it was suspected that ideas pertaining to training could as easily be implemented by the 'trained tutor' in his or her tutorial class. In this way, tutoring can be said to be mirroring training in an isomorphic way. For this reason, no clear distinctions will be made between tutoring and training in this chapter as was done in the preceding three.

Finally, then, what follows in this section are the author's attempts to integrate the data in such a way as to pay credence to the notions of ecology and context. An ecosystemic approach

to training can never be viewed as conclusive or implemented in any rigid manner. What needs to be kept in mind is the dominant world view of the context which one enters - of course - with one's own world view. Here then, follows a discussion on the research results. Results do not refer to any notion of captured truth. The so-called results are meant to be read as a kind of conversation that the author is having with the reader, rather than as a set of themes that the author has neatly and conclusively packaged for the reader.

On Defining Training and the Nature of Relationship Between Trainees

The notion of training is not synonymous with the notion of evaluation. A tutor may start out (understandably) with trepidation and with fear of being negatively evaluated, but in the *process* of training, all levels (students, tutors, trainers) soon realise that training is essentially about the active interchange of information, and about engagement with each other in meaningful dialogue for the purpose of self-reflection and the enhancement of the atmosphere of learning.

In addition, any feelings of fear or uncertainty about training are *distributed* amongst all the trainees and thus everyone accepts responsibility for evaluating the process of training for its effectiveness, and for suggesting improvements when necessary. Blame is a non-notion, and any attempt by one trainee to highlight the 'pathology' of another trainee is contrary to the ethos of training (as gleaned from the comments of the participants). For this reason, trainees should be encouraged during training to redistribute the problem (via the medium of conversation) amongst all participants, and in this way, allow for alternative views and news of a difference to emerge.

If training is not to be equated with evaluation, then how has it been defined? Some commentators have suggested that it be viewed as a *support group* where trainees are afforded the opportunity to re-invent and re-invigorate themselves on an ongoing basis. After all, no trainee

will ever 'arrive' as a tutor. All tutors will continue to learn and therefore need an opportunity to examine (and possibly relax) the ideas and premises that underlie their system of punctuation. A support group is one means through which to achieve this outcome.

Other commentators have proposed the idea that training is merely an occasion where an atmosphere of learning is created. This atmosphere can be enhanced if trainees embark on meaningful conversations about training and realise the importance of self-reflection. *Self-reflection* was defined as a thinking about a thing, particularly with the notion of meditation upon a previous experience or tutorial event and its significance.

If the notion of training is to be defined as either a support group or as an occasion for dialogue, then it stands to reason that trainees (taken here to include the trainer) also need to define their relationship with each other. A number of suggestions in this regard were made by the commentators and proved to be useful:

It was suggested that trainees need to understand the *aim and purpose* of training from the outset so as to obviate guess work and uncertainty, as well as to ensure that all trainees set off on a journey where the starting line is the same one for all. In addition, the contribution that the trainee will be making needs to be acknowledged. The focus of training will thus not be on the trainee's faults, but on the contribution that he or she will be making *in relationship* with others.

The *task of each trainee* is not to admonish one another for thinking something different, nor to laud one another for thinking the same. Instead, the world view of each trainee is respected. Trainees *join* with and encourage one another to develop a *curiosity* about each other's perspective, and to *compliment* one another in a way that is appropriate and affirming. The contribution of each trainee is made to count. Everyone is cued (or cues one another) to participate, even once a satisfactory enough 'answer' has been established to a burning question. More conversation and further deconstruction and reconstruction is always possible and

therefore welcomed. This is the 'true' meaning of experiential learning. In experiential learning, the here-and-now is crucial as it affords trainees the opportunity to use the principle of immediacy to construct and discuss ideas out there -- in textbooks and in their heads. All trainees are thus involved in a process of gauging, but also conveying understanding of each other's meaning system.

In conclusion, an approach to training that promotes the importance of relationships encourages *systems awareness* and is both *tutor and student centred,* for self-evaluation, as well as peer and student evaluation, are of paramount importance.

The context of training does not determine behaviour. Each trainee's behaviour is part of a sequence of behaviours or cognitions and is not caused by anything. Every trainee has a measure of free will. And every trainee is encouraged to be honest and congruent about their feedback to other trainees. They (the trainees) should not be concerned with getting everything right, nor should there be concern about rival concepts emerging during discussions, for differences of opinion between trainees are permitted, not eliminated.

This approach to training will be *outcomes-based* for it will always encourage trainees to have the experience first, and then to link the experience(s) to theory or to attempt to construct, reconstruct or deconstruct it afterwards. The process of training is one that ultimately emanates from what the trainees have given. It can never be imposed on them.

On the Most Effective Role of the Tutor

It is obvious from the above discussion that the tutor trainees' world view is affirmed and elicited by means of facilitation during the process of training. It then stands to reason that the trainee (during this process) will also need to have some idea about what it means to be a tutor.

The role of the tutor can be seen in any number of ways: lecturer, facilitator, teacher, and so on.

Most of the commentators agreed that the primary role of the tutor was *facilitation*. The task of a facilitator is to promote skills among his or her students and invite them to participate actively in the tutorial so that they (the students) are able to learn independently in a way that is both effective and efficient. In a similar way to students, trainees can also be encouraged to acquire knowledge by means of their own learning endeavours during tutor training, and to resolve conflicting options and solve problems through discussion with one another, rather than seek ready-made solutions from the so-called trainer.

A facilitator is a pro-active, committed and enthusiastic tutor who encourages all students to participate, but this does not mean that (on occasion) the tutor will not need to use other practices such as lecturing, directing or choreographing tutorial proceedings. Training will always encourage tutors to develop their facilitation skills first, and then discuss any adjunctive roles that might prove to be useful. A tutor is therefore a multi-faceted individual who is furthermore able to tailor his or her style to fit the purpose of the tutorial exercise. Training that focuses on the notion of a pliable, flexible and multiple self or tutor, will equip the tutor trainee with the necessary armamentarium of skills in relation to their role as a professional. In addition, if tutor training helps the trainee to grasp the benefits of facilitation, as well as to evaluate their repertoire of behaviour and adjust it when necessary, then he or she is likely to feel confident about his or her ability as a professional.

On the Nature and Importance of Defining a Relationship with a Class of Students

Relationships, as already mentioned, are essential instruments of tutoring and therefore the importance of discussing definitions of relationship (with a group of students this time) is of

paramount importance in the process of training. After all, the tutor and the students need to create a climate where learning can be facilitated.

First, middle and end of the year tutorials have been used in this study similarly to the notions of pre-session, mid-session and post-session in psychotherapy, in that the terms describe relationships and interactions at different points between the tutor and the students.

In the first tutorial of the year, the tutor and his or her group of students define their relationship in one or other way. One cannot *not* define a relationship. The commentators in this study have suggested that the *purpose and rationale* of a tutorial be made known from the first tutorial of the academic year as it alerts students to the fact that a tutorial is about participation and facilitation. If a relationship is defined as participatory from the word go, then the tutor and the students have a joint responsibility to be actively involved in the process of the tutorial. Tutor training can therefore help the tutor trainee to find ways to define a relationship with their students in a myriad of ways, including creative.

By the middle of the year, the tutor and the students have an *established* relationship. They know what to expect from one another, norms have been layed down and they may also have learnt to trust the process in the tutorial a little more, especially if they were feeling a little unsure to start off with. Students usually report feeling confident about participation by the middle of the year, and engage and offer their opinions on matters more readily. An established relationship does not imply that there will be no vicissitudes in the relationship, for all relationships will experience ups and downs. Instead, an established relationship refers to one that has carefully demarcated boundaries, where the participants respect one another, but also encourage one another to share ideas on topics. An established relationship has been founded on group norms, norms that were established by all the participants from the outset. Even when some students leave or others join the tutorial classes late in the year, the tutorial group regroups or informs

(through example) the new members of the code of conduct and an adjustment is achieved. Relationship numbers cannot be fixed, they will always vary and this needs to be accommodated and also addressed during tutor training.

By the time the end of the year 'looms', the tutor and the students have yet another task to tackle in terms of their relationship. They need to prepare for the coming examinations, but they also need to take leave of one another. All relationships commence, progress and *terminate*. The commentators in this study have suggested that the tutor and the students terminate in such a way that the students do not feel abandoned and the tutor does not feel as if he or she is no longer needed.

The way in which the tutor relates to his or her students *(relationship domain)*, the personal and academic growth goals toward which the tutorial is oriented *(goal orientation domain)* and the tutorial's basic structure and degree of openness to change *(system maintenance and change domain)* help construct a tutorial that functions synergistically, and this needs to be discussed during the training process:

Relationship dimensions help the tutor assess the extent to which students are involved in the tutorial, the degree to which everyone supports and helps one another, and the extent to which everyone expresses themselves freely and openly. Each tutorial has an involvement or cohesion dimension. Involvement reflects how active and energetic everyone is and cohesion reflects the extent to which the tutorial class participates and is emotionally involved with one another.

The goal orientation dimension refers to the basic goals of the tutorial, that is, the areas in which personal and academic development is emphasised. For example, attending tutorials means that you accept that the learning centre stresses the importance of facilitation, participation and growing independence in learning.

System maintenance and change dimensions refer to the extent to which the tutorial is orderly and clear in its expectations, maintains control and responds to change. The basic dimensions are order, clarity of expectations, control and innovation. For example, clarity in a tutorial refers to the extent to which students know what to expect in the tutorial programme and the explicitness of the programme's rules and procedures. It refers to the extent to which students know what to expect in their weekly classes and how explicitly rules are communicated in this regard.

These domains (defined through the tutor's relationship with his or her students) need to be addressed during tutor training, in order to help the tutor obtain a reasonably complete picture of the tutorial and the learning centre environment.

On the Need to Revise Patterns of Relationship and Patterns of Thinking

Tutors will naturally map the terrain of training with their comments, irrespective of whether the topic of discussion is on the relationship between tutor and student or on the relationship between tutor trainees. This is likely to save all trainees much time, since the nature of the trainee subsystem's organisation will give all participants the clues they need to determine which directions to go in revising patterns of relationship, as well as patterns of thinking. If trainees are encouraged to converse and to self-reflect, then it is likely that they will achieve the necessary corrections when they veer into areas (such as blame) that are indicative of linear thinking.

Trainees may (or may not) embark on the journey of training still very much embedded in their own linear thinking where blaming allows them to live in a cause-and-effect comfort zone. If they do fall prey to these epistemological errors, then attempts to revise or change this mode

of thinking and relating should be encouraged in the training process. Sometimes this change will occur naturally, as a function of dialogue, and at other times, trainees will need to be gently nudged to the stage of awareness that Bateson (1972, p.122) has termed "humility". It only becomes possible to say that humility has come about when there is no longer any person, group or etiological factor to blame or to be angry with. Still, the shift to an ecosystemic epistemology during tutor training will not be easy. Recognition of *epistemological errors* often come in retrospect, and trainees' mode of thinking may remain lodged in a first-order cybernetic stance where they believe themselves to be the agents of tutorial power and control. Once trainees relinquish (revise or change or relax) an adherence to their own myths of power as tutors, then they may emerge as co-creators, allowing ecologies of ideas to emerge freely during training and during their tutorials.

On Creating an Open Training System

The commentators regularly refer to an *open training system* where information, feedback or comments must be allowed to enter and exit the training system. Of paramount importance here is their emphasis on the much needed presence of multiple role players, who bring with them a multitude of comments and hypotheses. These multiple realities are essential because (according to ecosystemic theory) there is no such thing as truth. Each role player will thus be invited to the debate during training, but it will be up to the individual trainee to ultimately evaluate the quality of the input constructively and use it (or not) to shape a context for future debate, goals and activity. An open system respects both the autonomy of the individual and the training ecosystem as a whole.

The training system has (as a whole) a greater impact than the simple sum of individual

contributions, and therefore some attempt at synthesis must be attempted during training. All the contributions will need to be tallied in an attempt to understand the partial information generated from the analysis of each individual, role player or subsystem, as is being currently done in this very chapter. In a similar way to training and to this research, the tutor will not be encouraged to carve up the syllabus he or she is teaching into part-wholes, but to attempt to give his or her students an appreciation for the whole syllabus as well.

An open training system has an exchange of input between itself and its surroundings. This input or these resources may be information, discussion or energy. When these resources enter the training system, it will undergo a *transformation* of some sort, and then leave the training system as output.

In conclusion, as an open system, the training ecosystem represents various functioning units (role players) that interact with external influences (learning centre, the university proper) as well as with each other. Input will come from both external and internal sources to affect the training system. Next, because the training system is *synergistic*, the sum of the independent effects of the various functioning role players, is less than their combined effect. Therefore, an understanding of components of training, in terms of their place in the larger system, is necessary in order to understand their individual functioning.

Finally, *equifinality* refers to the preferred state toward which the training system will function. This final state is one of congruence between the individual trainee and the environment of training. In order to achieve congruence, negative and positive feedback loops need to regulate the processes of training. The negative loops will stabilise the system when it is congruent and the positive loops will change the system when it needs to move from incongruence to a more congruent state. Hence, the training ecosystem functions as an open, synergistic pattern of action that continually moves toward a state of congruence and optimal functioning.

On Symptoms or Problems as Metaphors of Relationship

The commentators regularly refer to the importance of an open training system in their commentary, but an open system is not necessarily *problem or symptom* free. The various commentators had different ideas on the meaning of a problem or a symptom:

Some commentators felt that symptoms (such as anxiety and nervousness around evaluation) served to highlight constraints in relationships, which needed to be reframed positively during the process of training. Problems or symptoms were thus *seen to be metaphors* of, for and about relationships. Concepts such as anxiety and defensiveness cannot be reified. The commentators felt that these concepts needed to be discussed in context, and the fit between the participants in the training system needed to be examined if circular patterns of cybernetic feedback (necessary to understanding the whole training system) were to emerge or be discerned.

Other commentators saw problems merely as being *invitations* from the trainee to other trainees for help. The emergence of a problem was not seen to be a negative thing in any way. Rather, it was seen as *an affirmation*, that is, tutor training was necessary.

Yet other commentators saw the emergence of problems or complaints about tutoring and training as an *opportunity* for trainees to engage with one another around their problems in order to discover positive or different meaning, one that was possibly present all along. These commentators felt that trainees should be encouraged to examine their *dominant* stories and to try to allow *subjugated* or alternate ones to emerge. They seem to be suggesting that alternate stories and different ways of viewing a problem or a symptom are sometimes obscured by trainees' dominant story. If this (obscurity) occurs, then a so-called standstill (training) system may have been created, where problem patterns recur in an ever increasing cycle of redundancy.

The commentators in this study did not only offer their understanding of problems or

symptoms, but they also made suggestions about how these can be managed during training:

Apart from identifying trainees' dominant stories and encouraging the emergence of subjugated ones, the commentators also suggested that the training system use various techniques, one being *externalisation*. Externalisation is a term that implies that the trainee can be separated from his or her problem or symptom. Rather than viewing themselves as inadequate, for example, trainees might discuss the times when inadequacy 'takes control' of them. By externalising the problem or the symptom, the trainee stops viewing him or herself as existing in a *stable* state of inadequacy. This then enables him or her to discover times when he or she has fought off these feelings.

To sum up: Commentators refer to trainees jointly developing an alternate view of problems when they occur. As they develop new meanings, trainees also develop new ways of resolving their problems. This process is *co-constructed* as it is jointly established between trainees, and not introduced by the appointed 'trainer' in order to bring about change. The problem or symptom is furthermore not in some spatially defined, out-there unit. From the perspective of the commentators, problems are not entities, but ideas (with accompanying qualifying actions) by everyone who is involved in training.

It is important to note that the commentators do not imply that the training system creates the problem, but that the problem creates the system. The training system is thus not defined exclusively by the fact that there is consensus around a problem or its solution. On the contrary, each trainee has his or her definition and linguistic reality of the problem. There may be consensus among some trainees, but not among all. This type of training system is thus an idea. It is a transient system that dissolves once its members believe that there is no longer a problem.

On Suggestions, not Prescriptions

The findings in the analysis of data reflect an ecosystemic, postmodern philosophy where a collaborative conversation, emphasising the important role of dialogue and suggestion, is highlighted. A suggestion is *not viewed as a prescription by the commentators.* The commentators seem to be saying that a suggestion means that the tutor trainee is aware that truth is multi-dimensional, and that any suggestion made, is merely one among many other possible suggestions. A prescription on the other hand, seems to imply something different: that one trainee has 'captured' the truth, and that his or her prescription should be implemented *as if* it is the only (correct) one.

In an ecosystemic approach to training, no-one will prescribe to anyone else, as the stance of the trainee is one of not knowing, such that he or she does not have access to the best information, but accepts the randomness of unique human experience, is receptive to being informed by other trainees, and gives primacy to the importance of everyone's voice.

On Morphostasis and Morphogenesis

Aside from an emphasis on co-construction and the role of suggestion in training, the commentators have emphasised the importance of addressing the role of pattern, structure, regularity and constancy, known as *morphostasis*, as well as change and variety, known as *morphogenesis.*

The commentators suggest that any living system, that is, any self-maintaining entity, depends on two processes. One is morphostasis, which means that the training system must maintain constancy in the face of environmental changes. The other process is morphogenesis,

which means that, at times, the training system must change its basic structure.

The commentators' point of departure is that trainees could start off the training process with some structure or idea about how to proceed, and then build in more and more structure as the process unfolds, rather than the other way around. (They also allude to the benefits of proceeding in this manner in tutorials.) The commentators seem to feel that too little structure in training is as detrimental as too much. In the former case, training might have little aim or focus and in the latter case, too much constraint or negentrophy (maximum order), will 'kill' the process. This is why the commentators feel there must always be some sources of mechanism for variety, to act as a potential tool of adaptive variability, to meet the problem of mapping new (or more detailed) variety.

One example of variety was the commentators' emphasis on the notion of *diversity*, that is, that trainees should guard against lapsing into self-reinforcing, homeostatic or redundant cycles of interaction. Instead, by enhancing the atmosphere of training with 'this, then that, then this and that', trainees have the opportunity to shift to meet new circumstances. Put differently, they are able to find new avenues to excite themselves during training or to give new impetus to their ideas. It is important to note here that the commentators do not seem to be saying that there will be processes that will create, regulate or maintain the training system. Instead, all behaviours of the training system will derive from the interaction between the participants. Ideas such as homeostasis are merely a commentator's description of the functioning of the training system.

Morphostatic and morphogenetic processes, then, are not operational phenomena taking place in the actual interactions of the trainees. They are merely descriptions of the course of these interactions, made by the commentators. Morphostatic processes are described as conservative and are seen to promote the status quo. And morphogenetic processes are seen as radical processes that promote newness. The commentators feel strongly that it is possible to have both

these processes counterbalancing one another.

On the Outcomes of Training

The commentators do not make any suggestions about how to predict outcomes from the interplay of morphostatic and morphogenetic processes. They leave us merely with the idea that the process of training (and therefore the outcome) emanates from what the trainees give.

Instead of a static, stable state, the training system evolves in its attempt to maintain its preferred state. *Equifinality* is the concept developed to describe this evolutionary process. Outcomes are therefore not continuous, but discontinuous. Order emerges from chaos, outcomes emerge from the process. This shift indicates that the outcomes (for there is no one outcome) can be sudden, and therefore even irreversible or random. This is the *evolutionary* model of change, rather than the stepwise one.

Conclusion

The commentators have made an invaluable contribution toward the study of an approach to tutor training. They have emphasised the importance of defining relationships, and have constructed the meaning of training in a deep way. They have also addressed the need to revise definitions of any nature, and to resolve problems and symptoms through dialogue. In addition, they have defined an open training system, one characterised by negative and positive feedback loops, as well as one that respects the idea that outcomes cannot be predicted. They can only evolve from the process.

The thesis itself is at this very point, the point where the final chapter has evolved from the process of writing, thinking and analysing. The author had some idea at the beginning of her study about how it would unfold. But she did not predict what did emerge eventually. This inability to predict the 'outcome' did not create apprehension in the author. It merely created excitement. The time has now come to evaluate and conclude this study, with the realisation (on the part of the author) that endings are not static. They inevitably lead to new, somewhat unpredictable, beginnings.

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION

Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the present study will be evaluated in terms of its strengths and limitations and recommendations for future research will be proposed. Thereafter, the proposed tutor training package will be mentioned. Finally, the author will close with her final words.

Evaluation of the Study

The research aim was to generate as many comments (from as many perspectives) in response to video footage of tutorial classes, in order to inform the thinking of those interested in an approach to tutor training. It is believed that this task was executed in a satisfactory manner, as the comments and ideas that were offered by the commentators, has provided the research with rich and complex description. The research attempted to generate valuable information on tutor training, but readers have also been given the opportunity to read and assess all the transcribed material for themselves. The material in question is in the appendices of this study, and readers are encouraged to examine the material from their own perspective, especially if they wish to add more complexity and diverse description to the subject at hand.

Once the video and audio material was transcribed and analysed from a (largely) ecosystemic perspective, an attempt was made to synthesise the data into a coherent discussion.

The initial (albeit abstract) aim of this study was to generate as much conversation on the subject of tutor training. Although this was initially an abstract notion, it was nevertheless easily

achieved in practice. This study not only contains debates on and within debates (such as Chapter 2), but has even attempted to synthesise the data (Chapter 10) in such a way that the author is seen to be discussing and analysing (with the reader) the conversations of others. In addition, supervision with the promoter was also conducted as a conversation between supervisee and promoter. The entire study is thus a meta, multi-level echo of voices and has been enormously exciting for this very reason. The author feels that the voices of the participants are clear. At no point have these voices mixed and mingled with the voices of others to produce a senseless noise. The 'noise' was always meaningful and created many a stir of excitement (and appreciation) in the author.

No deliberate attempt was made by the author to carve the comments from participants into good or bad, helpful or unhelpful comments. This was not anticipated to happen as the author did expect to find more helpful and less helpful comments. What happened instead was that the author immersed herself deeply into the world view of the commentators, and found that most commentators had valid comments to make. They also imparted their comments in a focused and professional manner, befitting their diverse roles.

In conclusion, the information generated as a whole has been extremely valuable and could serve as a further guideline to those working at open learning institutions.

Strengths of the Study

This study took context into account, and more importantly, the educational context of UNISA. In addition, the ideas and conversations generated were rooted in the context of relationships, which are governed by the important principles of pattern, relation and interaction. The comments that were generated are not ossified in the sense that they will never change even

if the professional relationships do with the passage of time. Rather, the comments served to highlight that linguistic realities are created, and can therefore not exist in any fixed or objective sense. They belong in a specific context and the author must invite as many commentators to participate as possible. In this way, more pieces of the systemic whole are generated, and this creates possibilities for 'news of a difference' or alternative (yet complementary) discussions on the meaning of tutoring and tutor training, to emerge.

The author acknowledges that she has described the system of training both from within the system and from above it. This tendency (as participant-observer) to move in and out recognises that its view is based on a study of the part, which is recursively linked to the whole. Unlike inward oriented systems, which view part-systems as black boxes that can be observed solely from the outside, the language oriented system employed in this study brought the author into the system as well, prohibiting any disconnection between the author-commentator circuit.

Language is an epistemological knife. Keeney (1983) explains that it not only slices the world into bits and pieces, but it also provides names for things that do not really exist. The cybernetic epistemology in this study has therefore attempted to draw a pattern of recursion though both sides of countless distinctions, be it the distinction between the author and the commentators or the distinction between change and stability. In addition, the array of comments have been used as a way of building double description. By transferring comments onto paper, contexts are created and contexts provide meaning and structure for all the participants. Ancis (1999) points out that research can be seen as a conversation and should therefore not be statically reified, but that commentary, ideation and language should be viewed as essential means to exploring psychological experiences.

This study provided *an* approach to tutor training. It makes no claim to providing *the* approach to tutor training. Truth is heuristic and this sums up what was attempted in this study.

From this viewpoint, one goes in search of many perspectives, and no single perspective is considered more correct or more valid than another. This approach (where a whole host of realities co-exist) has enriched the study and our knowledge on the subject in question.

In qualitative research, the purpose of the study is made known to the participants (where possible) from the outset, unlike in the positivist-empirical tradition, where participants are usually debriefed after the study has been concluded.

In this study the author joined with, respected and valued her relationship with the commentators, and they have been acknowledged for their expertise. The author was also subjectively involved with the participants and did not assume the stance of objectivity. This is a rather humble approach, as the author acknowledges that she is part of the research and not apart from it in the sense that power brokers are apart from their research, in that they speak of their power and control when describing their relationship with their research subjects. The author is not playing a game of intellectual semantics here in her criticism of the word 'power'. She truly believes that there is no such thing. After all, the researcher 'in power' depends on his or her research participants for generating information, and cannot be seen to cause things to happen. Essentially, what is being criticised and objected to here is not so much the 'reality' of power, but the consequences of a habit of punctuating the world in terms of this notion. The alternative is to not punctuate the world of human relationship in terms of power. The author has therefore replaced the notions of power and control with the ecological metaphor, 'part in an ecosystem'. A crucial individual in a system (such as the author) is always part of the research system, and is therefore subject to all the limitations and necessities of the particular part-whole relationship in which he or she exists.

Reliability and validity, as conceptualised in terms of qualitative research and as outlined in preceding chapters, was achieved in this study. In terms of reliability, the educational context

was explained. The author furthermore disclosed her orientation, her internal processes and the manner in which she was going to engage with, analyse and integrate the study material.

Validity was achieved by employing multiple data sources, and by means of the data collection method, which included audio and video recorded footage. Second, the use of ecosystemic theory was coherent with the belief that reality is constructed and with the methodology of discovering meaning through language (commentary). Third, this study succeeded in enriching the world of tutor training and extending the understanding of the readers on the subject. In the end, new meanings were created and the author's own ideas (reflexive validity) were enriched as she interacted with the text and the video and audio footage.

In general, the author increased her awareness of systems and moved away from the rather simplistic notion that tutoring and training is only centred on the student.

Limitations of the Study

Many varied and diverse comments have been articulated by the author and the commentators, but these are not the only comments that could be made. Countless others, which this study was unable to "capture", are possible. The author is thus aware that her mind (albeit not always consciously), at times, selected some data and selectively omitted other data, because she had identified certain ideas that she was looking to confirm and have validated. The author's conceptual framework (namely ecosystemic epistemology) determined such crucial factors as who was selected to participate in the study, how the study was formulated and what interventions were made. Any frame of reference, albeit essential, always involves one or other limitation on a study, as frame's of reference are nothing more than conceptual grids or filters through which studies are interpreted.

This study (by virtue of the fact that is falls under the rubric of qualitative research) was both time and labour intensive. It was therefore not feasible to use a very large sample of participants, and only three tutorial examples were studied intensely. The study thus gained validity at the expense of generalisability.

A further limitation is that the commentaries elicited in this study were sometimes very subjective. Keeney (1983) warns against taking the notion of the observing system too far, such that the validity of the research suffers in that, what is produced, tells more about the observer than the observed. It was therefore considered important to include both description and explanation in this study, so as to ensure a purer form of description. Zeleny (1998) points out that if one includes the italic speech of the observed, then one can maximise explanations.

Further research, according to Zeleny (1998), needs to explore such issues as whether one can truly speak of the notion of co-research (meaning participants are co-researchers) or not, given the numerous and current debates on the notion of a power differential between authors and the researched. This was not debated (only mentioned) at any great length in this dissertation.

Finally, this study has examined and proposed ideas about an approach to training. It did not *actually* implement these ideas in order to get feedback from the trainees in this regard. Its usefulness and feasibility can therefore only truly be evaluated once it will be implemented.

Despite these limitations, the focus of the dissertation was on the creation of a context that would elicit meaningful comments around the educational experience of tutor training and its complexities. It is hoped that the variety of comments that were elicited, not only serve to arouse the imagination of the reader, but that it will also be of use to academics and educators in the field of open learning.

Recommendations for Future Research

Due to the numerous and varied problems in the educational system, future research in South Africa could investigate (more fully) the role and merits of experiential learning and outcomes-based education, as it has proved very useful in this study.

The experiences of the learner and those imparting knowledge to learners should be studied in depth in order to assess whether or not the service that is being received by learners and by trainees is a quality service. Other educational contexts (schools, technical colleges and residential tertiary institutions) could also be studied so as to contribute to the topic of training as a whole.

It would be interesting to find out whether the ideas generated by this author find credence with the work conducted by others, especially those from different educational contexts. In addition, a larger sample of trainees would increase the ability of authors to generalise their findings.

Towards the Future

One way in which this study has borne fruits is that it will inform the thinking of the academic tutor coordinator at the Department of Psychology (also the promoter of this study) to put together a tutor training package for all tutors in the tutorial programme at UNISA.

It is anticipated that the package will contain a workbook as well as a video. This package will not only be informed from the work conducted in this thesis. In addition to the results of this thesis, the input of all concerned in the tutorial programme will be collated or synthesised, and it is hoped that the package will spur other departments (aside from psychology) to adapt the

package to suit their particular needs. In this way, all tutors, from all disciplines, will have the opportunity to dialogue with one another (both inter and intra departmentally) around the notion of training.

The tutor training package is not an end product in and of itself. It is merely another means (a stimulus) to elicit further discussion on tutor training, and is likely to lead to other (as yet unpredictable) ideas and research.

Concluding the Loop

Death, concluding remarks and other kinds of endings confound the author with its timing and its apparent disregard of her feelings around finality. How then to evaluate the good and the bad of it all from a more personal point of view? The only effective way for the author to be initiated is to *join* the procession, and not excuse herself from the rite of evaluation. To resist the need to assess the good and the bad is to excuse herself from the farewell ritual, and farewells have long been a part of her landscape. They will not be ignored. This is what there is to say then: There is nothing wrong with the realisation that the author has had both a torrid and a fabulous time with this thesis, writing, re-writing it, neglecting it, nurturing it. There is also nothing amiss with the realisation that all did not go as planned. And there is no sense of despair around the fact that this piece of work cannot be timeless.

The proneness to 'decay' of all that is worthwhile can, as we know (from Freud's work on transience), give rise to two different impulses in the mind. The one leads to an aching despondency, while the other leads to rebellion against the fact asserted. Yet there is a third option, namely, to respond to the grace of relationship and to give thanks:

The author personally knows gratitude best in the mixed feelings that rush upon her in a

moment with her significant others, when she is feeling the bliss of their presence, and at the same moment (and because of that bliss), she fears for their safety and hopes never to lose them.

The author's relationship with all involved in this study is not only about the people who interacted with her and with one another. Every relationship, from the formality of supervision, to the relative informality with coworkers, was an entanglement for which the author is grateful.

In addition, the author is grateful for the struggle and for the anxiety experienced in relation to writing the thesis. The struggle is in evidence every time she repeated an idea (tautology), as if she was anxious (and she was!) to grasp an idea or theory, and to make sure that it would be conveyed clearly to the reader. The author opted not to hide the evidence of a struggle, as it is not something to be ashamed of. Instead, it is something to be grateful for. From adversity comes strength, and usually an appreciation for life, especially at those times when the road is (mercifully) less bumpy.

If it is at all possible to find 'the whole world in a grain of sand', then the author found sustenance at a small point in life where her destiny crossed (and her soul intermingled) with the destiny and soul of countless others.

In an attempt, then, to conclude the loop and to give the reader a sense of recursiveness, the author chooses to end with the exact same quote from Packer and Addison (1989, p.291) that was offered in the introduction of this study, for endings are merely beginnings, and all beginnings carry the implication of an ending:

> Only in this century has there been a greater recognition that the search for epistemological security can never succeed. This suggests that we would be better employed working to open up *new* perspectives, rather than trying to justify whatever perspectives we currently hold .... We should, perhaps, be attempting to *in*validate our

own interpretations; to look for the cracks in their apparently polished surfaces ... (we should all be) ..... required to spend time debunking our own perspectives, pointing out their flaws and shortcomings; documenting the anomalies and oddities that remain puzzling and unexplained, the fish that have escaped our nets. These things waken us in the small hours to a recognition that, even as psychologists, there is much about people we still can't give a name to.

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APPENDIX 1

TUTOR CONTRACT
(see overleaf)
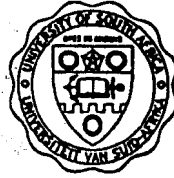
UNISA

In the agreement entered into

between

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA
(hereinafter referred to as UNISA)

and

....
(hereinafter referred to as the Tutor)

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Agreement entered into between

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA
(hereinafter referred to as Unisa)

and

. . . .

(hereinafter referred to as the Tutor)

The parties agree as follows:

1.   **PURPOSE**

1.1   The purpose of this Agreement is to regulate all relevant matters pertaining to the relationship between Unisa and the Tutor.

2.   **CONTRACT PERIOD**

2.1   The contract period shall, subject to the provisions of this Agreement, commence on .... and shall terminate on ....

3.   **DUTIES/SERVICES**

3.1   The Tutor agrees to render specialised services, as specified in Annexure A, attached hereto which Annexure forms an integral part of this agreement.

3.2   Without derogating from the specific undertakings contained in Annexure A, the Tutor agrees to:

3.2.1   present face-to-face tutorial sessions in a facilitative manner, four (4) times per month (per course) in respect of the following (course/s) ...., ..., ... with the understanding that each tutorial session shall be a minimum of one (1) hour duration.

or

2 (two) times per month (per course) in respect of the following (course(s)) ...., ..., ..., with the understanding that each tutorial session shall be a minimum of 2 (two) hours; The tutorials will take place at dates, times and places to be determined by Unisa.

3.2.2   attend tutor meetings as and when requested by the University;

3.2.3   attend development/training sessions by the academic department concerned and/or the Department of Student Support;

3.2.4   liaise with the academic department concerned on a regular basis when and as specified by the academic department concerned;

3.2.5   liaise with the relevant Learning Centre of the Department of Student Support on a regular basis in respect of the administrative duties set out in Annexure B attached hereto.

3.3   A Tutor's performance may be assessed by the academic department concerned and/or the Manager of the relevant Learning Centre of the Department of Student Support for quality assurance and control purposes.

3.4   Should a Tutor not be able to attend a scheduled tutorial session due to illness

etc., the Tutor shall not be entitled to receive any renumeration for the said tutorial.

4. RENUMERATION AND RELATED ISSUES

4.1 Unisa shall in respect of the aforementioned services pay the Tutor:

4.1.1 One Hundred and Fifty Rand (R150,00) per one (1) hour tutorial session or Three Hundred Rand (R300,00) per two (2) hours tutorial session. This amount shall be deemed to be full payment in respect of the preparations as well as presentation of the tutorial session.

4.2 The abovementioned amounts shall be payable as follows:

4.2.1 The Tutor shall sign the prescribed attendance register or time sheet during each tutorial session available at the .... Learning Centre. If abovementioned is not adhered to it will result in non-payment of your claim.

5. RELATIONSHIP

5.1 It is agreed that the Tutor is not an employee of Unisa and that the Unisa standard terms and conditions of employment shall not be applicable to the Tutor.

5.2 The Agreement terminates on the date specified in clause 2.1 above and no party shall have the right to claim a renewal of the Agreement on the same or other terms.

6 TERMINATION

6.1 This contract shall terminate automatically at the end of the contract period set out in paragraph 2, or if the Tutor fails to attend two (2) consecutive tutorial sessions and/or meetings held in terms of paragraphs 3.2.2 or 3.2.3, without giving notice of such absence to the Learning Centre staff; the Tutor

has no right to enter into a further contract with Unisa and has no expectation of entering into any further contract with Unisa:

6.2   Notwithstanding paragraph 6.1, should the Tutor breach any term of this Agreement, Unisa may, at its election:

6.2.1   Inform the Tutor in writing of the breach and require the Tutor to rectify such breach within 7 days of the receipt of such notice; should the Tutor fail to rectify such breach within 7 days, Unisa shall have the right to terminate this contract with immediate effect by giving written notice of such termination;

6.2.2   Terminate the contract summarily by giving written notice of such termination to the Tutor.

6.3   If the period of the contract referred to in paragraph 2 is longer than 3 months, this contract can be terminated by either party giving the other party two (2) weeks notice of termination.

6.4   In the case where the number of students enrolled for tutoring for a specific course falls below fifteen (15) on one or more occasions; Unisa at its sole discretion may cancel this Agreement.

6.5   No provision in this Agreement shall limit either party's right to cancel this Agreement for any reason whatsoever and in such a manner as recognised by law to be sufficient.

7.   UNISA PROPERTY

7.1   All study materials, text books and Tutor Resource Files issued by Unisa to Tutors remain the property of Unisa and must be returned to Unisa prior to the termination of this agreement.

7.2   The Tutor may, with the consent of the Learning Centre or Relevant Academic Department take out on loan other Unisa property, provided that this property is used in the normal execution of the Tutor's services and provided that the necessary administrative requirements are met.

Such a loan will be subject to such conditions as Unisa may set and shall be returned to Unisa prior to the termination of this Agreement, or earlier, at Unisa's request.

7.3   The Tutor shall take proper care of Unisa property in the Tutor's possession or otherwise used by the Tutor. Should the Tutor lose such property, should the property be damaged due to the fault of the Tutor, or should the Tutor fail to return the property in good order in terms of clauses 7.1 or 7.2, the Tutor shall be liable for the replacement or repair of such property. The cost incurred by Unisa in replacing or repairing such property may be deducted from any monies owed to the Tutor by Unisa.

8   INCOME TAX

Any money payable in terms of this Contract shall be subject to the deduction of Income Tax in accordance with existing Treasury Regulations unless the Tutor provides the University with a Tax Exemption Certificate of a Tax Directive by the Receiver of Revenue.

9.   GENERAL

9.1   Any condonation by either party of any breach, failure or any default in performance by the other party, and any failure, refusal or neglect by either party to exercise any right hereunder or to insist upon strict compliance with or performance of the other party's obligations under this Agreement, shall not constitute a waiver of the provisions of this Agreement and either party may at any time require strict compliance with the provisions of this contract.

9.2 This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties who acknowledge that there are no other oral or written understandings or agreements between them relating to the subject matter of this Agreement. No amendment, consensual cancellation or other modification of this Agreement shall be valid or binding on either party hereto unless reduced to writing signed and dated by both parties hereto.

9.3 This Agreement shall be governed in accordance with the law of the Republic of South Africa.

9.4 All the provisions of this Agreement shall be severable and no provisions shall be affected by the invalidity of any other provision of this Agreement.

9.5 The parties acknowledge that they have entered into this Agreement after making independent investigations and that neither party has made any representations or given any warranties other than have been set out in this Agreement.

9.6 The rules and regulations of Unisa, including specific regulations regarding the use of Unisa premises and lecture halls, should be adhered to.

10. DOMICILIA AND NOTICES

10.1 For the purpose of this Agreement, including the giving of notices and the serving of legal process, the University and the Tutor choose as their domicilia citandi et executandi as follows:

University of South Africa
Preller Street
Muckleneuk Ridge
PRETORIA, 0003

The Tutor

Postal Address: ....

....

..........................Code ....

(............) .... (w)

(............) .... (h)

10.2   Any change in respect of a party's domicilum will be communicated to the other party in writing and such change shall only take effect on the seventh(7th) day after receipt of the notice in writing.

SIGNED AT PRETORIA this   day of   2000

_____   AS WITNESSES: _____

On behalf of the University   _____

_____   AS WITNESSES: _____

The Tutor   _____

TUTOR SERVICES

Tutor services include the following:

1.   Subject/Course Facilitation Role

As subject specialists, tutors help learners in a variety of ways to understand their course material to acquire the knowledge skills and attitudes necessary in their fields of study. The tutor's assistance is determined and confined by the mode of delivery, namely, the distance education study package. The tutor's role in face-to-face tutorials is therefore more **facilitative** than **didactic**, and entails encouraging dialogue between tutors and students, among students, and between students and the academic and administrative structures of UNISA.

In this facilitative role, the tutor, in conjunction with and guided by the expectations of the respective academic departments, complements the learning material by

-    developing confidence on the part of students to interact with the learning material so that they are able to develop skills which will enable them to learn independently;
-    assisting students to interact with and understand the key issues and problematic sections of the course as well as the overall themes;
-    encouraging students participation in tutorials, through the formation of study groups and an appreciation of the value thereof.

In order to achieve the above objectives it is necessary that the tutor
-    be well qualified in the subject which he/she tutors; hence a basic degree and/or a postgraduate qualification in the particular field is a prerequisite;
-    have a sound knowledge of the course content; and of the didactic processes and academic expectations upon which the material is based;
-    display good communication skills;

be committed to preparing adequately so that the tutorials are well structured, and well delivered in the available time prescribed.

The Tutor should, through the tutorials, empower students to be independent and autonomous learners.

2. Counselling Role

In comparison with the subject specific role mentioned above, the counselling role of tutors is more general in nature. The counselling role is concerned with the identification of more general problems of learners, with finding ways of solving these problems, and with assisting learners to develop the necessary learning skills which will make them autonomous.

3. Administrative Role

The administrative role of tutors entails to ensuring the efficient delivery and monitoring of tutorial support through up-to-date and correct record keeping, and through communication with students. This involves liaison with the Learning Centre staff, with the central administration and with academic departments in

- organising the Tutorial Group
- confirming of tutorial times;
- monitoring student attendance and ensuring that the tutorial attendance register has been collected and signed by students;
- endorsing the tutorial attendance schedule by signing and dating it;
- facilitating tutor payment by completing the tutor register

The three roles of the tutor hopefully highlight the importance of tutorial intervention in the study package. It must, however, be emphasised that the face-to-face tutorial is not a didactic lecture. Rather it is a facilitative process which is planned as part of UNISA's way of supporting its learners to understand what is being taught, thereby developing independent learning and ensuring successful learning.

ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE OF A TUTOR

1. To facilitate the smooth administration of tutorials, the tutor agrees to:
    - Report to the Learning Centre Administrative Office at least 30 minutes before the beginning of the scheduled tutorial session.
    - Register for the delivery of the tutorial.
    - Collect the class/tutorial attendance register.
    - Confirm the venue of the tutorial session.
    - Monitor the attendance.
    - Ensure the circulation and signing of the register by the students assigned to the tutor.
    - Ensure the return of the endorsed (by tutor) attendance register to the appropriate office.

2. To facilitate tutor payment process by:
    - Collecting and filling in the prescribed form, as proof of delivery of tutorials;
    - Ensure that the monthly tutor claim forms have been submitted before the due date as stipulated by the Learning Centre.

3. In the event of the tutor being unable to attend a particular session, the tutor agrees to communicate with the Learning Centre Coordination staff 48 hours before the specific scheduled tutorial.

4. The Learning Centre Manager shall ensure the following:
    - Ensure the circulation of the class schedule to the tutors in accordance to the number of students
    - Ensure that all appropriate forms needed by the tutors are available 30 minutes before the beginning of all scheduled tutorials.
    - Monitor the collection/return of the appropriate form.
    - Ensure the completion and delivery of the following to the Department of Student Support (Pretoria):
        - Composite summary of tutor claims
        - Individual tutor claims
        - Attendance lists (as proof of tutorial delivered)
        - The above to reach the Department of Student Support not later than the 20th of each month

APPENDIX 2

EXAMPLE OF AN ACCEPTANCE LETTER
(see overleaf)

University of South Africa

Department of Student Support

HARMONY BUILDING, PO BOX 392, PRETORIA, 0003 • ☎ (012) 429-8574
Fax: (012) 429-8576 • email: masalmc@alpha.unisa.ac.za

THUTONG
LEARNING CENTRE

ACCEPTANCE LETTER

THUTONG LEARNING CENTRE

PERSONAL INFORMATION	
Title & Surname:	
Full names:	
Initials:	
Identity number:	
☎ Work:	
☎ Home:	
Address:	
	Code:

BANKING DETAILS (To facilitate Electronic Payment)	
Name of Bank / Building Society:	
Bank Account Number:	
Type of Account:	
Name of Branch:	
Branch Code:	

I, the undersigned wish to accept your offer of appointment / do not accept the appointment.

Please sign on the applicable line.

Signature: _____ (Accept)   Date: 1999 / ___ / ___

Signature: _____ (Do not accept) Date: 1999 / ___ / ___

APPENDIX 3

TUTOR EVALUATION AND TUTOR SELF-EVALUATION FORMS
(see overleaf)

UNISA LEARNING CENTRES

TUTOR EVALUATION FORM

Learning Centre ....

Name of tutor: ....   Date:...

Course / Paper: ....

This evaluation form is anonymous - please be honest when you answer. Any constructive criticism is most welcome. Please rate your tutor on the following aspects by placing a cross in the appropriate box.

1.   Was the tutor always on time for tutorials? How would you rate the tutor's punctuality?

1.1   ☐   The tutor was late almost every week.

1.2   ☐   The tutor was late only on a few occasions.

1.3   ☐   The tutor was always on time.

2.   Was the tutor absent from tutorials without prior notice? How would you rate the tutor's attendance?

2.1   ☐   The tutor was absent on many occasions.

2.2   ☐   The tutor was only absent on a few occasions.

2.3   ☐   The tutor was never absent without prior notice.

3.   How did the tutor run tutorials?

3.1   ☐   Lecture.

3.2   ☐   Allocate tasks to students for presentations.

3.3   ☐   Allow group participation in class.

4.   Was the tutor able to explain concepts in a clear and meaningful way? How would you rate the tutor's way of explaining the course content?

4.1   ☐   Very difficult to understand and not very clear.

4.2   ☐   Easy to understand, clear and meaningful.

Please turn over and complete page 2.

5. How would you rate the quality of the tutorial?

5.1 ☐ Not so helpful.

5.2 ☐ Helpful.

5.3 ☐ Very helpful.

Please give reasons for your answer.

....
....
....
....

6. What is your overall impression of the tutor?

....
....
....
....
....

7. Would you recommend the tutor for 2000? Please motivate you answer.

Yes ☐   No ☐

....
....
....
....
....
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THUTONG LEARNING CENTRE   TUTOR QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: ....

SUBJECT/MODULE/S TUTORING: ....

1. How long have you been a tutor at UNISA?   Years [   ]   months [   ]

REGARDING YOUR EXPECTATIONS

2. As a tutor at this Learning Centre what are your expectations regarding:
a) Students?
✿ ....
✿ ....
✿ ....
b) Academics?
✿ ....
✿ ....
✿ ....
c) Learning Centre staff?
✿ ....
✿ ....
✿ ....

3. Since you started this year, to what extent do you think those expectations are met by:
a) Students
❀ ....
❀ ....
❀ ....
b) Academics
❀ ....
❀ ....
❀ ....
c) Learning Centre staff
❀ ....
❀ ....
❀ ....

4. What successes do you think you have achieved by being a tutor at this centre?
★ ....
★ ....
★ ....

5.   What are your biggest problems and how have you tried to resolve them?

Problems	Solutions

REGARDING YOUR TUTORING STRATEGIES

6.   What are your usual ways of conducting the tutorial/s ?(in percentages)

Lecturing   [   ]   Facilitation   [   ]

Question and answer   [   ]   Problem solving   [   ]

Brain storming   [   ]   Group work   [   ]

7.   Why do you prefer to conduct tutorials in this manner ?

❖ ....

❖ ....

❖ ....

8.   What style of tutoring do you think is best preferred by your learners?

∗ ....

∗ ....

∗ ....

8.1   What could be the reason for this preference?

❖ ....

❖ ....

❖ ....

REGARDING TUTORIAL ATTENDANCE

9 .   Have you encountered any problems during tutorials relating to:

student participation   [   ]   students coming late   [   ]

inadequate preparations   [   ]   student absenteeism   [   ]

Other: please give a brief explanation

❂ ....

❂ ....

❂ ....

10. How have you tried to solve these problems ?

Problems	Solutions
Student participation	....
Students coming late	....
Inadequate preparations	....
Student absenteeism	....
Other	....

REGARDING SUPPORT FOR TUTORING

11. What support have you received from the Learning Centre to ensure effective tutoring?

☻ ....

☻ ....

☻ ....

12. What suggestions do you have to make students attend and more regularly?

◙ ....

◙ ....

◙ ....

13. Have you personally developed and followed a tutorial year-plan?

Yes   [ ]   no   [ ]

If yes, have you shared your tutorial year-plan with your students?

Yes   [ ]   no   [ ]

if no,   please give reasons

✦ ....

✦ ....

✦ ....

14. Do your students contact you outside the tutorials?

Yes [ ]   no   [ ]

REGARDING YOURSELF

15. Are you punctual, and do you attend tutorials regularly

Punctual: Yes [ ] , No [ ]   Attend regularly: Yes [ ] No [ ]

If no, please give reasons:

O   ....
O   ....
O   ....

16. Do you read notices on notice board and notices placed in your timesheet pouch?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If no, please give reasons:

O   ....
O   ....
O   ....

17. Are Centre meetings important to you? Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If no, please give reasons:

O   ....
O   ....

18. This year 5 meeting were scheduled. How many did you attend?

1	2	3	4	5	None

If you've ticked 1,2 or none -   what are the reasons for not attending?

O   ....
O   ....

19. Are you available to tutor next year?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

If no, please give reasons:

O   ....
O   ....

20. Any general comments/suggestions you want to make?

❖   ....
❖   ....
❖   ....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Notation

The reader is alerted to the fact that Appendix 4, 5 and 6 are transcripts of the video and audio recorded material. For ease of reading, the author has employed the following practices:

1. The *word for word* quotes have been written in the "Times New Roman" font evidenced in this sentence.
2. Italics have been employed either to describe an important sequence of behaviour in the video or audio material, or to denote that someone else, that is, a student, a tutor or a lecturer is talking over the main speaker, or at the same time as the main speaker.
3. The measures in point 1 and 2 have been adopted in order to make the material reader-friendly.
4. Pseudonyms have been used throughout to protect the identity of the research participants.

APPENDIX 4

MS A'S FIRST TUTORIAL OF THE YEAR

Introduction

On behalf of the researcher, her supervisor and tutors at the Thutong Learning Centre

in Pretoria, we welcome you to this video production and hope you enjoy and benefit from

what you see. I am Dr A. I have been a tutor at the at the Pretoria Thutong for four years

now. I am tutoring third year Research Methodology. As a professional researcher I enjoy

teaching Research Methodology, but I also enjoy the interaction with the students that I do

not have at my work. This would be an example of a first tutorial of the year. Obviously as it

is only twenty minutes long, one has to concentrate on main points and it is difficult to

expand too much. But enjoy it.

The Tutorial Class

Ms A: Not all of you. I just want one or two. Okay, good morning everybody.

Welcome to third year Research Methodology. I don't think I am wrong if I say that this is

the course that you have heard numerous, from last year or previous years or previous

students, that this is this terrible course and you are going to do statistics and it is absolutely

terrible. Am I right? Is that what the other people said? *(nods from the class.)* Well I hope

that during the year you forget that terror altogether and you begin to enjoy it. I absolutely

love research and I love statistics also. And so I hope not only that those fears will abide, but

that you will really also become interested in research. I want to ask you first before I answer

you first: If you think of research and Research Methodology, what comes to mind? What do

you think of? You have never done Research Methodology before, so what does the word say

for you? Research Methodology? Anybody want to j .....

Student 1: Laboratory kind of situations.

Ms A: Now, when we say laboratory kind of situations, what do you think of?

Experiments? *(Two students say yes, experiments.)* Ya, okay. What else?

Student 2: I just wanted to say, research methods in the field of psychology.

Ms A: Okay. What do you mean by research methods? Research methods. What

does that say for you?

Student 2: The methods that you would use in conducting experiments.

Ms A: Okay. So you kind of associate Research Methodology in psychology with

experiments. Can you give an example of an experiment?

Student 2: Taking children into a room *(Mmm)* and letting them watch television and

observing their behaviour on the kind of programme that they watch.

Ms A: Okay. Ya, so what that tells me that perhaps you haven't done Research

Methodology yet. But given the psychology that you have already done, you have come

across Research Methodology. So, it is not that new to you. And actually, what people don't

really realise is that our whole, perhaps I must say, consumer society that we have around,

western kind of lifestyle, are built on research. Everything we do. Um. We are sitting down

here and we are doing the video production and there is a video camera at the back of us.

Now people, a person doesn't one day walk into a room and sees, oops, here's something

lying. It's a video camera. That video camera didn't just happen. It's the product of years of

research in that particular field. All of you come to class today in a, or most of you, in one or

other type of a motor vehicle -- a bus or a taxi or a car. Cars just didn't happen. Um. Um.

Cars, the motor car that we have today is the product of years and years and years of research

in the scientific field. And the same goes for, um um um, psychology, which is your major

discipline. I mean I see some of your textbook here. Give me that one, the that's abnormal

psychology. You are now doing abnormal psych, um a course in abnormal psychology and

here's a handbook and it's full of facts about various kinds of normal and abnormal

behaviour. Now, where does these facts came from? I mean who is the author of this book?

I don't know the book.

Student 3: Sue, Sue and Sue.

Ms A: Sue, Sue and Sue. Do you think the three Sue's came together and decide --

let's write a book on abnormal psychology? Now okay. What is, are we going to write first?.

Schizophrenics. What's the cause of schizophrenics? Let's decide. And they are kind of

writing it there and sucking facts about schizophrenics out of their thumbs. Do you think it is

how it, this book happened? No. This book is based on decades of research in psychology.

That's actually all the facts I assume, that are in this book are the products of hundreds and

hundreds of psychological researchers who have done research on the causes, on the

characteristics of various kinds of normal and abnormal behaviour and that's how it come

there. Now, if you want to understand, actually really understand, the background of your,

the other disciplines in psychology, and if you really want to understand your world, the

modern world we are living in, you need to have an understanding of Research Methodology.

Because you are confronted every day with this -- not only when you are studying

psychology. I mean now is the time of elections. Every time you open a paper, there is one

or other research organisation in South Africa of which is one of the research organisations of

which I am working, are also playing in the ball game and is saying, now we know that so

many people are going to vote for the ANC, so many people are going to vote for the National

Party, and so many people are going to vote for that and that, and that can happen, and that's the reason why people don't vote, and that's the reason why people don't vote and everybody is giving you, bombarding you with the research results. And I, I came from a background. I can tell you that some of these research are good research and some of them you have to take with a pinch of salt. Um, take for example, um, most of these research on, um, um, um, voting patterns are based on large scale um, um, questionnaires about it. Now, the cheapest form, we'll come later in the year, of, um, um, questionnaires survey, is the telephone survey or countrywide survey where you have to contact people all over the country. A telephone survey means that you have an interviewer, a telephone person to be asking the questions about. But do you think that telephone survey in South Africa will give you the realistic picture of voting patterns? (*Class says* no.) You all say not, why not?

Student 3: Not everybody has a telephone.

Ms A: Not everybody has a telephone. That's one problem. Ya. What are the other problems?

Student 2: Not everyone is listed.

Ms A: Not everybody is listed and usually you use telephone directories to draw numbers. Not everybody is listed. Another problem? Most people have cellphones now and cellphones are not listed. And many students are living in hostels where they don't have a phone in their room or other people. So you are excluding a lot of people from the survey. So what you get in the end is not really a realistic um um um picture of what it is. Um, some. Everytime I read one of these um, um, um, um um newspaper reports I always try to find how was this research done. Unfortunately, the journalists usually do, don't think it necessary to give that information. You are, you can be, you can be caught with a red face if you don't know um that um, which research to trust and which research not to trust. Say, for example,

you are a party organiser and you come to the head of the political party and tell that person: "Listen, we are going to win the elections. This, this survey say we are going to win" -- when that election is based on the telephone survey and are only in the elite groups only. You are going to be caught with a red face and that is a simple example. But what I want to tell you that not only in your personal life, but also in your, our professional life, it's important to realise almost everything we come across is, in one or other way, based on research. And there can be good research and there can be bad research. And I hope that in the course of this year you will learn to know the difference between good and bad research. But that you will also get interested in research and will learn to eval, learn to, no. Even if you don't become a researcher yourself, to really evaluate and appreciate the value and the role that research places in er, er, our lives and in our professional lives. And of course we are going to do some statistics this year, but statistics, I hope, at the end of the year will fit in, in er, er, a larger whole. Statistics is one of the tools we have, but it is not the only one. But it is a very powerful one. And we are going to look at a lot of tools that we can use in research, and statistics is one if you can use it effectively, it is fine. But you have also to be able to interpret it well. I hope in the year you will see and you will become interested when you will see statistics also in the background of the whole of Research Methodology at large. But now, we come to psychological research because you are psychological students. You are especially focusing on psychology. Now, what do you think we study in psychology? Hmm? Historians study history and they do research, maybe historical research. Biologists study biology and they will study about the plants, animals and things like that. Now, what do we study in psychology?

Student 3: Behaviour of humans.

Ms A: Okay. *(Ms A moves to write on the board.)* Human behaviour. Focus of psychological research is the human. And why does what we do? ... Hm, you might think, human behaviour. But I must tell you that you probably, when we start with Research Methodology we are probably doing the most complex research there is because human behaviour is extremely complex. The most simple forms of human behaviour ... Most of you, when you go from this class will probably (on a Saturday morning) go and do some shopping. So you will walk into a supermarket and you will probably say "I need some toilet soap", but there is all kinds of toilet soap -- Lux, Palmolive, Sunlight, whatever. And you walk to the shelf and you take a particular brand of soap. Why? Why do you take that particular brand? Why did you choose, everybody of you, why do you choose Lux or Sunlight or Palmolive or whatever?

Student 2: Because you like it.

Ms A: You like it? Why do you like it?

Student 2: Well, I suppose various reasons for various people. Maybe the smell or the way it feels against your skin.

Ms A: Ya, Ya!

Student 2: The fact that it's not tested on animals ...

Ms A: Yes! Can you see that is some of the actions we don't even think about. We walk into the shop, we take the soap. We never, never or very seldom think about it. It's one of the simplest acts that we usually do. But she *(pointing to student)* has highlighted some of the very complex reasons why we choose the particular brand. We like it. Why do we like it? There can be ethical reasons: I don't want soap that has been tested on animals or animal products or something like that. It can be the smell. It can be anything, of a lot of things. Any other reasons? -- the smell .... Why do you choose soap? *(Ms A cues a student who has*

not yet said anything.)

Student 4: Maybe it is suitable for my skin.

Ms A: Suitable for you skin. You understand? And this is a simple act and we can think that this is unimportant. Why should we study that? I can tell you if you are the owner of Lux factory, making Lux, or you are a factory worker working in that factory, your very livelihood depends on whether people buy Lux or don't buy the Lux. So, it's very important for you to know that. And that's only a simple form of behaviour. But if you think of things that you study in psychology like racial prejudice, and interpersonal relations -- think about marital relations, think of, about parent-child relations and parenting behaviour. Think about all kinds of abnormal and normal behaviour. And you will know that every act that a person know, is very, very complex. So, in psychology you are actually dealing with one of the most complex topics that you can. And I can tell you that psychology research and all your thick handbooks that you have lying there full of facts about people, we still kind of know the tip of the iceberg. There is still a lot of human and human behaviour that we don't know. And that's why we study research. And why we want you to become interested in research, because there's such a lot of things um, that we don't know. And even if the handbook is full of facts, circumstances changes. Can you think of anything in our world that actually has very relevant um, um effects on human behaviour that wasn't there in the past?

Student 5: I think in South Africa, getting rid of apartheid ...

Ms A: Ya. Ya. In South Africa we had before 1994, we had immense social and psychology change and that has a vast impact on people and people's behaviour. And that's not in your handbooks. It needs to be studied. It needs to be recorded if we have to understand our world, and why they behave like they do behave, we have to, we have to do research. And we have to do good research. Hoor hierso, there are a lot of other things about

the modern world. I mean television is old news now. I don't know how long television will last. I can say and I have not done research myself, but I have been in close contact with people trying to establish what the effects of television on behaviour is. And what we now know is that it has an effect, but we still don't understand just this little bit of how and why because it's such complex interaction with other facts. We also now have um, the information explosion. Almost every family have a computer or have access to one or other computer facilities. You can go on the Internet. You are actually bombarded with knowledge and all kinds of influences and we, I think we don't have an idea at this stage what the impact is on human behaviour and on human society. And that will be the role of researchers now and in the future, to establish that. I just want to say that when we speak of human behaviour, it's important to know before we go on that included in human behaviour, is *(Ms A moves to the board and starts to write)* affective processes, that is, our emotions and feeling and values and norms and all kinds of things that also determine our behaviour, as well as intellectual and thought processes. Sometimes these um, um processes, or most of the time, you can't see. You can see a person behaving a certain way, but these processes are actually influencing or determining behaviour to a large extent *(points to the board)* so that is also a very important part of our study of human behaviour. *(Ms A mumbles something, looks behind her and some members of the class laugh.)* So now we go on and I want to explain to you what kind of method of knowing we have in psychology, and what is the kind of method that we use. Um. Because. You may ask, why that is important, but there's actually various ways in which we "know" things. I said that to you, that in Social Psychology and your handbooks that are full of facts, and I have kind of given it already away, and those facts are based on um um, research and we are going to look what method is research. We know that the schizophrenic has this and this and this and this characteristics based on research.

That's a specific method of knowing. But before you started studying psychology, or even before you went to school, there is a lot of things that you actually "know" about your world. We don't only know because we study and we have to distinguish um, um the various ways in which we know things and they mention in your handbook a few ways of knowing and I happen to think they are not the only ways of knowing. I think there is a lot of other ways of knowing. I think when you work with Research Methodology, we have especially to be aware of these ways of knowing. Now, the first way of knowing is the method of tenacity. Tenacity has to do with feelings and beliefs and folklore and rumours. Can you give me example of opinions and beliefs that are part of our kind of "knowledge" base, or of your knowledge base? When women um, um are talking with another, they will say "Lux soap is better than um Sunlight soap". Is that always based on research, or is it just subjectively his opinions?

Student 3: It's his opinions.

Ms A: Ya. Or a kind of own experience, you understand? It's not really, not one of them has actually read a scientific paper and said this one is better than the other one. We have all kinds of beliefs. I remember that my grandmother always said this story -- that the earth is round. It is not. The earth is flat. You go out, any one of you go out here, you look. It looks like a flat plane. Understand? And for a long, for a long long, people have believed that. That the earth is flat. I mean it seems so logical. Why on earth should you believe anything else than the earth is flat? And actually, for ages and ages, people believed that. Um, in the time when, that the explorers went out, they believed when you stand on a boat and you see the sea, the sea goes where you see it. When you get with your boat to that point, the boat will fall. Understand? Into a black hole or something because the earth stops there where you can't see anymore.

The reason why they couldn't see any further was because the earth is round. So that's why they couldn't see any further. Why it seems that the earth stops there, but now we know that that is not really true. I mean, we have vast evidence of going into the air, photographing the air, and we see in the photograph that the air, the earth is round. But can you see the difference between what people commonly believe about their world and what is actually facts in the end, produced on science or based on science?

Author and promoter decide to sound the intercom bell to denote to Ms A that she should start wrapping up her tutorial class. This simple intervention brings about an unexpected result -- Ms A relaxes and the author and promoter opt to continue videotaping her and her class. Laughter from class (and Ms A) can be heard and seen. Ms A runs her fingers through her hair, as if relieved that it is all over.

Ms A: Yira! Goodness me! It's not me, this! Ek het skielik nie geweet hoe om dardie oorgang te maak. Ek het so gewens sy wou daar stop want ek het nie geweet hoe om van daai punt na daai punt toe te gaan. *(More laughter from the class. Translation: I suddenly didn't know how to make the transition. I so hoped she would stop there because I didn't know how to get from the one point to the other.)*

Student 2: Sorry, I would just like to know. This method -- does that include intuition as well?

Ms A: Ya. I believe that intuition is more true than science sometimes. But it's not based on science. It's a kind of feeling you have.

Student 1: Is there not a fine line between authority and tenacity because those people who believed that the earth was flat, had been told it from people in authority? You

know what I am saying? I find that very difficult to distinguish sometimes because there is a very fine line. Was it because you just believed it, because it is a myth or had you been told it by, that myth, by the schoolteachers and by ...?

Ms A: Ya, many. You are very right. Many of these myths *(Ye)* have been told by authority and especially the legislature *(Yes)* because they haven't understood the Bible correctly, but they read the Bible like a scientific handbook. Now, I remember that somewhere in the Bible stands that the earth is standing on its pillars, or something like that and people believed that now, when they came and say that the earth is revolving, you know, it was kind of against religious, the people did not want to believe it. You are now saying something that's against the religious leaders. So it is like that and... And many of our myths and beliefs, we believe because people in authority told us that. Goodness me! I wouldn't have passed, I think, but ... I see, are they going to let us out or...?

Ms A's Comments on her Own Video Presentation

Gooday. I must say that watching the video just confirmed to me how nervous I had been. Perhaps it is the fact that I am a terrible introvert, but I am totally unable to function really well if I have the feeling that I am watched. Contributing further to my nervousness was the fact that I heard about five minutes before the start of the presentation that I had really been expected to present an introductory lecture in which students' anxieties with regard to research and statistics had to be defused. Although I honestly do spend considerable time in the first tutorial of the year on these issues, I had really prepared to cover the learning material of Topic 1 in the video presentation.

Well, I stumbled a lot over my words. Only my students will be able to tell if I

usually do that. However, I do think that I did it more than I would usually do it in a normal tutorial, but I *DO* intend to improve in this matter. My movements were also stiff and rigid. Apart from nervousness, I had been confined to a very small space. Whereas I usually write continuously on the board, I could also not do that. But I think I have to give attention to this matter also. I also have to concentrate to pronounce everything I say very clearly.

With regard to the content of the lecture, I do think that I gave you a glimpse of what I usually try to do in the first tutorial of the year. As I have already mentioned, I usually take considerable trouble to defuse students' anxieties with regard to this particular course and especially with regard to statistics. The term "research"- unlike other topics and sub-disciplines of psychology - is also very abstract and most students have difficulty to link it to their life world. I try to deconstruct it and to link research to our everyday experiences. I think I usually do it more extensively than portrayed in the video.

As the students are usually especially anxious about the statistics part of the course, I also try to ensure them that - in time - we will give sufficient time to statistics in our tutorials. I also ensure them that I would do everything in my power to enable them to look with confidence forward to the statistics part of the end of the year examinations. However, in order to understand the place of statistics in the larger framework of Research Methodology, it is also extremely important that we give sufficient attention to the first part of the course. They have to be able to understand that statistics do not stand on its own, but is part of the larger context of Research Methodology. They will not be able to make sense of statistics if they have not mastered the first part of the course. When I come to the statistics part, I also try to link various statistical methods to what we have done earlier, for example, frequencies are used to explore your data; correlations are used to determine relationships; t-tests are used

for laboratory research to determine the differences between experimental and control groups, etcetera.

During the first tutorial I also give attention to why it is necessary to study Research Methodology. I use Topic 1 in the study guide as basis. Aspects of what I usually do, is reflected in the video presentation. I usually emphasise the ability to be able to evaluate other people's research critically; the ability to interpret and use research results creatively in your own environment; the development of skills that could be used wherever you work (e.g., nurses can use their research skills to evaluate patients' satisfaction with their treatment; the importance of Research Methodology for M.A. and doctoral studies, as well as the possibility of the students becoming professional researchers themselves.)

But, as I have already mentioned, I did not cover the issues as extensively in the video presentation as I normally do in the first tutorial of the year, as I understood that I had only twenty minutes. I usually spend about thirty minutes of the tutorial on the issues that I have already described, and then go on in defining the focus of interest of psychological research, namely, human behaviour. That is about all I can manage in the first tutorial.

However, in the video presentation I went on. I could not understand why the twenty minutes were so long! Of course, the author did not stop me after twenty minutes. I went totally blank when I had to make the transition to the methods of knowing. I was very relieved when it was all over.

Just one other thing, when I watched the video, my usage of the word "facts" seemed wrong. Perhaps I should have used the word "statements". I do not think that we really can speak of "facts" when it comes to human behaviour -- it is far too complex and there are too many complex interactions, but perhaps you have another suggestion. Thank you.

Students in the Class Offer their Comments Voluntarily (and Anonymously) in Writing

Sudent 1: Die situasie was onnatuurlik, maar ek het dit nogtaans geniet. Me. A se gespannendheid was duidelik en dit het my beinvloed. Ek het ook gespanne begin raak. *(Translation: The situation was unnatural, but I enjoyed it anyway. Ms A's nervousness was obvious and it influenced me. I also began to feel nervous.)*

Student 2: I heard many people saying research is difficult. I think the tutor is going to make it easy for me if I cooperate or study hard. For the fact that somebody is looking at me, I was afraid of even attending at my itching ear because of the evaluation and the camera.

Student 3: I found that the situation wasn't that bad as I anticipated it would be. However, the atmosphere was rather tense. I think that the tutor may be insecure about her abilities. Maybe other tutors could help her out.

Student 4: From the content point of view, I thought that she gave a good overview of what research is, and was reassured by enthusiasm for statistics, that they are not to be feared. I was very aware of the fact that this lecture was being videotaped. I was also aware of the fact that the lecturer was very aware of the camera. It inhibited my awareness and I felt that I did not want to make a fool of myself on camera. I believe that we all have something important to learn about evaluation, as the camera cannot be blamed. In fact, it highlights a weakness, namely, we are uncomfortable with evaluation. That must mean something important for all of us to work on.

Student 5:   The tutor actually came across very well and I like the way she

addresses her topic and gets the information through to us. However,

today she seemed uncomfortable, as was I. It may have been the

camera, but it is also about our joint insecurities. We should work on

being comfortable with an observer.

Student 6:   The tutor was good enough and she tried to involve us all in the

tutorial. I liked the video situation as it forces you to look at how you

participate.

Two Psychology Tutors Comment Further (on Video)

Tutors: The author and Mr A.

Place of work: Thutong Learning Centre in Pretoria.

The author:

Okay, I am the author, the psychology tutor for the third year courses.

Mr A:

I'm Mr A. I'm the psychology tutor for, um, second year psychology, focusing on

Personology.

The author:

Okay. Now Mr A, we have just watched Ms A giving (um) an example of a

tutorial where she has just met her students, so they are just about to define, she is just about

to define her relationship with the students, or she already has. Um, before we actually get to

the process, um, perhaps I could engage you to say something about the content, about the

way Ms A went about doing her work the first day of the year?

Mr A:

Well, she starting off um, telling everybody how frightened they should or would be about research and methodology and statistics and um, the natural thing was that she was going to try and excite them about the subject and not, dare I say it, bore them to death with examples of research into soap and things like that. It was not an exciting um, um, it wasn't enough to get the students to change their minds. If they were dreading a course on stats and research methods, um, the tutor didn't change that attitude, although I think she set out to by telling how passionate she was about statistics. *(That's right)*. She didn't convey that passion at all.

The author:

So, you think that maybe there was overkill there -- that what seemed like passion, was actually just maybe nervousness in that case?

Mr A:

Yeah. I mean, that was pretty blatant that she was so nervous in front of the camera. But another thing is that she is a tutor of four years standing. Um, not a lecturer, but in a tutoring position, um, she should have been used to being in front of a lot of students and not so static in getting her message across.

The author:

Yes, I think very often, when we are told about tutor training, we are encouraged to use everyday examples and to make it applicable to everyday situations, but um, I'm not quite sure, I think something went wrong there, but what went wrong I'm not sure. Maybe it was just a question of dominance; maybe it was the setting; maybe it was just a lot of linear processes going on -- it was pretty much from Ms A to the students, but also, the students at

this stage know very little, if anything, about Research Methodology in spite of Ms A saying: "I'm sure you know a lot more than you think you do". However, the students seemed to be also, as much as Ms A said in her commentary, rooted in one spot. Everybody seemed to be very much closed in. There wasn't a free flow of information or discussion taking place. Do we attribute that to, I mean you talk about four years experience, do we attribute this just to the set up in the first year, the first example, I mean the first tutorial of the year, or do we attribute it to factors other than that?

Mr A:

Well, if I put myself in her shoes, I would have rearranged the room slightly or greatly. I would have had those columns changed into circular rows and put that white board in front of everybody, not alongside, to make it more participatory, so that they felt like now, that we could get into a discussion of this. At no point did she facilitate any kind of response or ask or get. It was just a lecture.

The author:

To be fair on her, I set up that context specifically like that because I wanted to illustrate, I don't know whether you have ever experienced this at Thutong, but when we have the first tutorial of the year, usually we get a lecture venue, and I wanted to demonstrate how you can, sort of, overcome the barriers. So, we could encourage Ms A to say maybe that's what you were given, but that's not necessarily what you had to work with. You could have shifted. You could have whatever the case was. But I think, essentially, she was overwhelmed by a tremendous amount of anxiety. And toward the end, in her own commentary, um, I think she was very self critical. It's not that she does not have insight. But you felt something different because you were saying, at the back of the mirror, that you felt that you were being lectured to instead of ..... and that she was justifying her position.

Would you want to elaborate on that?

Mr A:

I felt there is an element of being a tutor that the students, from feedback, that the

students would like the tutor to be a leader in the sense that they would like to be led

into discussions, or themes are brought out from the tutor. The tutor brings up topics

and leads the class in discussion. Not lecturing, where the patient, where the students sit

there passive, listening, maybe making notes here and there. There was no invitation to

participate. I sensed that she was not acknowledging the students' abilities to even respond.

Asking questions at times and answering them herself. And that's a little bit like a school

teacher.

The author:

Yeah. A monologue essentially. Um, this video, of course, is for the purposes of

developing a training model. I mean, would one of the suggestions be that somebody like Ms

A, or tutors like Ms A, should be helped to increase their repertoire of behaviour to be able to

be not just lecturers, but also facilitators, not to just accept the structure, but also work with

structure etcetera, or could we add to that in terms of suggestions, because we also want to be

constructive as well, aside from pointing out obviously what was missing?

Mr A:

Yeah. Perhaps, before starting on the first lecture of the year, um, a small group of

fellow tutors could have got together and shared experiences and built up a little self

confidence amongst the group and with that little self confidence, shared ideas on

how to break the ice for the first tutorial of the year, and then gone on from that

point. Sometimes, to go into the first tutorial, cold, let's say, is asking quite a lot from

people, especially as she claims to be an introvert. Um, I have my doubts about that.

But, okay, she says she's an introvert, but if she could just, you know, relax. And not feel threatened by the vast information she obviously had to impart to these students, um just feel more comfortable.

The author:

Yeah. Because the first tutorial is essentially more important for you to define your relationship with your students, than perhaps to want to give them an overview of the entire syllabus. Perhaps that is in the second, or third or perhaps, even fourth tutorial. But first impressions are so essential and it's interesting, I don't know if you know this, but after the lecture or the tutorial, we asked students to actually comment on why they were particularly stiff, because it was very obvious, and a lot of them said they were picking up on Ms A's anxiety. So, that's evidence of sort of a mutuality, something mutual going on. In other words, students picking up cues from the tutor and responding in like and that's essentially what tutorials are about. They are about a reciprocal relationship.

Mr A:

Ah, that's interesting. So, the students were already exhibiting signs of empathy? So that was a kind of a good start for second year psychology students.

The author:

Ya. And perhaps that would be important to point that out to Ms A, who in her commentary, seemed to be simply focused on, sort of, very deep self criticism:- I should have said "statements, not facts", I should have done this, not that. And to actually indicate to her that, although it can be improved in the respects that we have said, believe it or not, she had basic empathy there. She could have worked with that enormously well.

Mr A:

But perhaps, she didn't recognise that.

The author:

I don't think so.

Mr A:

She didn't see it.

The author:

But she was too focused on herself, perhaps.

Mr A:

Well, when the camera was off, or she thought, the introversion went out the window

and then she kind of said, well, okay let's get on with this real stuff now.

The author:

But you see, also it's very often people, I mean you and I have trained here at UNISA,

and we know sometimes we like to set up the trainers as being conspirators. Um, and that's a

bit sad because I saw that sort of when Ms A thought that she was no longer being watched,

then she kind of looked towards the door and, you know, "Is it all over, is the camera off?"

and I think that is perhaps another thing that many tutors have, sort of in their ideas about

training, that it is a little bit conspiratorial and that you are being evaluated. And of course

you are, but to a better end, not to a worse end. You know, it's ultimately constructive, isn't

it?

Mr A:

Constructive, ya. And aren't you as a tutor, um, a little bit of an actor as well? For an

hour you kind of want to invigorate your students to pay attention, so you get them to laugh at

you or something to realise, okay guys, listen, you can relax now. I'm just going to help you.

I'm not here to lecture you. I'm here to kind of -- we are going to have some fun together

now, in the learning process.

The author:

Ya, I think Ms A would find all of these comments very valuable, um, but I don't
think they are essentially projects for her to take on with a vengeance. I think it would be
nice that after training, these kinds of ideas or self-reflections automatically become part of
the process because when we are not being observed, when we are just in a normal
tutorial, I don't know that we take so much time to actually evaluate ourselves after each
tutorial, and to say, you know, "What happened there? What was my relationship with my
students like? Did I cover what I needed to cover?". But when the camera is on us, I guess,
it's the one opportunity that we can't hide from ourselves. It's kind of there in colour, full
colour and we take it home and we look at it and we expose ourselves to other people and we
say: "What do you think of us?" And that is a little bit intimidating, but it need not be. I
mean, it's ultimately for the point of learning from each other. I like what you said at the
beginning when you said the idea of, perhaps all of us getting together and actually comparing
ideas because, essentially from Ms A's example, um, we will adopt or discard accordingly.
So, she would have shown us how to or how not to and that would have been, you know,
valuable in itself.

Mr A:

A bit of role playing ...

The author:

Sure.

Mr A:

Get together and practice and go through, you know, our cancer support groups, you
know, oftentimes, the patient's can't even, they say to their friends -- "How are you feeling?
And they say, "No, fine". They battle with the word cancer. They battle with the word

disease. They usually get round to it if they are Afrikaans speaking because the Afrikaans for both is "siekte", and so they can go into serious sort of denial if you like and say, well, "You know, I'm fine. I'm fine. I'm fine". So, in a fellow tutor situation, where she perhaps wouldn't feel so intimidated, she could say "Look, I've got a problem with doing this and doing that". So, we have to set up a role playing situation and she could practice it often enough with us who are nonjudgmental and nonthreatening and all that, so she can feel more comfortable. Practice on us and then zoot it across to the class.

The author:

Ya, I mean, I don't know about being nonjudgmental because I think we have been very judgmental in our appraisal, but it would be understood that it would be for constructive purposes, not destructive purposes because it's very easy to think of this as being self-righteous or superior and that's not essentially what we are trying to convey.

Mr A:

Oh, No! From both I've learnt a great deal in that it might sound judgmental, but it's not meant to be. It's meant to be, sort of, as you say, constructive.

The author:

There is just one final point that I would like to say is, that maybe, I still want to go back to you saying she has been in it for four years, and having been in it for about seven years, I think that, where I can identify, is that maybe complacency comes into it but I mean, I don't want to project now and say that this is what is happening with Ms A, but I think at some point you think: "Hang on, I have been here, done this before" and a certain sense of complacency sets in and I think that is why training is so valuable because you have got to re-invent yourself and you have got to keep your ideas fresh or you can become quite stale in just the way in which you go about doing things.

Mr A:

I like that. That's brilliant stuff. Re-inventing yourself, re-invigorating yourself, yes! You can never say, it's rather like being a Christian, you can never rest on your laurels and say, "I'm a Christian, I don't have to do anything.."

The author:

"I've arrived"....

Mr A:

You've arrived.... You can never do that as a tutor because you are not being fair to yourself. You are not being fair to your students. You're always active. It's brilliant what you said. You re-invent yourself, you can never rest on your laurels.

The author:

Ya, great. And on that brilliant note...

Mr A:

And with that thing *(indicating the camera)* going kadonk, kadonk ...

The author:

Ya. Thank you for watching.

Mr A:

Thank you.

Two UNISA Lecturers Have their Say (videorecorded)

Lecturer and promoter of this thesis in discussion with:

Lecturer: Mr B, Department of New Testament and an ex-tutor at the Pretoria

Learning Centre, known as Thutong.

Place of work: UNISA.

The promoter:

Okay. I am the promoter for the thesis of the author and Mr B can introduce himself

(motioning to him.)

_Mr B:_

I am Mr B from the Department of New Testament. I have been a tutor for the

courses in the Biblical Studies and the Biblical Archaeology for many years, and my interest

in this is on the role of didactics and, um, the facilitation of learning.

The promoter:

Oh! And I just want to say thank you very much to Mr B for being prepared to sit

with us and to watch the video. We have just watched, um, Ms A's session with the students,

as well as her own comments on the session, and then, um, the conversation between the

author and Mr A. And I would just like to say that we appreciated all these conversations,

(nodding from Mr B) but I at this point in time, like the students would like, um, to show a bit

of empathy for the whole situation. I think what the impression that is made on me was that,

um, the incredible way in which Ms A made herself vulnerable in the, the situation *(nodding*

from Mr B) because it is a simulated situation and if we can remember that, what we are

trying to achieve here is not about the person, but it is on processes and, um, as I say, we do

have a lot of appreciation for, for the people that were prepared to take part in this whole

process. So, that, that would be my first reaction to that, and, um, and then my appreciation

also for the tutor herself who was prepared, like the author also mentioned, she was so

prepared to look at herself and to learn from her experience, and for me, that's what is

standing out, um, as so necessary in the whole process of tutoring, (nodding from Mr B) that

tutors should have, and that also came out in the conversation between the author and Mr A,

that opportunity to reflect, that to reflect on themselves, to reflect with others, and they very

seldom have the opportunity when you do see yourself in action, and I just know from own

experience, that that can be very traumatic to see yourself in action, but that, that is actually a

wonderful way of learning and if you are prepared to be part of something like that, and I

think that tutors that are serious about tutoring should be prepared to do such self-reflection.

But Mr B, I just like to know from you, I mean your reactions to the process ....

Mr B:

Yes! I agree with what you have said. Self evaluation is very important, the peer

evaluation is very important and I think we should move all, we should also move one step

further and educate our students, our learners to evaluate our ways of doing things, and, um,

our way of handling a tutorial and a class, a discussion class or whatever, *(nodding from the*

promoter) so our students, I would say, um, need to be treated as adults, people with

obedience about people, people with needs, people who have paid a lot of money to be taught,

to be educated, and they should play an active role in a assessing our ways of doing things at

UNISA.

The promoter:

Okay, so what you are saying is that very much the respect, the respect for each other, the tutors respect for the students and the students' respect for the tutor and for themselves, um, very much in the outcomes-based education that is also very much a feature *(nods from both.)* Okay?

Mr B:

Yes! Yes! May I elaborate a little bit on that? I think in the context of a first tutorial, it is a wonderful opportunity to do some research on your own as a tutor, with regards to the reasons why students are there, *(nodding from the promoter.)* What are their expectations? What are their needs regarding the course? What do they think and anticipate they will be, be doing with the information that they will be, that, that will, um, be transformed to them? What will they do with it? How, what idea do they have about the career in psychology or Biblical Studies, or education? I think that is a wonderful opportunity and right through the year, to see how their needs change, how their expectations also change and are adapted to their being more educated in effect, so that is a laboratory, um, that we can use to, to explore our students' minds.

The promoter:

Okay. I, I really like what you are saying Mr B because I was saying, thinking about that introduction as you said, and I understand what the author was saying, that the chairs were actually put like that in, for a specific reason, and that is very clear that, that is not ideal, um, but, but I had thoughts along the same lines of, rather what you are saying is to explore, to discover where students are at, what *their* expectations are and what *they* would like to get out of this experience or from the experience, and even though we know that these rumours are rife about, that the statistics or the Research Methodology, um, is the feared kind of

course, yes, it, even if it was there, it would have been better if it had come from the students as a real concern for *them*, than having been imposed, um, even though one could see why and that, that, you know, that was valid, that was perhaps valid, but if it had come from them, I think it would have been, rather better.

Mr B:

Ya. Yes. The whole organisation or organising of the class as other speakers have already mentioned, would have, would have helped a lot to get this, this discussion going, because if I look to the back of another students head, it seems to me that I cannot communicate with the person like that, so, so the organising of the class, I think, is very important, um, we should remember, and I have empathy as you said with what we have seen, um, but still stu, our tutors have to be taught and have to be trained to be facilitators. It's not a, a, it's not a tutor centred approach, it is a learner centred approach. And the learner is there to experience, we are there only as tutors to create an environment, an atmosphere where the learning can take place through talking, and, and, the communicating with each other especially and learning from each other, learning from each other.

The promoter:

And you know Mr B, this was mentioned by the author, how important it is, those first impressions and the kinds of patterns that you establish in a first tutorial because it is going through my mind, okay, how is a first tutorial different from other tutorials, and is this perhaps the kind of more teacher orientation? Was that adopted because it was a first, first, um, tutorial?, but from what you're saying, what the author is saying, and what Mr A said, it is so important that if you are going to do the interaction, you better do it from the word go, from the very first, and if I may just say, this just links with something so important, I think, is this whole idea that meeting the student where they are at, also in terms of the structure that

you do provide. Mr A also touched on that. And, and in my experience that is so important. We have to realise, I think, that students are also scared, um, and they were so anxious that I have to say, I was sitting and thinking, when is this anxiety going to break? And it only broke with, when we phoned in there, and there was that sound. And it was so remarkable, the change in the structure and what went on in the group before and after that beep came through. It was as if that broke the tension, and then they could be themselves, the students and the tutor. So, but I think we need to recognise that the students are in fact, or are possibly also, um, insecure and that they like in the old school, they like getting some structure, they like, actually, you know, I was interested to hear some recent research, if you ask them which style they actually prefer, they like the way when they can just sit back and be passive, you know, that's not comfortable, but comfortable is not always where you learn better. So, that fine line between having *some* structure in terms of meeting *that* need, but not too much, to allow students to move into the uncertain zone, where they are actually going to learn something. I just think that is so important.

Mr B:

What I really appreciated from the tutor was the many examples from everyday life that she used, starting with the problem, what is this? What is research? And, um, what is research? Starting with the problem, getting students to start thinking about what is at hand, and then the many and relevant examples that were used, I really appreciated that, because it, it links up to the, the learners secure, secure knowledge. It, in the end, a student can say: "Oh, but this is not so bad as I thought, this has really some relevance, some relevance with everyday life". But at this stage, I thought, can these examples stop now! *(nodding from the promoter.)* They are getting irrelevant, they are getting too much. I get the point. I get the point, and when are we going to get down to what is the structure of this course, what

am I expected to learn? And I was anxious because the examples were starting to irritate me. I know how, what she wanted to tell me and I am also in this a novice. I, I, I regard myself as a novice, but a first year student then, or a first, a first learner, but now I would really like my mind to start getting some structure. What lies ahead?

The promoter:

Okay. So, so I, I actually, I really enjoyed the, those, I actually liked the example of the soap, because for me, that, that, you know, that came, it brought something home to, I could relate to, but, um, and then I want to say that I am not a research psychologist, and she really motivated me and in a way, you know, I thought, well maybe this is more interesting that what I ever thought it could be. So, in that sense I, I, I think she really managed to do that, so, you know, that was good. And what I also appreciated was that, okay, things were not going all that well and she was aware that it was not going as she would have liked it to go, and then she asked certain questions and didn't get a response, but then, she tried and she went down to a different level of less complexity to a simpler level, and asked the question on a simpler level, and I think that is extremely important for the tutor to be able to do that.

Mr B:

What was the exact example?

The promoter:

Um, it, it was, she asked them about, kinds of knowledge, and, and, and, how types of things, ways in which they know and so on *(Oh, I see, yes!)* and they didn't really, and then she started with, maybe, intuition, this and that and she tried to, I think she tried to give them some examples if I remember correctly, but then going down and giving an exact example and helping people to understand. I thought that was really good. Ya.

Mr B:

To me an example, if we can stay on this point just a little, a little bit longer, an example can become the issue, as was the case with "Is the earth round?" "What does the bible say about that?" An example can become the issue, and then you're in bad waters. So, I, I, I would always advocate for, use examples, make them relevant, and I would say as, for advanced, advanced learners in that sense, use examples that are on their level. Start with those. If they don't work, go to an easier level, but do not, um, irritate students with too many simple examples. The one with the soap was good for an introduction, but then one had to go and, and, and there were others, but what I wanted to say is, don't let the example become the issue of discussion, then you're in troubled waters.

The promoter:

I, I really like, like that point, and as you say, in the end the example needs to support the, what you really want to say and what you really want to say has to be foreground, and the examples need to be background, ya. So, um, you know I am, was also aware of my attention span, now I am just talking off, you know but it, my attention span could only last so long, and, and up to a point I thought, now we need to do something different, so you need to build in difference. You cannot *(Yes!)* go on with the same pattern *(diversity)* for too long. Diversity *(Oh yes!)*. Also this diversifying in the method of your tutoring, um, now this, then writing, then getting up and breathing and then a this and a that, because you cannot, because that was twenty minutes and for me that also felt long. I couldn't even keep up ....

Mr B:

Yes! I agree with you. I agree with you. Even though we are working with adult learners, their span of concentration is also limited, and I think we should, we should be able and we should have the competence as tutors to diversify our, um, our way of teaching, and,

but this will happen, this will happen if one is prepared in the sense of letting it come from the group. You have a diversity in front of you, eight students, hundred students, use it, use their worlds, it is diverse, it is from all over, use their diversity to enhance your own atmosphere of learning.

The promoter:

So in that way you build in interest, ya, so you know ....

Mr B:

A last point, um, if, um, if we are at the end *(Ya, I think so)*, I think, um, always very important is language proficiency. We are not first language, we are not first language English speakers, and our, the people out there as our tutors are also not all proficient in English, but I should like to plea for correct tenses of a high level and high standard of communication. It may be, may be an aside, but that is if, if 'has and have' have to be in the right place, and I would think that language proficiency, the language proficiency among our tutors, is to me very important because we are professional people and we would like to maintain a very high standard.

The promoter:

And, and that just comes, I think, would be the last one, that the tutor is, in the end, a model *(Yes, yes)* in all respects, and you have to be, specially, in this case where you're teaching psychology, or facilitating the learning of psychology, you have to practice what you're preaching, so you are on a meta-level, modeling human behaviour *(Ya.)* And that is a great challenge and a responsibility. I do thank you very much.

Mr B:

Thank you so much. It is an honour.

MS B'S MIDDLE OF THE YEAR TUTORIAL

Introduction

Hi everyone. My name is "Meli" *(pseudonym.)* I am a tutor at Thutong Learning Centre in Pretoria for about two years now. Welcome to my tutorial demonstration. What I'll be doing today it's, um, self-evaluation and self-image, and the group that I'm involved with, it's a first year group, and we've been together for, plus minus, eight months. Thank you for your time.

The Tutorial Class

Ms B: Okay, before we start, do we have any burning questions from what we did last time? *(Silence from class.)* Are we okay with what we did last time? Okay, and, um, today we will be looking at what? Ss *(prompts class, who join in tentatively.)* Self-evaluation and self-image, which means that we will basically be evaluating ourselves, isn't it? It is very nice, right? Now, what do we understand by the concept, self? What are we talking about when we talk about self? What is self?

Student 1: Me, myself. *(Student 3 also motions to herself, and answers non-verbally.)*

Ms B: It's you, right? When you say me, what is you?

Student 1: It would be my character and personality. *(Barely audible.)*

Ms B: Okay. *(Ms B starts to write on a big piece of paper, positioned in the middle*

of everyone.) What about you? *(cues Student 2.)*

Student 2: I, I, I think so. It's the person, itself, myself.

Ms B: Myself. What, what does that mean, my, what's myself, because we talk about self? What is myself? *MY*self? What is it? How do you put that my into words?

Student 2: I, I think. When I talk about myself, I talk about the personality, the way I am, the characteristics around things, understand? The way I think about those things. And the way I react towards ...... *(Ms B encourages the students by writing their contributions on the piece of paper.)*

Ms B: And what about you? *(Cues the next student.)*

Student 3: I think it's my total personality.

Ms B: Total personality *(Yes.)* Right. When you say total personality, what are the components of this total? What is inside this total?

Student 3: Total. I think the centre of myself.

Ms B: Okay. *(Cues next student.)* Do you have anything to say?

Student 4: I think to say, what you are.

Ms B: What you are. Okay.

Student 5: I think the concept self to me, my outward behaviour, character, moods ....

Ms B: You said character, right? And you said moods? Okay, so it looks like self, um, it's a lot of things. Right, now, if we look at all the things that we have, um, mentioned, what categories of characteristics do we have, right? Like, if, if we talk about, we are talking about here, um, think about what we have done uptil now. Remember, your, your sub-systems, your part-systems and so on. All the things that you have mentioned, where do you think they would fit in? If you are talking about character, for instance, what are you talking

about?

Student 3: Behaviour.

Ms B: Behaviour. How do we learn behaviour?

Student 1: From our environment.

Ms B: Environment. Right. What are you talking about when you are talking about the environment? What is the environment?

Student 2: It's where you interact with others.

Ms B: Right, so it's basically ...

Student 1: When you come in contact with other people.

Ms B: Other people, and the meaning to say other people, it basically means that we are talking about ....

Class: Social.

Ms B: Okay. Right, um, when you are talking about personality, what, what is personality?

Student 1: The way you feel about things.

Ms B: The way you feel about things. Right.

Student 2: The way you perceive.

Ms B: The way you perceive. Right.

Student 3: The way you look at things.

Ms B: The way you look at things. Right. Now, if we're talking about feelings, perception, cognition, what does that remind you of? We said feelings, right? Perception, okay, and we said cognition. What do you think about when you see these three words? Remember, this is your, this is your intrapsychic, remember those part-systems that we spoke

about? Right, so these are the components of your intrapsychic. Okay, so it means that you basically have, the what? -- the social, which comes from what you are, your behaviour, okay? Then we have the what? -- the intrapsychic, which is basically the psychological part of you, isn't it? Right. Then we also have the what?-- the physical, okay? Right, now what I want to know is, when we are talking about *SELF* given all this, are we talking about something that does not change, that is static, that is always the same *OR* are we talking about something that is continuous, always shifting, always changing?

Class: Changing.

Student 1: You get influenced by something everyday. You might not be scared to ride a bicycle, but then you get knocked over by a car, then you would be scared to ride a bicycle.

Ms B: Right. Are you also saying it is continuous?

Student 2: Ya.

Ms B: What makes it continuous? Is it the experiences or is it the interaction that you have with your social environment?

Student 5: It is the interactions.

Ms B: In what way? Can you give me an example? *(Motions student 3.)*

Student 3: I'm not sure.

Ms B: Like they say, if you just think about you, right, as self, are you changing, are you continuous?

Student 3: I am changing.

Ms B: You are changing, right. How have you changed, for instance, um, between now and last year? Okay, you want to take this *(motioning to student 2 who wants to answer*

for student 3.)

Student 2: Myself, I can say, how the person change, you know, last year I didn't know what it was about to be in the university, but now I am in the university, I know what it's all about. Those things that people used to tell me, I found, are not the same. I see them the other way around. For example, I am acquiring insight. So it is what helps me, the change that has occurred.

Ms B: Ya. Right, now, if we, if we add what you have said, because you are saying, what other people have told you, you find that's it's not, you know, it's not what you are experiencing, right? Now, what I want to know is, when you are talking about, um, self-evaluation for instance, if you want to evaluate yourself, right, okay, let us start with what is self-evaluation. What are we talking about when we are talking about self-evaluation? How can you define it?

Student 3: It's when I can evaluate my behaviour, my knowledge and others.

Ms B: Right, now, you have said you are evaluating your behaviour, you are evaluating your knowledge, you are evaluating others, right? Now, if you want to evaluate yourself, okay, that is, your behaviour and whatever you have mentioned, what do you think would be more reliable to look at? Um, like given, let's say, right, given those three things *(Ms B writes on the paper)* you want to evaluate yourself, right, which one would be more reliable, do you think? Which one do you think would be more reliable to help you evaluate yourself? Would it be looking at your, for instance, self-image? Would it be looking at your self-reflection? Would it be observing your behaviour? Or will it be, maybe a combination of any of the two? Or will it be a combination of all of those?

Class: Combination.

Ms B: Combination of all of this? Why?

Student 1: How you see yourself, is how you are going to react to someone else, and that is going to influence the behaviour, then that person is going to see you in a certain manner.

Ms B: Okay. So, behaviour is basically the reaction. So you are saying how you see yourself. So where would the seeing fit in? Is it the image or the reflection?

Student 1: It is the behaviour about yourself.

Ms B: Right. So you are saying there is a link between the two. Okay, then where would reflection fit in, self-reflection? What are we talking about when we are talking about self-reflection?

Student 3: I think it's appearance.

Ms B: Appearance.

Student 1: Okay, I say something to her and she takes it the wrong way, so she storms off out the room and then I reflect back onto myself that I treated her wrongly. Something like that.

Ms B: Right, you wanted to say something *(motioning to student 2.)*

Student 2: Not really.

Ms B: Okay. What do others understand by reflection, self-reflection?

Student 5: Self-reflection, I understand it in terms of, just the way the lady said now. I think it's just a way when you say, maybe I talk to you, and thereafter she react in a manner in which I was not expecting her to react, so I can reflect, maybe I am wrong or right, or maybe she understands me in this way, or she is wrong or whatever. In fact all these things ...

Ms B: You can write, if you want to.

Student 5: No I don't want to write, I just want to talk. I think image and reflection and behaviour, they are the reliable sources of which you can evaluate yourself, but the best thing to do for me, from my point of view, I think, you can rely on someone else. Someone with whom you interact every day, interaction. I don't know.

Ms B: Okay, when you say, um, in terms of other people right, I know that you are basically talking about the way you interact with other people, and so on, okay. So, just for everybody, if you look at that maybe as, um, a way to evaluate yourself, that is, listening and looking at what other people are saying and how they behave, how reliable would that be? Do you always get the right impressions from other people about yourself?

Student 3: Not always.

Ms B: Not always. Do you sometimes feel like there are certain things that you are doing which are good and which are not being acknowledged?

Class: Ya.

Student 4: Okay, how about I say, reflection itself, um, reveals. Like reflections, you always see yourself, but if it is not how you see yourself, it's how you think you are.

Ms B: How you think you are. Okay. Right, then you mentioned, I want to just, um, take the interaction part of things, right, where would you fit that, the interaction with other people? Will it give you your self-image *(Yes, from student 5)* or will it give you reflection, interacting with other people?

Student 5: Interacting with other people, I think, both.

Ms B: Reflection and image. In what way?

Student 5: In the sense that, maybe I see myself, you know, how you think of you. How, I see myself as someone at home, at home with others guys, that will help me, and my reflection also, how they see me and how I see myself. *(Okay.)* Physically. So, I don't know. This is the way I interpret it. Image and reflection, I don't know.

Ms B: Okay *(Laughter.)* They can help *(referring to others in the class.)* Okay.

Student 2: Myself, I can say, the way I imagine myself, for instance, isn't the same with other people. For example, myself, I can maybe I think I can understand myself, and I know that I am better, you understand, so during our conversation, you understand, she can look at me as being not that bad at all, you understand? Because of the reflection, and after that, myself, I will look at, why does she think I am not as bad, you understand? That reflection will come back to me and first, that will be the image that comes first, and after that is when the reflection will come, and I see to all those things, what was the problem, understand?

Ms B: Does she make sense? She does to me because I think what she is basically trying to say, she said, I pick up from, she said, image comes first, then you have the reflection, right? Because you have said that here in the image, you have how you see yourself, how you think you are and that involves interaction with other people. The other people are going to tell you, you are like this or you are not like this, right? Then from that, okay, that is, that, um, inter-subjective experience, because you are experiencing yourself as something and people are also experiencing you as something else, so there might be congruence in the way you see yourself and in the way other people see you, right? There might also be incongruence in the way people see you and the way that you see yourself. Then, reflection will be on both sides, okay? I wonder why two people say I am like this,

okay? I wonder why, okay? So, the big question in reflection is *WHY*, right? *WHY* do people think I'm like this, okay? Then it's also, why do I think I am like this? Okay, for instance when we were picked up there *(meaning the video)*, what was the question that we asked ourselves? We didn't talk to each other direct, but something was happening within us, isn't is? What did you ask yourself? *(motioning Student 1.)*

Student 1: I hope I don't get chosen! *(peals of laughter from the class.)*

Ms B: Okay, then when you were chosen, I mean when you were chosen, what question did you ask yourself?

Student 1: Oh no!

Student 2: I think myself, I ask I am better than others or what else - what is happening, you understand? I was even afraid ......

Ms B: Right. What about you? *(Looks to Student 3.)*

Student 3: I was asking myself, Why are, what are you going to say?

Student 4: I was just thinking to myself - why me out of all those persons? I'm scared.

Student 5: I just ask myself - what is it that is going to happen?

Ms B: Okay, okay, so you can see that the centre of everything, it's, it's *ME!* Right. And it's *WHY*, okay? And it's also - what is going to happen, you know? That concern of - why did they chose me? Like you said, is it because, what is going to happen with me? Is it because I am better than other people, and so on, and at the same time, it's like, when you ask yourself a question why, you are going back to your what? To your image, right, because you are now thinking about, does it mean that I have to, to be up to a certain standard right, because the fact that I've been chosen, maybe it means that I'm fine, you know, I can go

there, I can talk, so does it mean that now, I have to, to put myself under pressure of being able to meet that standard, okay, which is basically, your, your image, right, so if you see yourself as somebody whose able to speak up and you have read this and so on, then you are not going to have a problem, isn't it? Because you are going to say, after all, I understand what is happening, so it's okay. That is the image of, if I have done the right thing, that is, studying and understanding, then I can relate to other situations quite well, okay? Now, we said self-image, reflection and behaviour, right? When we read this chapter on self-image and if we look at, just the way that we have here, what is it that grabs us, you know, I don't mean gggrab us, I mean grab us, okay? What is it that grabs you? What is it that interests you? What is it that you are curious about? It can be, I mean you can express yourself in one word, or you can express yourself .... what makes you curious about the whole thing that you've seen here, about the chapter about self-image and self-evaluation, what does it bring you? Do we understand the question *(class indicates that it does.)* What do you think about when you, what did you think about when you read the chapter?

Student 5: You know, me, when I read the chapter, I find that, now I have the knowledge to evaluate myself, to know who I am and how a person maintain a good, a good outward behaviour. Let me not say, let me not say in terms of the behaviour, let me talk in fact in terms of self, you know, I can understand really who I am now by reading that chapter, you know, I read it just about three months back.

Ms B: Right, so what are you implying? Or what word can you use, you know, are you saying that you have learnt to apply what you have read to yourself? *(Yes.)* That you have learnt to reflect? Because now, what he is basically doing, he read the chapter, right, and he was able to look at himself, right, so which means that he was able to question stuff and things about himself. Does it mean that you didn't do that before you read the chapter?

What was happening before?

Student 5: Before, I was having no knowledge about myself. In fact, I was having a knowledge about myself, who I am, but in the sense that, I was not, which way can I put it clear? ....

Student 1: I found that you basically become more aware of the way you ....

Student 5: Of myself, yes.

Ms B: You become more aware of yourself *(Yes)*, okay, so that is basically what reflection is, isn't it? Because you are now looking at, you are now questioning, you know, yourself, you are applying what you are reading, to yourself, okay? And what did you find? What is there? *(Laughter.)*

Student 5: No, I didn't disclose it.

Ms B: You cannot, it's confidential. He is entitled to that as well right, what about other people?

Student 2: Myself, I think I understand the reaction of other people and another thing, to accept myself, the way am I, and to understand the situations of other people, you understand, how do they react with me and to deal with those early situations, whether it is bad or right, ya.

Ms B: Okay, so what was happening before, do you mean that before you didn't accept yourself anyway?

Student 2: Ya, and I can say that I even, first time, I did not trust myself, you understand, so from now that I read the chapter, I still, I understand myself and accept the way am I, and understand some of the situations because I can't cope with the situation, but now I can cope ....

Ms B: Is there any situation that you would, maybe, love to share with us where you feel that you are now reacting to it differently? Maybe this has happened before, then I feel like, now I've changed, I'm not responding, you know .....

Student 2: Ya. The thing that, it was a feeling before, you know, when I read a book, and I found I don't understand, so I tell myself that, am I supposed to leave the course or what is going to happen, because I do not understand a chapter of work, but after, when I read the, this book, I said to myself that I can cope, nothing else ....

Ms B: Okay, okay, ya, ya, you also have a, you have that image, you have that image of yourself, right, then you also, sort of, have reflected on what is happening to me? Why is it that I can't understand, you know, what I'm learning? Is it because I'm stupid or is it because of this and that, you know. So, as you went along, you sort of find, um, a way to, to understand that it is not because you are stupid or what, but, oh, this is how things work. Then you are comfortable with that, right? What about you?

Student 1: Um, okay, I was always one that, I always keep my feelings to myself and then I did Psychology, and I found out that other people are scared to speak up. In my work situation, I spoke up and my boss just stood there looking at me, like, okay. But he agreed with me with what I was saying, and eventually they moved me out of this section into another department, now they are moving me again, all this over a couple of months, so for me, I got more confidence because I sat back and looked at myself, and said, listen, this has to change now.

Ms B: So we have a lot of self-reflection here, okay, and what about you?

Student 4: Okay. As I read this chapter, I began to realise that I must help my self-esteem. I never had that, and then. Okay, in these situations, I never said anything, so as I read about self, self-image and self-reflection, I came to this point that I need to see myself as,

I am not to see myself as, okay, not to react as what people want me to. I have to react to what I want, so I be better, being somebody.

Ms B: Okay. *(Ms B looks to Student 3.)*

Student 3: I think from this chapter I have learnt to know myself and to know the necessities, yes.

Ms B: From what I am hearing, it is, um, there has been a shift, right, and from what you are saying, it is more of a positive shift and it is more forward than anything, it's like, you've been here and now you see yourself, you know, moving a bit further, isn't it? Right, now if we, we look at being here, and moving a step further or changing or being more positive and being something more assertive and so on, how do you relate this to, remember the theme of the book is "Man in Context?" Right, how do you relate this change to man in context, or to you in context, or how do you relate it to everything that we have done until now? Where would you fit the pieces, how do the pieces fit together? *(Silence.)* Do you understand the question? Like we are here now, right, this is you, right, and the way you have explained yourself, you have shifted, you are here, okay. Now, I want to know, okay *(resorts to writing on the paper in the middle of the circle.)* Okay, you were at point "A" right, and now you have told me that you feel like you are at another point, which I will call point "B", right, now what I want to know is, we have this context, isn't it? Right? When I say this context, I basically mean the context that you, you have with me here, the context that you have with me at Thutong, the context that you have with other students, contexts that you have at home, at work, generally all the contexts, that is the *YOU*, right. This is the you in this, okay? Now, what I want to know is - what has been happening here? How do you relate all the pieces? How do you put the pieces together, such that you arrive at this? What do you, is responsible for you having arrived at this point?

Student 3: I think it is acquiring knowledge.

Ms B: Is it because, did you acquire that knowledge by doing Psychology? Would it have been different if you didn't do Psychology? *(Class mutters yes.)* Do we all feel the same way? Okay, we owe it to Psychology - I've seen that, eh?

Student 1: If you do Psychology and it's influenced your life and you've taken that influence to positive means, then you'll find that you've shifted, your whole environment, you've changed, so that you can be better in your context.

(Bell rings at this stage to notify Ms B of the time she has available, and to suggest something useful for her to do with her students, namely to get students to reflect on themselves, in the here-and-now.)

Ms B: Right, what I want us to do now is to basically reflect on ourselves, right, in the here-and-now, okay, and like I said before, what is it that you think has happened to move you from whatever point you were in before, you know, to this point, given your context, okay? Do you prefer to do it openly or should I give you a piece of paper to just write it, talk about it?

(Student 2 indicates that she would prefer to write, and Ms B starts tearing pieces of paper in order to furnish everyone with a piece for the purpose of doing the task.)

Ms B: All right, I'm going to give you five minutes. I'm going to explain to you just now. Okay, you basically, okay, I'll just start with myself just to give you a clue of what is happening, okay, um, shifting from, the way you are looking at me, it's like you are saying,

aaah! at last, okay, okay, having shifted from one point to the next, what I can say it's, as you have mentioned before, doing Psychology basically gives you a chance to, to look inwards, right? To ask yourself, why am I doing this? Why is this happening? Is there any way I can, you know, change it, right? And looking at that why question, basically applying Psychology to your life, right, I'm not now, I don't really look at or question other people's behaviour, but I question other people's behaviour in relation to my own behaviour. What is it that I did such that the next person behaved the way that they do, okay? And the way I behave is different, depending on the context. How I behave with you in class and at home with my friends or wherever is different, right? But again, it's also the same to a certain extent because it's still me, my personality, okay? So, I've also learnt a lot in applying Psychology to myself, okay? And being able to fit in different situations and being able to look at my own behaviour, and not always blame other people for what is happening in our relationships, right? So, would you like to say something on, to that effect?

Student 5: Ya, I am happy to say something.

Ms B: You said you wanted to say something .... how has the context affected you to shift from point A to point B?

Student 5: It affected me through. I know that the certain behaviour is due to the fact that just like classical, I mean in classical conditioning, you learn about the operant and the what?

Ms B: Classical.

Student 5: And classical conditioning. It's that they are learning things, when they introduce us from the nervous system, they see how a man function in relation to his outward behaviour, I know that maybe, what can I say?

Ms B: What do you want to say? You can say it in Sotho, then somebody will tell us what is happening.

Student 5: No, I don't want to say it in Sotho. I just don't want to.

Ms B: You don't want to say it or you just can't express it.

Student 5: No, I can't express it, you know, let me just put it clear, that when you shift from A to B, just the way you have put it there, you shift by learning things, you learn various things in Psychology, so you start to adjust yourself, like, no man not this behaviour, I have to behave in this manner, just because of this is a good behaviour. Each and every person, there is the psychopaths, you can't just do that, when you are doing Psychology and Psychology tell you that when you do this, it results in this and this and this.

Ms B: What have you learnt in this context?

Student 5: Now?

Ms B: Have you learnt anything, maybe you haven't learnt anything, okay?

Student 5: I haven't learnt anything.

Ms B: You haven't learnt anything? *(Student 5 laughs and shakes his head, indicating that he has not learnt anything.)*

Ms B: What would be learning, what would learning mean for you in this context? If you were to learn something, what do you think ...?

Student 5: To learn something is for me, is to get a new knowledge, the minute I don't have it, so up to so far, I think, there is things that we have already done here. I know some of them and I know them. Some of them just cleared in my mind, I'm thinking so she is talking about self-evaluation, then is in my mind.

Ms B: So you are saying you haven't learnt anything new because *(No, I haven't learnt anything new)* because of your knowledge and what have you, okay? What about interacted, have you ever interacted with us as we are here?

Student 5: No.

Ms B: You haven't?

Student 5: I haven't.

Ms B: Has that taught you something, or it just doesn't matter?

Student 5: No, it do matters just because of what the testers want to know, how far can they retain the information that they learn, or how can they put it in a real life situation? They just want to see the students, that they can put it, what they have learnt into ....
(practice.) Yes, that is why we are interacting now.

Ms B: Okay, okay. What about you?

Student 3: I think, through this knowledge of Psychology, I have learnt to cooperate with other people, learnt to understand each other.

Ms B: And how has that helped you in this context, the things that you have mentioned, how have they helped you in the context, in the here-and-now?

Student 3: Socialise, socialise us.

Ms B: Okay, so before you were a little bit quiet and shy, okay, and now you can talk to us, okay. What about you?

Student 1: I found that I got a lot more confidence, well I think I had a certain degree of confidence, but I think it's grown a bit, and as a person, has made me able to do things that normally I think I would not have been able to do.

Ms B: And what about the context, has it taught you anything new, or have you experienced anything? What have you experienced here?

Student 1: That you can have your own opinion. And people are allowed to feel what they want and they shouldn't be scared to say it either.

Ms B: What about you?

Student 2: Myself, I can say I can understand about interesting subjects, within me and with other people. And another thing I understand, I acquire knowledge through our interaction because most of the things we say influence me and others, and through that interaction, I gain the knowledge, you understand, and another thing I have learnt is to differentiate between different situations and I have learnt to express feeling. Another thing I have learnt to understand myself, the way am I. I can see the courses taught me a lot of things because most of the things I was not aware, for example, accept the way am I and the way things happen, I couldn't accept those things, but now I can accept all those situations and things that is happening to me and to other people.

Ms B: Okay.

Student 4: In this context I have learnt to interact with other people, and through interacting with other people, I have gained more knowledge and I have learnt to accept people as they are, and to accept their point of view. Through these experiences, I have learnt to, okay, I have built my self-confidence, so it helped a lot.

Ms B: Okay, I think that will be all for today. If you don't have any questions and, um, if you don't have any burning issue that we are curious about, that is, you know, now that we have spoken about these things, and now that as we are going home, there will be other things that, you know, questions that will be coming out in our minds, and so on. Right, now what I want us to do for next week, this is Chapter 46, right, so, we read the next three

chapters and basically if you look at the, I always emphasise that whenever you read a chapter, you go back, how does it relate to everything that we have done, right? And don't forget to look at the beginning of the book where they have the biological, the part-systems, right, because you can see now that we have moved from the biological into the psyche, and we are more now, which is the other one, the social something, right? So, the idea is, when we read the next three chapters, we must be able to relate it to what we have just said because it was more about interacting with other people, right? Now we have to know, by reading those chapters, what does that mean, okay? And reflect again on what we have just said today, okay? So read there and keep in mind what we have just, um, spoken about, then next time we talk about and discuss the next three chapters, okay? And if there are any questions, you know, that crop up from what we did, we start with them next time. So, how was the experience for you, was it nice, was it scary, was it what?

Student 1: Nerve racking.

Ms B: Nerve racking, because, like you are going to be killed. *(Laughter.)* Would you love to do this again? *(Class says YA in tandem!)* So you liked it? You have enjoyed it. Good for you. Okay, so we will see each other next week then. Thanks.

Ms B's Comments on her Own Video Presentation

Well, I experienced the demonstration to be relaxed, the atmosphere was relaxed. Students were comfortable and they were able to, to express themselves, but what I also experienced was the fact that our relationship was complementary to a certain extent because I had to be, I had to be pro-active. I had to give them, um, a direction, that is, or that is my responsibility, maybe because they see me as a tutor, or maybe because I see myself as a tutor,

so in that way, I had to give them direction and, um, you know, sort of create and, um, choreograph a, a, a situation where they were able to express themselves. The other thing was, um, there was communication at different levels. I communicated with each one of them and they were also communicating, you know, with one another in terms of, if somebody maybe is stuck, you know, with words, then the other one will come in wanting to say something.

What was also interesting for me, or what I observed, was, um, the fact that, what was happening in the tutorial demonstration, was basically an extension of, um, how we relate to one another when we are at another setting, which is Thutong. There is the relationship that I have built with them so far, has actually helped us to relate the way that we were relating when we were here. And I found it interesting when they expressed, um, how they view the context, when they basically commented on the whole thing in terms of how it has helped them to, to be able to express themselves, um, to share their views, to be able to apply whatever they learnt to, to everyday life, to be confident, so for me it was what they have learnt before they came here. It also helped them to behave the way that they were behaving when they were here with me. And, um, well, having said all this, I think the content, that is, we were doing a topic on self-image and self-evaluation, in itself, was sort of a, a base on which all of this had to happen, because the content itself, it created a context where we were able to relate to each other the way we were, and to talk about things that we were talking about, which I am not sure would have been the case if maybe the, the topic was not self-image or self-evaluation. I am not sure if we were going to be as self-reflective as we were and get as personal as we did, but I would say the content was, in itself, you know, helpful in creating the kind of context that we had, and in creating the kind of atmosphere and in me being able to ask them the type of questions that I did, which were in most cases, personal

and in most cases, a person had to say "I", you know. I felt this, I do this thing this way, and

so on. And, um, what's the other thing? Okay, if I look at my relationship with them here

and I compare it with the relationship that I have with them at Thutong, there are certain

implicit rules that are there, and roles and I felt that those also, sort of, existed in this context,

like we know that when we come here, they know that they must have read whatever was

given to them the previous week, and, because when we come, the first thing is, they have to

say something about, you know, whatever they have read throughout the rest of the week, so

mine is just to ask them questions in terms of giving key words, then those key words sort of

guide me to know how, how much do they understand, you know, how far have they gone.

What is it that they do not understand? And it's a guiding point for me to know how am I

going to move in that particular day, so I don't actually, much as I, I prepare and plan, but the

actual, you know, the process it emanates from what the students are, are giving me. But, I

enjoyed, um, personally the demonstration because of the fact that the students were few, and

I could easily, or the other thing, I was sitting down, which I don't do most of the time. I was

sitting down, which was quite relaxing for me and, um, because of the small number, I was

able to reach everybody, you know, maintain a good eye contact with everybody and

everybody was able to express themselves. And what was interesting for me was that, the

students that were chosen, are that students that I don't perceive, are the students that I

perceive as quiet at Thutong. Now I got to see that they are not quiet because they are quiet,

they can't say anything, but I think they are quiet because of the context. They are dominated

by other students who are more talkative in that particular setting. So, the sitting arrangement

itself, it was helpful, which is the opposite of what is happening at Thutong. I don't, normally

have that type of sitting arrangement with them. Most of the time I'm standing in front of

them so that everybody can see me and I have to move to the sides, and, um, because of the large numbers, I cannot expect everybody to get a chance to express themselves, which was the opposite of what was happening here. So I can say that everything that happened, I can basically attribute to the fact that we have an established relationship with them and secondly, the sitting arrangement that was here. And also the fact that here, what I was doing, I was, in a way, pushing in a very subtle way by saying: "Do you have anything to say?", you know, which I do at Thutong, but seldom so because there are other people who are always there to offer their comments or whatever. So, there is it.

Students in the Class Offer their Comments Voluntarily (and Anonymously) in Writing

Student 1:   It was nerve racking at first, but as I watched the tutor, I began to gain confidence as she was helping everybody to get involved.

Student 2:   Myself, I can say that the tutorial was good because it taught me how am I with other people, and I am okay.

Student 3:   I was helped with socialisation, other people help me to cooperate with them, also the tutor.

Student 4:   My self confidence was helped to grow. Other people's opinions were okay with me, so my opinions must be okay too.

Student 5:   I thought that I learnt nothing new, but I forgot that to experience something is also learning, not just out of the book.

Three Psychology Tutors Comment Further (on Video)

Tutors: Ms D, Ms E and Ms F.

Place of work: Durban Learning Centre.

Ms D:

All right, I'd actually like to comment on something. She said something about the

tutor function in the comfortable atmosphere. Of course the atmosphere is going to be more

comfortable because all those students that showed up were prepared. They knew what they

were there for. The knew they were being filmed, of course, what is she going to do faced by

thirty or forty students, three quarters of which are unprepared? How is she going to get them

to discuss an information? That is the problem that I am facing.

Ms E:

I've actually been trying to encourage my students to do group work, and I'm facing

huge resistance, um, some students actually not pitching up on the days that they know we are

going to be doing group work, so I've got to actually try and spring it on them!

Unannounced. So, ya, I mean, it's wonderful to have that small group, where you can push

each person to respond, but it doesn't, doesn't work like that in real life.

Ms F:

My groups as well, I've been trying to break them up into smaller groups, with key

questions, and they've told me that they prefer to work individually. They don't want to work

in groups.

Ms D:

Yes, I had that problem. I don't actually tell them what we are going to do. I tell them

to prepare, and on the day they come, and I tell them, please sit yourself into groups of four

and, um, I give them different work to do, and you can always see the people, there are some

that really enjoy working together, but those are the ones that actually have groups, pre-

prepared groups. And they sit together and they chat about it, but there is always three or four

that prefer to work individually.

Ms E:

I think what she said about content is also very important. The topic, um, that she was

discussing, self-awareness, that type of thing, is, is an easy topic for group discussion. I mean

she mentioned that herself, that it's the type of topic that lends itself to discussion, but I mean,

for example, with me teaching research, and in particular, the latter sections of research where

we are actually dealing with statistics, I mean it is very hard to get group-type work going. It

doesn't lend itself to discussion. It's facts. You have to know how to do it, and, um, I think

that was also an important factor.

Ms D:

I think what bothers me more than anything else about this, is, I don't actually

understand what she was trying to do. She was, she was doing research on what? She was

doing research on an unreal situation, or is she trying to actually compare a real life situation

with a set-up situation because that's what it was, and gain what out of it?

Ms F:

It's not really helping us. Our groups are too big.

Ms D:

Exactly. I can never have that personal relationship that I build with my students individually. I can't, because I don't even know their names. I don't have time, in one hour a week, to learn people's names, to know what they need, what they want from me.

<u>Ms F:</u>

Especially when you have such a vast content that you have to cover.

Ms D:

And you have to cover it, because that is what they expect out of you.

Ms E:

I think that also applies to what we have been doing today, um, learning about different learning styles and, the fact of the matter is, that finding out students' learning styles takes time, which we don't have. Okay, how are we going to find out how different students learn? We'd have to set them some kind of exercise or activity or something like that, and we don't actually have time to do that. As you say, we barely have time to learn their names, so that's an issue, um ....

Ms D:

She also spoke about, um, the fact that she got her students, okay, the difference between the small group and the group in Thutong, um, she said that she found that the students that she chose, were some of the students that never expressed themselves in the situation in the bigger group, were given the opportunity to express themselves here, and it wasn't because they didn't have anything to say, but it was because that, there were others who had more to say and .... I actually find that that is a little bit of a simplistic way of looking at things because, as far as I'm concerned, those students, that on a regular basis, don't' have, don't have anything to say or don't say anything or don't express themselves, are

those that should express themselves because those are the ones that are facing the problems.

Ms F:

Not necessarily. With first years, they are very shy. In the context of thirty students, they know it.

Ms D:

I don't want to open my mouth .....

Ms F:

Ya, but they are just too shy to speak up.

Ms D:

There you go, that's the problem that you are facing. I am facing the problem that those are the ones that are afraid to open their mouths because they don't know how to express themselves. Now, how can you shut up the students that always talk? I mean, I come to the point where I say, please, I don't want to hear anything more from those that normally talk. I want to hear those that don't talk, and there is suddenly silence.

Ms F:

And everybody looks down ......*(laughter.)*

Ms E:

So how we would incorporate those students, I don't know ...

Ms D:

And you can't pick either. You can't say, I want *YOU* to answer, because it's not fair.

Ms E:

I just makes students ...

Ms D:

Afraid of you, and we are going back to the problem that they are not prepared.

Never. Really. Seriously. *(Sigh.)* And that's it. I don't have anything more to say.

Two UNISA Lecturers Have their Say (videorecorded)

Lecturer and promoter of this thesis in discussion with:

Lecturer: Ms G, Department of Psychology.

Place of work: UNISA.

The promoter:

In the first few minutes, what I liked was, um, the way that she started, that, um, she

asked them the questions, and so she actually waited for them to start the process. I don't

know if you had anything there ...

Ms G:

Ya, I just felt that, I felt that she's got that very easy-going, relaxed manner and yes,

she took that initiative, I thought, to get them started by asking, I thought, good questions.

The promoter:

And then, what I liked was that she linked it to previous, obviously, homework she

had given them and so again, she kind of put the responsibility on them and was facilitating

rather than telling at that point in time.

Ms G:

What I also liked was, um, the piece of paper she had because I felt like in the

questions she asked, she involved herself in the writing and she involved them in the

contributions that she got, because I felt initially, obviously they were feeling a bit, you know it was all strange being videoed, but in doing that, I think it was very nice. She started involving everybody in the whole process and I really liked that.

The promoter:

Ya, and then even more specifically, she asked them about themselves, um, and the me, and when the me came up, she immediately made it personal, a kind of an experiential, so they started very much with experiencing with what they were going to talk about.

Ms G:

Another thing that I picked up on is that, and I think it's a good thing for a facilitator, to pick up and to use the people who are willing to participate, because I noticed she did that, and she, in a way, allowed the quiet people to be initially quiet, because if you looked at the whole interview, in the end they were actually, the quiet ones, contributing quite a lot, so I thought that was also nice. I liked that, I think.

The promoter:

I liked the idea that she tried to include the people, but that she, she, they weren't threatened, um, and she didn't pressurise them too much, um, as you say, she used the ones that were, were willing to participate and yet tried, so she showed sensitivity to me in trying to draw out the quiet ones, but then respected, um, those boundaries. I liked that. And what I also liked was that, whatever the responses, they were treated as worthy responses, um, and put down on paper as a worthy response.

Ms G:

She affirmed them and "A hum", and used a lot of those kind of, smiled a lot, you know, um ... I liked that, actually.....

The promoter:

I, I, I actually found that very interesting that she, she really affirmed strongly in her "Hmm's" wasn't only the nod of the head, but it was really quite a strong affirmation and her body language then, she used well, um, I thought that maybe, I found that just interesting that, in our video we made, we, we tended to not affirm sufficiently in terms of body language. She was affirming well. Ya. Ya.

Ms G:

Let's see what else I got.

The promoter:

Oh, perhaps in the meantime, can I go on to, um. If found that the links she made with the theories *(Ms G indicates that this was her next point, and the two are delighted at the synchronicity.)* Oh, is that the next one? Oh ya, ya! The links she made, she made very good links with the theory without putting the theory first, the experience was first, but then the links were made and in a very meaningful way, I thought.

Ms G:

Yes. Yes. I also noticed how she used, you know, what she had written on the paper, and she said, remember what we did last week, you know, so she again linked it back to what they have already done and brought that into the present as well. I thought that worked well.

The promoter:

Ya. Well, you know, just overall, I was thinking of the whole process, she was absolutely flexible in using whatever they had to offer. Now, I don't think all tutors would be able to do that, because you have to be very confident, that you will be able to handle those responses, um, because they could have come up with anything, and she would then be prepared to link that into a structure which she obviously had in her mind, um, but she

allowed them to move with it and she linked with that. Now I would say that's ideal, whether everybody would be able to do that, I don't know.

Ms G:

Ya. And another thing is the way she generated the information, the way she kept asking questions and I thought those questions also challenged them, because I did pick up that at times they felt a little uncomfortable, but I think she made them think and she made them think about what they were saying, and just like in terms of writing exams, she made them give more information and I liked that, because I think that is one of their weak, um, students often don't give us enough information, but she really helped them, got that idea going, that if you say something, you need to explain why, what made you say that.

The promoter:

A little more .... *(That's right.)* Opening up the conversation with the questions. Ya, I think ....You know, this just makes me think of how important it is, and we also discovered that, that when you facilitate, you have to have some structure. You cannot, even though she started off very little structure, she then brought in structure which was, people need to learn with open, openness and flexibility, but within, within a structure, which I find is good.

Ms G:

Another point that I think I commented on, I felt at times, that she, she was working hard. I do think she was working hard, um, the whole session, um, I do also have, you know, that kind of sympathy with her to get the conversation going because, initially, I think it really isn't easy, and given that the whole strange situation of being videod, you know, but I, what I wanted to say, it was hard, and she had to put a lot of work into it, but I, she succeeded. She succeeded in getting the conversation going, so maybe that's another thing, that one needs to persist and to actually get it going. Don't give up and don't just stop.

The promoter:

Also in terms of the understanding, I liked the way that she checked out whether they

had understood and then, when one person understood, she didn't stop and agree with that

person and that was end of story. Or she commented on whether that was now accurate or not

or a possible explanation, she first checked out whether the others also understood, and then,

when they kind of all understood, and you could see the progression in the levels of

understanding, you know, and then when people could really make it their own with the

personal examples, and they really came alive, that I found very .....

Ms G:

And that's when the conversation really started ...

The promoter:

And that she helped them with terminology. I felt, you know, she made sure, and

then, how the process actually allowed, became self-explanatory, so that a very difficult

concept like congruence and incongruence, then became so clear, that she could bring it in at

a point and then, it had been explained, which I thought, you know, that really was good.

Ms G:

She always, as you said, made things clear. She also, in a way, extended the

conversation by clarifying.

The promoter:

So, she didn't abscond in the realm of facilitation, she actually commented on that

herself, you know, you know, that she needed to play that role, ya, um.

Ms G:

Another point that I wanted to make, she always, I noticed, used their language. If

they had said something in a particular way, then she took that and then, took it into another,

you know, idea and so on, and I think that also helps people connect, connect into the theory and connect the experience into the theory and extend their understanding. I liked that very much.

The promoter:

And the other thing I, she, she first asked them whether they thought something made sense, and then explored it then further with the others, even though somebody had given a very good answer. She asked them whether that made sense.

Ms G:

And then I just also commented, you know, when she asked them about, you know, um, what would grab them. When she asked it, and they kind of sat and looked at her, and then I felt she kind of, in a way, belaboured the point a bit. She then spoke too much and, um, our experience as well, coming from Pietersburg, you also know that, you know, talking too much doesn't help. That was my one criticism.

The promoter:

I, what I also found that I liked was the fact that when she was very in touch with where they were at in their understanding, and when she was, kind of, a level above, she picked it up and then she went down, down, to the concrete level. When the verbal explanation wasn't sufficient, she went down to drawing it. First showing it and then drawing, actually drawing it, until she was sure that they were kind of with her.

Ms G:

And I think that also has another function, in that it also confirms and reinforces in another way what they have learnt. She is giving them other channels of clarifying.

The promoter:

Obviously this was part of the topic, but you know, the fact that it was then taken from

one context into another context, and that they became part of that context, and the

applications and the personal applications, and here it become very personal in a sense, ya, ya.

But, again, they were allowed, some of them were prepared to share and others wouldn't and

that was respect.

Ms G:

And I think, again, that that is something that just naturally evolved out of this, out of

the interview that we watched. It might not happen every time, but I think it happened. She

took the moment and went with it and I think that was important.

The promoter:

Ya, and I think that, that principle of immediacy, using what is happening now, that

was so excellent that she said, How did you feel when you were chosen to be part of this

group? I mean, that made it so real, and then they could talk about that, so that was very

good. What struck me is, um, while watching this video, the importance of concentration,

concentration span, because I myself felt, that even before the session had ended, I had now

reached my level of saturation, so I think it's important to either break up the whole thing at

one point in time and get people to get up and breathe and whatever, and go outside,

whatever. I know it's not always possible, but it really struck me that an hour can be a long

time for people to concentrate.

Ms G:

I also experienced the same, but I felt there was a very nice flow and there was an

impetus and then it kind of, as you say, got to a point where it evened it out. But I also

wanted to comment on that point of, of interruption. And I felt, actually at that moment, that

was when there was quite a bit of personal sharing and I just felt that that interruption, kind of

stopped the flow. I think that what was happening in the room, in a way, needed to have its

own end, needed to finish in its own way, and, um, I think we just chatted in the room and said it is important to, like, I think you and the author were in that room probably in your own conversation, but not being part of what was going on in the actual, actual session, and I think that it's important that one needs to respect that you don't always, um, not always aware of the processes, ya.

The promoter:

I suppose that, that was not really happening in the real life situation at the tutorial, but that principle would again be demonstrated, that people on the outside of the process or on the outside of the conversation cannot really comment on the conversation that they are not really part of. They can, they can comment, but they will always be commenting from the outside, like we are now commenting from the outside on a conversation of which we weren't really part of, so, um, again, who are the people that you really need to ask? The people that are in the conversation, okay?

Ms G:

Thanks.

The promoter:

Hope this will help.

MS C'S END OF THE YEAR, EXAM SKILLS TUTORIAL

Introduction

I am Ms C and I have been a tutor at the Thutong Learning Centre in Pretoria since 1996. Thus, I have three years experience as a tutor. This will be a demonstration of an exam tutorial and the class will consist of second year psychology students. We will use examples from the Developmental Psychology syllabus. Thank you for joining us and we hope you enjoy the tutorial with us.

The Tutorial Class

Ms C: Okay. Good morning people.

Class: Morning *(in tandem.)*

Ms C: Um. We are going to do an exam revision, a bit of exam revision today. So, before we start, I want to know. I told you to try and use study techniques in the last tutorial and I want to know from you, did it help you? Did you try and use any new study technique? Okay, did you try something new? *(Ms C points to a student with her hand up.)*

Student 1: Ya, what I did, I. What I was doing originally. *(Mmm)* I was now taking my summaries *(Mmm)* and then like basically doing another summary. And I think that's what's just buggering up. So now, I just read through my *(Mmm)* summaries with my study guide, *(Mmm)* and I follow the stages of the study guide and then I answer the questions in the study guide. *(Okay)* Then, when I finish one whole section, I then do the assignment, *(Oh,*

Okay) and I find it a lot easier ....*(Okay.)*

Ms C: Okay. Anybody else? Yes *(Pointing to another student.)*

Student 2: Ya. I was with one of my member of my group *(Yes).* Eh, we were

doing, eh, in, infants memory *(Yes)* and then, as we said, we must try the technique of, the

technique of reading aloud *(Yes, yes)* and then try to, to to read on, on on different, um, how

shall I put it? We are alternating, alternating in reading *(Oh, Okay)* and then we close our

books and then see whether we have understood and discuss it and then internalised it. It

means we had to go through it, maybe twice, *(Yes)* and then we can internalise it, and then it

worked. *(Did it work?)* It worked, because when she left in the afternoon, we could, you

know, relate to each other *(Oh)* verbally *(You could remember what it was about)* without

looking into the book *(Oh, that's very good, yes, very good.)*

Ms C: Okay, now let's start with an example which we can do together. I am just

going to do a little possible, paragraph question with you, um, and it is, about, um, identity

diffusion and identity status. Now, if we look at Marcia's theory, the question, I'll read the

question to you: According to James Marcia's theory, is it possible to experience identity

diffusion after the identity status, that is, identity achievement is achieved? And give reasons

for your answer. Okay, so what is the key word in this question? Let m, do you want me to

read it again? Okay.

Class: Yes please. Ya *(In tandem.)*

Ms C: According to James Marcia's theory, is it possible to experience identity

diffusion after the identity status, that is, identity achievement, is achieved? And give reasons

for your answer.

Student 2: The key word is identity diffusion (Okay, *identity diffusion)* and identity

status, achievement *(Class starts to call out the key words in tandem and Ms C moves to*

board to write up the key words.)

Ms C: Okay. Now, okay, but what, what is also very important to remember in this question?

Class in tandem: James Marcia's theory.

Ms C: So that you don't go and, um, go to Erickson's ... *(Ms C continues to write on the board.)* Okay ..... Okay, now, um, okay, go to, okay, did you prepare a bit for this, *(Yes)* so you know what the question is about? *(Yes.)* Okay, good. So, go to, first of all, your, what you remember about identity diffusion? What do you remember about that? There is, um, ...

Student 3: There is confusion.

Ms C: Okay. Yes. There is confusion. Go, yes on page 429 there is a good summary over there about um, *(diffusion)* identity diffusion. Okay, what does it say there? Yes? *(Ms C points to student who has her hand up.)*

Student 2: A person may not, or, experience any crisis .....

Ms C: Ok, um, Okay. The, the okay, the crisis is present at the moment, so he is still busy with a problem. He knows the identity diffusion is ..... he knows he doesn't know yet! *(Ya, Okay.)* Has a crisis. Okay. And , um, what is absent during identity diffusion? He knows, he *(commitment)* yes, commitment is absent, so he knows he hasn't, he still has to make up his mind, um, so now, the identity achievement. What does, what does identity achievement. What is that about? What. How does it differ from identity diffusion?

Student 3: Well, they've already decided what they are committed to.

Ms C: Okay, they have commitment and they, do they have a crisis?

Class: No.

Ms C: Okay, so they are past their crisis. So the question asked: Is it possible to have identity diffusion after identity achievement?

Class: No. No. No, it's not possible. No after, no.

Ms C: Okay, why? What is your reason?

Student 3: Don't know.

Student 1: Because with identity, um, achievement, *(Mmm)* we've gone through the crisis *(We've already solved it)* so you've already solved the problem, so then you've passed the identity diffusion.

Ms C: You have already solved your crisis, so there's no, so you don't need to go and solve the same crisis again. *(No.)* Okay. Um. So in that sense, it's not *(possible),* Yes. So that would be your answer. *(Ya.)*

Student 3: Can you not have made up your mind in terms of an identity, and then, for something like your career or another aspect, go back into diffusion? Or no, is that not possible?

Ms C: Well, um, that is what I was going to get to at a moment. Um, if you look at Marcia's theory, it says you can go through different stages *(Yes)* at different times. You go through it. And do you think he will really go and change his whole career now *(Shaking of heads to indicate no)* if he is, if he is, if he gets new options or whatever? *(Student who asked the question is shrugging her shoulders to indicate that she does not know.)* It could be. It could be. Yes. If he, a person is at a later stage. Okay, so then, it is possible to *(Yes)* experience identity diffusion after identity achievement. Okay, so new options, that is, say you use the example of someone who goes and study medicine. *(Right.)* He has got his degree for medicine, but now he's got a degree. Now he has, now he can choose. Now he

has new options. Now after my degree in medicine, I know I can become a neurologist, a a psychiatrist, whatever. And now, he can specialise. So, he can, so again he's confronted with new ideas, new options. So, what is your final answer now?

Student 3: I would say yes ..

Ms C: Okay, so it is possible *(Ya.)* Okay. Um, perhaps not with the exact same um, decision that you were faced with before, the, the exact same crisis, his, he doesn't like to go and study medicine again. He doesn't have to decide about that, but he has new options after his degree, so it is possible. So this question would count three marks, one mark for the "Yes". Okay? Then, you have to explain first what is identity diffusion and identity achievement. Okay? For that, each one, you will get one mark for the explanation. So, identity diffusion is the crisis is present, commitment is absent. Achievement is the commitment is present, but the, um, crisis *(crisis)* is absent. And then you say, and the reason is you are faced with new options, um, new decisions, um, but probably will not have to decide about the same crises again because he has already achieved what he wants. Okay. Now I am going to give you your questions. Um. Okay. Okay the first one, the first question is a multiple choice question. Um. Perhaps I should, I am just going to read you the question and then you can look at the possible answers. The question is: Which of the following factors promote the moral development of adolescents? Okay, so, now, so you, immediately in the exam, you go to, what is the key word here?

Class: Moral development *(In tandem.)*

Ms C: Moral development and ....

Class: Adolescents *(In tandem.)*

Ms C: And ..... the factors which promote ... Okay, so here's, here's that question. There are your options and the next question is, um, it's a paragraph question: Discuss the

changes and the reasons for them in the parent-adolescent relationship. Okay.

Student 4: Paragraph question?

Ms C: Yes. It's a paragraph question - discuss the changes and the reasons for them in the parent-adolescent relationship. And it's for ten marks.

Student 1: Must we work together?

Ms C: Yes. You work in one group, otherwise, that you can discuss the whole, and ask me if you have questions about anything. *(Discussion and whispering begins as class gets to work. Ms C places the worksheet in the middle, so all can see the exercise.)* Can you see that?

Student 5: Yes. Thank you.

(Laughter and movement as the class relaxes and settles in to the task, but they seem to be confused about what to tackle first and what next.)

Ms C: That is the first one *(Ms C points)* after you have done with that one, you can put that one in. *(Class sets to work and Ms C moves around her students, monitoring them. Silence sets in. Ms C addresses this by saying the following:)* You must discuss this, you know. What is the first one, the first option there? What do you think about it? Which one, someone just read the first option there .....

Student 2: Participation in peer group activities where different values are discussed.

Ms C: Okay, so?

Class in tandem: Yes, Ya.

Ms C: Okay, so you all agree with that, okay. "B". "B".

Student 6: The development of formal operational thinking and a decrease in egocentrism.

Student 3: "B" as well.

Ms C: You think "B" as well, okay. Then "C".

Student 5: Parents who do not demand heteronomous acceptance of their values.

Ms C: Okay, what. You would say yes *(implying Student 3)* and she would say no *(implying Student 7.)* Okay, okay so it is "A", "B", perhaps "C". Okay, "D".

Student 2: Parents who use inductive disciplinary techniques and who are good models for moral behaviour.

Student 5: So, all of the above.

Ms C: You say all of the above. Okay, um, then, are you, so you are happy with that? That's what you would do in the exam?

Class: *(Mumbles as if to indicate yes.)*

Ms C: Okay. Great, the next one ......Oh yes, that one. Okay, all of the above is correct by the way. Okay, someone just read it again.

Student 1: Discuss the changes and the reasons for them in the parent-adolescent relationship.

Ms C: Okay, what is the, what are the key words?

Student 1: Um, changes and parent-adolescent relationship.

Ms C: Okay. Good, so? What would be the first thing that you would do ... in this question? What is the first thing that you would write down?

Student 5: You write the key words down.

Ms C: Okay, and after that when you start answering it?

Student 1: Well, you have got to discuss it ......

Ms C: Okay, but what are you going to discuss first?

Student 1: The changes ...

Ms C: Okay, yes, obviously, because the question is first about the changes and then the reasons. Okay. So first, you discuss the changes. So you can't remember, quickly turn to your textbooks for the changes ...

Student 1: There is conflict between the parent and adolescent.

Ms C: Okay, just write down the answers for this question.

Student 1: And then, um, nobody is talking ..... *(student laughs at the inactivity between the class members, no one is saying anything.)*

Ms C: Yes, but do you agree with her? Who says she is not talking nonsense?

Student 5: Do you want, do you want a paragraph of the question afterwards or are you going to discuss it?

Ms C: Um, yes, you just write down the key words and then we can discuss it.

Student 5: Okay. All right.

Ms C: Okay, but don't just write it down, just make sure the others have been included because you have to give a group answer.

Student 3: Why does there need to be conflict, because adolescents just start to question values, but you don't have to fight about it, you can just discuss them?

Ms C: Okay. Okay. Okay.

Student 3: And they start to separate as well and they have more to do with their peers than they do with their parents.

Student 1: They are more, um, independent ......

Student 3: Ya.

Ms C: Okay. What do you say? *(Ms C prompts a student that has been largely silent, but the student will not engage.)*

Student 1: The paren, surely the parenting styles will have a lot to do with it as well because, depending on how, what style you use ...?

Ms C: Okay, but that, aren't we getting into the reasons now?

Student 1: Oh yes ..... Okay, so what are the changes?

Student 1: Well, you get that conflict between the parent and the child.

Ms C: Okay, is that the only thing?

Student 1: No.

Student 6: They are more involved with their friends.

Ms C: Okay, they are more involved with their friends, so what happens? They ..?

Student 3: They're questioning.

Student 1: They become independent.

Ms C: Okay, that's the second change. What would be? Okay, the question counts ten marks, so you would think that there would be more than two changes ....

Student 1: Ya ...

Student 3: One of the changes, they become more questioning and more independent ...

Ms C: Yes, so the changes doesn't only occur in the relationship itself, but also occurs in parents' behaviour and the adolescents' behaviour, so how does the adolescents' behaviour change? You just said it .....

Student 3: Oh, they're questioning things.

Ms C: Yes, they, they become more questioning, okay, they are questioning their rules, their values, okay. And the parents, what do they do?

Student 3: They're more controlling.

Student 2: They feel upset ....

Student 5: Ya, they feel upset ..... That's the word I am looking for .....

Ms C: Why, Why? Yes, yes, they feel upset about the changes in their children and how do they react? Like?

Student 5: They are more controlling.

Ms C: Yes, they want them to be babies again, okay. And what does that, what happens then?

Student 2 &5: It leads to more conflict.

Ms C: Okay, so we are again back to conflict.

Class: Ya.

Ms C: Okay.

Student 5: And especially between the um, mother and the adolescent, more than ....

Ms C: Okay, why, why do you think?

Student 5: Because the mother is more involved with the child's upbringing.

Ms C: Okay. Okay. Okay. Okay, so, okay we have then four changes. Okay. Now, do you think you can start with the reasons? Do you think you have enough changes now?

Student 3: What about hormonal changes?

Ms C: Okay, but, okay. It will add, it will be more of a reason than of a change. Okay, okay. Then you can continue for, on, onto the reasons.

(The author sounds the bell to summon Ms C to the intercom in order to ask her to address the theme of exam anxiety and how to manage it. The class resumes their discussion on the question at hand while the tutor is indisposed. The class come up with biological, intellectual and cognitive changes in their discussion.)

Ms C: Okay, you are all writing this down that you can hand it in at the end of the session.

Student 1: Well, half of mine is almost all ten points *(all share in the joke.)* But now, won't the parenting styles be a reason? Because we have said, so far we have said biological changes, the development of the adolescents' own identity, um, social development, um, when they become more independent in their own peer groups and then there are cognitive changes, but won't, doesn't there, don't their parents handle them differently?

Ms C: Yes, what do the rest of you think?

Student 3: Yes, there is a fit between the adolescent and the parent, aren't they also ..?

Ms C: A reason. Okay, what is the question about?

Student 3: Adolescence.

Student 1&5: Parent-adolescent relationship.

Ms C: Yes, the parent and adolescent relationship, the changes, and the reasons for the changes. So, do you think, um, the type of parenting style, um, is going to change during the parent-adolescent relationship?

Class: No. Not necessarily.

Student 6: It is going to affect the adolescent.

Ms C: So, it is going to affect it, but it is not going to change, and what is this question about?

Class: Change.

Ms C: So, it is not applicable to the, so you must be careful when you answer an exam question, don't do something like this, don't, yes, take a sidetrack and start answering about parenting styles and that wasn't one of the questions. Okay. Okay, um, because I want you to um, afterwards just to, um, write down one full, good group answer, perhaps you can write it down there *(pointing to the centre of the group.)*

Student 5: Okay.

Ms C: Okay, so, okay.

Student 5: Okay, and the other, um, reason for change is the, um, development of the identity.

Student 1: Ya, we said that.

Student 5: Did we? ...

Student 1: Yes.

Student 5: For the reason? ...

Ms C: Okay, so. Okay, so, okay, what are the reasons now? Give me the four reasons. Okay ...

Student 5: Cognitive, developmental, identity and social development.

Ms C: Okay, so, now, so you gave four reasons, okay, but, and you have four changes, now you have eight marks, so where do you think the other two marks? ...... What didn't, what has a big influence, do you think, about, on the change and the, okay, how should

I put this? What would you say more about, which of those reasons could you say more?

Student 3: The cognitive changes.

Ms C: Yes.

Student 5: And the biological.

Ms C: Okay, but the, let's go to the cognitive - what about the cognitive?

Student 3: Well, they start to reason from the possible to the real.

Ms C: Okay, that's, yes, that's one reason, that's another. That's one of the cognitive, um, reasons. The other one?

Student 3: They form operational thought and they start to think in a scientific way and deduct from this.

Ms C: And, yes, and, and, okay. So you have to, um, explain a bit more about the cognitive. Okay, now, um, are you two quickly going to write down a good answer for us? *(Ms C chooses students that have been largely inactive so far.)* Okay. Okay. Write the full, the full paragraph answer like you would answer in the exam.

Student 1: How do you suggest we do that? Do you think we should, when we write our answer, should we first highlight all the changes or should we incorporate it?

Ms C: Are you saying?

Student 1: Discuss the changes *AND* the reasons ...

Ms C: Okay, that, that would depend on you. You could either say this is a change and conflict is because of the cognitive reasons or whatever, or you could just say these are the changes and these are the reasons .... It depends on you.

Student 1: Oh, all right.

Ms C: Because they didn't specifically ask you to give an integrated answer, or

whatever, they just say ....

Student 1: So they won't .....

Student 4: First the changes, and then the reasons ...

Ms C: Okay, so tell her *(indicating the one that was assigned the task)* what the changes are that she can write it down in full sentences.

Student 2: They enter a complex social environment.

Ms C: Pardon?

Student 2: On that they enter a complex social environment.

Ms C: Okay, is that the first, is that what you, the first change?

Student 2: Yes.

Ms C: Okay, oh, okay.

Student 2: They are questioning parental rules.

Ms C: Oh, okay! Yes, that's the first one.

Student 2: *(Turning to her group member)* As they enter the complex social environment, they question their parental values, roles and regulations, and they question, and this results in conflict.

Ms C: Okay. Okay, so you question the values, then there is the next reason, the conflict ...

Student 2: And then the parent becoming more controlling ..

Ms C: Because of the? ...

Student 2: Sudden changes in the adolescent.

Ms C: Okay. Okay, okay, and then ...

Student 1: And then their independence.

Ms C: Ya.

Student 1: The independence is another change.

Ms C: Okay. What do you have so far? *(Ms C checks on the girl assigned the task.)* Okay, you have to write there what values they question. They question their own values, their parents' values.

Student 2: Their parental values.

Ms C: So you must write it there *(indicating the sheet of paper.)*

Student 2 to girl assigned the task: Parental values ...

Ms C: *(Coaxing the girl assigned the task)* Question the values of the parents. Ya.

Student 4: Parents become more controlling, that's the second ....

Ms C: Okay, the parents become more controlling, okay, that's another reason. Then?

Student 2: They become upset and more controlling.

Ms C: Okay, and then, the next reason. What is the next reason? They become more controlling ..

Student 2: And then this result in conflict.

Ms C: Okay. Okay, conflict *(Ms C sticks to the girl that is writing down the group answer.)* Another reason is conflict. And now the change. Okay, and what is the last one? What is, can you remember what the last change is?

Student 1: Have they put in their independence?

Ms C: No, okay. That's the last change ..

Student 4: Independence?

Ms C: Yes. Of whom?

Student 4: The adolescent.

Ms C: Okay, then you write it down. Okay, then you give your reasons ... Tell her what is the first reason.

Student 1: Biological changes, because now they are in the stage of puberty.

Ms C: Yes. Okay, and the next reason?

Student 5: Cognitive.

Ms C: Cognitive changes. Okay, what did you say about the cognitive changes?

Student 1: It's when they start using formal operational thought.

Student 2: They reason from the possible to the real.

Ms C: Good. Okay, okay, so there you have three reasons, okay.

Student 1: Social development.

Ms C: Social development. Just elaborate on that. Why is social development a reason?

Student 1: Because that's when they start to form their independence and they start to go out with their peer group.

Ms C: Okay. Yes, so.

Student 2: And they develop some social competencies.

Ms C: Yes, social competencies.

Student 2: Develop by themselves and the styles of their parents. Social maturity.

Ms C: Yes, competence and ...

Student 2: Social maturity. And how do they acquire that – by?

Student 1: Peer group.

Ms C: Yes, mainly through the peer group because that is their new social group.

Student 2: Interaction.

Ms C: So, you have to add there peer group *(Ms C is addressing the student who has been assigned the task of writing up a group answer.)* Through contact with their peer group. Okay, and then the last one.

Student 1: Have you done the development of their own identity?

Ms C: And how could that be a reason?

Student 1: Well, they are now establishing their own values and their own , um, what's the other word?

Student 4: Identity.

Student 1: Yes.

Ms C: Yes. Okay.

Student 2: They have to make choices.

Ms C: Yes, so they have to make more independent decisions, part of the identity formation. Okay, are you happy with your answer? Just encircle the correct answer for me here as well. Can you still remember what you decided?

Student 4: No.

Student 5: All of the above.

Ms C: All of the above. Okay, now, now that we have looked at the exam kind of questions you could expect and so on, I want to know - are you all relaxed when you arrive there in the exam hall, good mood ... *(Class breaks out in a reaction, saying "no" and indicating their apprehension.)* Okay, what do you do when you, how do you feel when you arrive at the exam hall, and you are going to write the exam now?

Student 1: Tense, stressed and my hands sweat.

Student 2: I usually don't want to go into an exam room tense. I feel like being confident.

Ms C: So you, what do you do, now what do you do when you feel confident? How do you do?

Student 2: I just say, I am going there, I am going to write. I am going there, in there, I am going to write and I'll see how the question paper, just going to approach it as I see it ...

Ms C: Okay.

Student 2: Ya!

Student 7: She's a very brave lady! *(Laughter from everyone.)*

Student 4: When you stand in front of people, you become tense, you don't know them, it's ..

Student 5 to Student 2: Have you studied before, all of this?

Student 2: Ya, I've been doing my studies since 1994.

Student 5: '94? Okay, okay it is only our *(indicating Student 1 and herself)* second year, so we are still very ..

Ms C: So what do you do, what do you, how do you prevent yourself from? ...

Student 4: It's always, except for saying that you, you have been at the field for quite some time. It's, it's always *(Class all respond, mixing their views, making their dialogue indistinguishable.)*

Ms C: So, no matter how long you have been studying, you still feel anxious?

Student 4: You can get your Honours, your Masters, but you still feel the same way.

Ms C: Okay. Now what, what do you, what do you think you should do when you

feel so anxious? Do you think you should keep on feeling anxious and write like that *(Ms C demonstrates anxiety.)*

Student 5: No.

Student 2: You are going to be too tense when you enter the "C" hall *(Laughter at this precise recollection.)*

Student 5: *(Laughing)* "C" hall!

Student 2: *(Laughing)* Hall "C". You are really going to distort some information that you have stored in your brain to deliberate on your exam question answer book.

Ms C: So you agree, you have to really try and put an effort into getting relaxed?

Student 2: Ya, you must try.

Ms C: Okay, so what do you think you should do? Do you think you should go quickly and talk to your friends and tell, ask them - did you learn this?

Class: No! No! No! No!

Student 7: You are going to be more confused.

Ms C: Okay, so you stay away from the topic that you are going to write about at all costs. Okay, so what do you?...

Student 8: When you write, you mustn't talk about the paper.

Student 2: Unless you keep yourself far out of sight of other people and then you just go through those ones which you think you have not internalised fully and then, just go through them before you enter, but do not discuss anything.

Ms C: Okay. No discussion on anything.

Student 1: Just upsets you.

Student 5: Confusion.

Ms C: And, um, do you think you should do what she said, just read through the work quickly?

Student 5: No! No! No!

Ms C: Not advisable, you have to be very brave like she is *(Laughter.)*

Student 5 to Student 2: You must leave it at home and you go for a lunch like me and Karin, we go for lunch before we write and we just ate salad and orange juice and then we, at about quarter past one, we leave and then at quarter to two we are there ...

Ms C: And you talk about everything except the exam.

Student 5: Ya.

Ms C: Okay, okay. Okay, so now you are sitting there in the exam, in your chair with your pens and everything, okay, just remember, be equipped. Don't arrive there and realise you don't have a pen. You are nervous as it is, so if you get there and you have a pen and a pencil and everything, then you are going to get more nervous, so make sure you have everything, so it starts, relaxation starts at home. When you get in the car, in the bus or whatever, you have your bag with everything fully equipped. You don't talk to anybody *(laughter)*, not about the work, okay, and then you are in the exam hall. Now you are still a bit tense, what do you do now?

Student 5: You pack out your things ..

Ms C: Okay, okay.

Student 3: You try and breathe! *(Loud laughter.)*

Ms C: Yes. Try and breathe! *(More laughter.)* Please do that. Okay, um, okay, perhaps a few deep breaths would do the trick and a bit of relaxing of your arms and thinking

about something ..

Student 2: Stretching your arms, I usually do that....

Ms C: Yes, okay, so you see, you have your techniques ready. Okay.

Student 1 to Student 2: You're quite calm though.

Student 5: Ya, always *(Student 2 enjoys the compliment.)*

Student 2: Always?

Student 5: Ya.

Student 2: Not always.

Ms C: I just get nervous thinking about the exams, she's ...

Student 5: She's always confident.

Ms C: Yes, that's very good.

Student 7: And you make a short prayer.

Ms C: Oh, yes.

Student 2: Yes!

Student 5: Ya, that can help.

Student 1: That I do. That I do all the time.

Student 2: Actually, that's the first thing that one must do when you sit on that

chair.

Ms C: Okay.

Student 5: Ms C, about the pens and the pencils, I just want to say to everyone, it's

no need, like Karin, to take 200 pencils *(Laughter.)* Last year she took a whole box of

pencils, oooh, she had me laughing, oooh.

Ms C: She was very equipped. She equipped the whole exam hall *(more laughter.)* Okay, so you, when you sit in your seats, you just take a few deep breaths, relax your arms and think of something relaxing on the beach and so on, but don't relax too much. You need a bit of energy to still write the exam and the end of the day. Okay. So, do you think you are equipped for the coming exam?

Student 5: Not yet.

Student 2: We are not so fully equipped, but we are towards that.

Student 3: I just want to ask you if we can do more of the one we did.

Ms C: Yes, we are going to do it just after this.

Student 2: We are towards to be fully equipped for the exam. We have studied already.

Ms C: Okay. So you have studied, finished with your studies and everything. You are fully equipped.

Student 2: No. Not yet, we are towards that.

Student 5: We will be.

Student 1: There is a lot of work though and I find, I think that everything is going to be important because I might just leave out something, and that's the question they ask me.

Ms C: Okay.

Student 1: I just find it so, there is just so much work.

Ms C: Okay, so what do you do when you get a question which you know for sure you didn't learn? There you are in the exam, you are a bit tense and everything, you've done all your relaxing exercises, you feel okay, but suddenly the first question which you see, you can't remember learning that.

Student 5: You leave it. Go to the next one. Go to the second one.

Ms C: Leave it.

Student 1: I leave it.

Ms C: Build your confidence and then you return to the one at the end when you feel very confident and relaxed and you know you are going to pass this ...

Student 2: I usually do that when I find a question that I do not know. Which one was it - Education 303, there was a question of 10 marks that I didn't know, but I did pass.

Ms C: Oh! Good, so if you ...

Student 1: And you left that question out?

Student 2: I left it out.

Ms C: So don't scare yourselves such if you don't know it all. Okay. Okay, so, um, good luck for the exams and, um, we enjoyed this year together. Thank you.

Student 1 and 2: Thank you.

Student 5: Thank you very much.

Ms C: And we want to, and we want to thank you for watching this tutorial with us and, um, all the students chosen for these tutorials were randomly chosen from the classes and, um, we hope you enjoyed it and it will be helpful for you. Thank you.

Ms C's Comments on her Own Video Presentation

Hi! Now I am going to comment on the content and processes of the exam tutorial which I have conducted. First I will comment on those aspects which are similar to a more natural tutorial and especially the aspects of content which is always important to emphasise

during an exam tutorial:

It is always a valuable experience for the students if one discusses and do a few examples of exam questions during the tutorial, then they know what to expect in the exam.

Students should be constantly reminded to identify the keywords in an exam question, and only after the keywords have been identified, should they start to answer the question.

Accentuate the importance of concentrating on the specific exam question, and warn them of the possible dangers of digression from the original question.

Exam techniques are invariably important to discuss during an exam tutorial and the ideas of the tutor and students can provide the more anxious students with techniques to cope with their stress.

The following are processes which I regularly use during tutorials:

The keyword of any tutorial is always: discussion. The participation of the students is therefore essential and facilitates learning and a growing independence, during, among the students.

The use of prompting also encourages discussion as opposed to lecturing and is a technique I regularly use during tutorials.

Secondly I am going to examine aspects of, especially the processes, which differ from the more natural environment of the usual tutorial:

The observer effect is obviously present when a camera is used to record a tutorial, but although the students and I were aware of the camera, especially in the beginning, one cannot be anybody but oneself and thus the video represents a fairly accurate perception of a tutorial. In the beginning the students were more stiff and uncomfortable, but that is typical of any tutorial. As the tutorial progresses, the students usually gain confidence in their abilities to express themselves and understand the subject.

During a more natural tutorial, there are usually more groups, and more questions and also, um, more discussion.

During a natural tutorial, I am not so intensely involved in the group discussions. After the students have received their questions, they discuss the possible answers independently in their groups and only ask me questions if they experience any problems. For the purposes of this video, however, I fulfilled a more facilitating role in the group, to structure the situation and thus guarantee the clarity of the video.

The last aspect which I want to accentuate is that the tutor should work before the, before the tutorial, and the students should work during the tutorial. The tutor should be adequately prepared for any questions which the students may ask regarding the content of the work, study methods and exam techniques. The students should, during the tutorial, participate in discussions and should also prepare adequately, to be able to ask the tutor questions regarding work which they do not understand. Perhaps I should just also add that, in the normal, um, natural tutorial class, we have facilities like head, overhead projector and um, whiteboard or blackboard, which were obviously not present during this tutorial.

Thank you.

Students in the Class Offer their Comments Voluntarily (and Anonymously) in Wiring

Student 1:   I found the class enjoyable because we discussed our fears about the exam, which was quite amusing because we all had the same fears. We also discussed what we do to relax ourselves. Ms C was not a very confident lecturer and I thought she was not happy standing in front of people lecturing.

Student 2:   I enjoyed sitting in a circle and answering questions on adolescence, but I found that Ms C was very nervous and excited. She laughed a lot and jumped around quite a bit.

Student 3:   Die klas was nogal lekker. Me. C het my geleer dat ek alles "reg" doen voor die eksamen: Ek "spot" glad nie, leer alles. Ek slaap laat die oggend en kry iemand in die stad. Ek eet slaai en drink vrugesap. Teen die tyd dat ek skryf, weet ek dat ek baie hard gewerk het. Ek kan net my allerbeste doen. *(Translation: The class was rather enjoyable. Ms C taught me that I do everything correctly before the exam. I don't try and 'spot'. I learn everything. I sleep late on the day of the exam and meet up with someone in the city. I eat salad and drink fruit juice. By the time I write, I know that I have worked very hard. I can only do my best.)*

Student 4:   Ms C is a bit like a teacher. I'm not sure if I like that, sometimes I do, mostly I don't. She makes me feel like there is only right *OR* wrong.

Student 5:   A tutor should facilitate more. Ms C teaches a lot, but she is always thorough and well prepared for class. I admire that.

Two Psychology Tutors Comment Further (on Video)

Tutors: The author in discussion with Mr A.

Place of work: Thutong Learning Centre in Pretoria.

The author:

Okay, we want to welcome everybody. These are the tutor comments – the second step of this process. I'm the author and the tutor for third year psychology.

Mr A:

Hi. I'm Mr A. I'm the tutor for second year psychology, focusing on Personology.

The author:

Okay, now Mr A, our task is - we've just watched Ms C on video, and we've seen, we are meant to discuss three aspects of the video: the first is content, the second is process, i.e. her relationship with her students, and then we are meant to formulate some kind of a response to Ms C's comments on herself. Let's start off with the content. What struck you most about Ms C's way of structuring a tutorial?

Mr A:

Well, I thought she approached it very adequately. She was asking the participants to draw on themes from the passages, and get them to focus on key, key words from long sentences and that was an essential, well, it *IS* an essential part of revision. And she did that very well, and she got everybody to participate. It wasn't as if only one side of the room participated.

The author:

Yes, and I thought she covered many tasks that one needs to do in an exam. She did not only do a multiple choice example. She did an example of an essay-type question, um, and then what I especially liked at the end, is that she actually covered the theme of, um, exam anxiety, which is so important, because a lot of students are anxious about taking that exam, because at the end of the day, they are going to get a mark that they are going to carry with them, perhaps for the rest of their life.

Mr A:

There was a section in that area, where I thought she could have helped the examinees, um, if they are very nervous and they are going into the exam room reasonably well prepared, one way to kind of control this adrenaline rush, is to write down, okay, of course you can't write until, um, the exam has started, but to focus, once they get the go-ahead, to write down their key notes, key words, to give them guidelines, should they need, if they hit a blank, they can at least draw on those early words. I find that's helpful and I find some people enjoy it as well.

The author:

Is there anything about the content that we would have, could say to Ms C that would be constructive to her in terms of thinking differently about her, the way she conducted her tutorial?

Mr A:

Well she, I thought she did it very well. I, I just felt personally, that, um, she has such a charismatic way of talking to to a, but I, I would have sat down, and and had, conducted the whole thing eyeball to eyeball, but, um, that's me. She did it remarkably well, but that's Ms C, um. She got the best out of them. They all participated, there wasn't anyone who sat still, um, sometimes the guy in front of her seemed to be quite, I was only seeing the back of him, but she got everybody to participate. It was great.

The author:

Ya, which leads us into the, the realm of her relationship with her students, the process that was going on. I think what was evident for me is that this was a well established relationship. The students liked her, there was a lot of laughter, which I think is always an indication that there's trust in the room and um, um, also from her point of view, just a lot of

giving. I think Ms C actually worked incredibly hard in this tutorial, and what was lovely, is

that the students reciprocated. They weren't just happy to sit back and allow her to do all the

work in her, in the tutorial situation.

Mr A:

Ya, I agree about what you said.

The author:

Do we have anything else that we could say about her, the relationship between her

and her students?

Mr A:

Um, well, I hesitate to criticise because it was such a vibrant air of participation. Any

criticism would be, well, well, out of place. I don't think there was any area that one could

focus in on. She was just covering it so well, I thought.

The author:

And then, when it came to her comments, um, she had quite a lot to say. She

compared the context as it was here versus the natural environment, but what I found

interesting there is that she said: in spite of the camera, which we are also aware of right now,

one cannot be anything but oneself in that situation, but anything else strike you in her

comments as, if we had Ms C here now, what would we respond to her in terms of what she

said in the last four to five minutes of her tutorial example?

Mr A:

She, she got it, she, she had to create an exam, um, scenario with the, um,

nervousness. She, she tried, I thought she did it very well. You know, you go in, she tried to

say right: you go into the exam room, your'e nervous, you don't know what to expect ..... She

was doing her level best to, to create um, exam conditions, um, and got the responses from

the participants because they were all relating their own experiences: very nervous and, um, about not having the right, um, stationery and stuff like that and um. I thought she did it very well. I, I can't criticise that.

The author:

And we would say to her: continue the hard work *(Yes, I would)* in that way because she is diligent, she is conscientious and I think that came across. She was also very well prepared *(Yes.)* In her commentary, there is something that I would steal from her as opposed to give to her and what she said is: A tutor should work *BEFORE* the tutorial and students should work *DURING* the tutorial. I thought that was a very astute observation.

Mr A:

That is so spot on. Um, ya, I think you can't, there is no, there is no other thing, thing to mention. It was wonderful.

The author:

Ya, I think what we can end off by saying is actually "Thank-You Ms C".

Mr A:

Ya, go for it Ms C!

Two UNISA Staff Members Have their Say (videorecorded)

Lecturer and promoter of this thesis in discussion with:

Ms H from the Department of Student Support.

Place of work: UNISA.

The promoter:

Okay, we are at the next level of the discussion and this will again be a meta-level on everything that went before, and I just want to say, I am the promoter of the study, and it's a privilege to be part of this and we are so grateful that we can be here today, and if you would like to introduce yourself.

Ms H:

My name is Ms H. I was the assistant tutor coordinator at the learning centre where Ms C and the author were tutoring, is tutoring, um, at time of the, when the video was made, and I am still part of the Department of Student Support.

The promoter:

Well, thank you. Um, it's a wonderful opportunity for us now to get a comment from a different perspective because you are looking at it, not from the lecturer, not from the tutor, but from somebody that has been involved with many tutors and the process, so, it would be wonderful to hear what you observed in that situation.

Ms H:

Um, I think as, as a exam preparation tutorial, it was a very good tutorial. Um, um, I think the, the handling of questions in a very step-by-step manner is what students need at that time of the year, um, I like, I very much like the fact that in her example that she broke down every part of it, every aspect of the question and the answers that came back from the students, um, and then took them through the process of answering it. Um, I think it was very useful and students really needed it at that time of the year, um, when they might have some of the knowledge already, but they might not necessarily know how to give it in the exam.

The promoter:

You know what I, um, I also very much liked the idea, and um, as it was previously

said, that she was very well prepared, and that is always the essence, and then it makes it look easy, um, because I think that part of the success of the process of facilitating, is that you have to know enough to be able to react to anything that comes your way, and Ms C did that very well. So, if you don't know the answers, either admit that you don't, but it would be wonderful if you are prepared and you can shift and move, so you can prepare up to a certain point and you can have a certain structure, but then, you must also be able to cope with the unexpected, which she did very well.

Ms H:

I think she did very well. I think she also, um, one can see that she was, she has been a student. She knows how, what it is like to study the material, and to maybe not be as sure of yourself as she is now as a tutor whose got a lot of knowledge and a lot of experience. And I think that is important to know, what the student feels like the moment you stand in front of a,a,a, when you sit in the class, that lack of self-confidence to answer a question and so on. I think she knows what it's like and she therefore brings out the students so that they will also be comfortable and able to talk. Um, something I think is very important, is also that, um, the students need to know as well, um, what, what the work is about at this stage, because otherwise you'll get them going back to textbooks all the time, and you wouldn't really have the answers, but these students were, I think, also knew what the work was about, um, they might have to refer, but I think that's also a part of the lack of confidence, um, but I think they knew a lot and that was also why the tutorial went well.

The promoter:

Yes, I'd like to comment on that, um, I know this was not actually at the point of the exam, and therefore they weren't as prepared, but I think if one had, um, an actual exam session, it would be a good idea to give these people homework, and she did give the

homework, which I also think is very important. I know that there are the problems with you

giving homework and then students arrive and they weren't there the previous time, and,

those are part, problems that tutors encounter all the time, but the homework idea, but if one

had a real exam situation, I know that in the empowerment programme, we give them specific

instructions to study a specific section, even if it's then not the whole syllabus, on which that

tutorial will then be based. Then they are not allowed to look in their books, because even if

they don't come up with wonderful answers, um, it's a very good experience then, to have to

produce an answer. Now what I found, I would have preferred if it was not only a group

answer, because the tremendous problems that students have with putting their thoughts on

paper, it is, that confidence, of actually knowing and then putting it down, I think is

something that one needs to practice. Also, if each of them could have had, perhaps limited

time here and all those factors, but they could each produce an own answer. You know, I

think that that is so important, but just the other thing I would have liked, um, to stress, is Ms

C did this excellently. She made students think about, okay, this might be one point, but

there might be more, and how you come up with a really comprehensive answer by

questioning yourself all along, and I just hope that they would have learnt from that, and said,

okay, you can say this, *BUT* maybe there's another perspective, and if students could do this,

keep on questioning themselves in the exam: Have I written enough? Because, so often

students write like one correct answer, one sentence, but it counts ten marks, so then they can

only get one mark, you see.

Ms H:

That's, that's what I said about her example, um, she took them through the question,

she took them through their initial answers, where she got the easy answers, the obvious

answers, and then she went back, referred to the question, referred to the theory that was

spoken about, and then got to the final answer and then, I also liked her, um, that she went back to the question and said, well that was for three marks, so now you have got this much and I think that maybe, um, in her last part, where she was talking about the exam anxiety, sitting in the exam room, it would have been useful for her to bring in that, um, remember you know how to go through questions. You know how to do a multiple choice. You know how to do a paragraph question, um, remember that you have got that confidence, and that you are just going to repeat that action now in the exam. Um, because for me, in that last part, I would have said, the most important point of not being anxious in an exam, is to be well prepared, um, and to see, to make that horrible scene of that cold room with all the people looking at you, you're anxious, turn it over into a place where I am now going to perform well, and this is going to be a success and not a failure, um, by being well prepared.

The promoter:

Ya. You know, I think that, that's such an important point, thank you for that. Um, you know, Ms C did, did several things that I thought were very good, but also this, accepting the answers as if that was the answer, and then, just gently, nudging them to think a little further, okay, so that's what you think, it's not possible to, and then later on, oh, then maybe what you are saying, it is possible. So she kind of, you know, she led them, and she didn't say no, what you are saying is wrong, but she knew that it wasn't the complete answer, but she continued with it, you know. And also, what I very much liked, and I think that's the difference between facilitative and the teacher, and I want to agree with what Mr A said, I would have also liked her to have rather sat, um, sat down and had a discussion, but then, on the other hand, um, she did it well and when you are in the exam kind of thing, maybe this school maamish, kind of little bit of walking around and standing while others are sitting, is also okay. It actually did go down well, but what I wanted to say also, is that in the situation

with the exam anxiety, she didn't come with a little recipe, and say, this and this and this is what you are supposed to do, which, you know, part of, could be nice, but she said, what is it that you are experiencing? What is it that you do? And there were some wonderful ideas! Some, *(and they were sharing without knowing they were going to share),* Yes, ya, yes, and . they were sharing on, oh, we find it useful to go and have lunch, the others said, you know, whatever you do, don't speak to other people, and so on. So that was wonderful and if there had been more time, perhaps one could do an exam session by saying, come up with the problems that you are experiencing, tell me, and each one of those people would have had a different problem, and you could have worked from there. What is it? But this, you know, in the outcomes-based education, to start with the experience and then go to the theory. So, all that, I just think that was a delightful session.

Ms H:

I think she really did well and, um, taking into account her comments about what a normal tutorial is like, I think the fact, the fact that there were observers definitely, although after a while it didn't bother me anymore either, um, the students looked very natural, um, and I think it would be wonderful to have it in a real, proper tutorial setting with the necessary equipment, and maybe a table to put books on, because I think people get distracted if things are falling off their lap, but I think she did very well, and I could say that, um, the students actually gained so much, um, you know, it's not just an hour of their time that was stolen or, or whatever. They could really still gain content in a psychology way, and also content in learning studies in exam skills and techniques.

The promoter:

So that was wonderful. Just the last, I think, comment that she mentioned, okay, that you would have an overhead projector, I just want to mention something we found very

useful, is to give, actually to give one of the students, or more of them that are prepared to, to write their answer on a transparency, and then to project it there and discuss it, and then say, how would we mark this? We found that that works extremely well, so that they could see this is me, okay, it makes them very vulnerable, but maybe there is one that is prepared to do that, then you can take something from what they had given, and you mark it and you say, okay, this person, for this answer, would have got eight out of ten, or four out of ten, you know, to bring the realistic ....

Ms H:

It could be very important also in a language point of view, because obviously some of the students are second, um, English second-language students, and they might have, they can understand a fellow student when the student is talking, but they are still not sure how to write it down in English, and maybe if the, if the more confident student was writing down an answer in front of the whole class, that student whose still worried about how should I put it in English, can see, well, that person put it that way and I got eight out of ten, and then with the tutor's inputs afterwards, I think then, then, it could just give that bit of extra help to a student that might not even be confident enough to write down the answer in front a whole class.

The promoter:

Ya, and, and, what we also found very helpful is that you write that, they each had to write their own without the book, because there was one particular student that kept on just paging through the book, um, without the book and you now answer, and then you give yourself a mark, and then, after you've seen the other one on the transparency, now, you revise your mark, so that you got that realistic perception of what you are producing. Now, I think that would be added.

Ms H:

I think in the time before an exam where there is still going to be at least two weeks or so to prepare, um, then you could go and, and follow up on, on where you think you need some more help, whether it's on terms or how to write a question or whatever. I think then a student can take a lot with them, um, because I think that's also the idea behind the study skills exam, tutorial or exam-skills tutorial, is to tell the student what to go and prepare now before the exam, not just content wise, but also how, where, where am I short still of,of,of answering correctly?

The promoter:

Thank you. Thank you so.

Ms H:

It's a pleasure.

The promoter:

Very enjoyable, and we hope that, um, that in terms of developing a training package further, that all tutors are going to benefit from this.

Ms H:

I really hope we can. It would be wonderful.

The promoter:

Yes. There we go.

A Bonus Commentary - Psychology Lecturer's Comment on Audiotape

Lecturer and promoter of this thesis in discussion with:

Lecturer: Ms I, Department of Psychology.

Place of work: UNISA.

The promoter:

This is a conversation between the promoter and Ms I, promoter and lecturer for

Developmental Psychology and we are discussing Ms C's tutorial. Ms I, perhaps you can just

tell us what struck you, about what was good, what was not good and then we can discuss

that.

Ms I:

Well, the very first impression is one of a tutor who is highly intelligent and has an

obvious mastery of the content of the course on which she is tutoring and, um, obviously this

will be a prerequisite of a good tutor because, um, one not only familiar with the course

content, but, um, one who has an intelligent grasp of it. And, and, her, her way of speaking

and conducting her session is very lucid and clear. That's one point. I think one should just

keep in mind, we just happened to hear her remarks on what happened, how she experienced

this session, and one should keep in mind that this is a simulated situation and it might look a

bit more stiff and formal than it would have been if it was in its natural setting and not been

recorded.

The promoter:

So, that would be then the first ......

351

Ms I:

That would be the first prerequisite. The thing we can perhaps talk about, that worries me a bit, is that there is, and I am putting this in quotation marks because I am not sure whether this is the situation in reality, and whether the tenseness of this situation didn't provoke a situation where she is still too much of the teacher. Because if you look at the video, they are continually addressing her or even asking her, what do you want? And she's standing, she's standing like a lecturer, and there's a board, and um, I miss the group interaction around a specific question. There is still, to my mind, too much dependency of the group members on the tutor, and one would actually want to provoke individual thought on a subject, whereas her questioning technique is very good, but then when the one or two (perhaps) more intelligent members answered, then she goes on. One would actually like, well, I thought, a slower process, not so fast and not so efficient, slower, sitting down with, allowing each and every member to voice an answer to the question that she has posed, and then you would also like the group members to be talking to each other about this particular question that they are addressing.

The promoter:

Ya, ya, ya. Can I just say, you know, that is the same point as I had in terms of, it's fine, you know, for the group to be doing and for somebody to be doing on behalf of the group, but it is extremely important for each individual to also be participating. You know, I thought it was very good, that she did, that more people did speak and there was a little bit of interaction, but even, it, it's good to get a group answer in writing, it's so important that each one should have the opportunity in the tutorial, to actually write their own answer.

Ms I:

Ya, ya. Right. Exactly. Because, you know, otherwise you can be busy with the process, it looks as if it's moving on, but some of the members might actually be more left behind than you realise, you know, and it's important for the tutor to check where each of the member's of the group is at a particular point and to be able to assist, you know, she moved very quickly through, to assist the member that is, perhaps, slower or is having some difficulty, or hasn't quite caught on, you know, and so on. I would like to see her sitting amongst them, kind of thing, you know.

The promoter:

Yes, okay. So, and, and, and, you know, on the, on the other side, on the positive side, I would think, in terms of, of bringing across specific study methods, of exam technique, I would say, you know, that was pretty good in terms of focus on key words, making them realise, you know, how you go about answering a question, and then, her asking questions, um. I agree with you that maybe she could have asked them to ask the questions, but she did bring across the idea that, when you're answering, you have to pose more questions to yourself. Um, you say, okay, if this is so, but then also, you know, there might be another way of looking at it and then .... She emphasised, you know, the idea that you have to focus on a specific question and then you shouldn't go off on these side tracks, all those basic things.

Ms I:

Yes, look, she is very clued up and I, there is no question about it whatsoever, but, just as another point, of, um, constructive criticism, um, which ties in with what I said in the beginning, that she's still too much of a teacher and she can become more of a facilitator. I know that the facilitator, very subtly, does take the lead and is a teacher, but the slant is still

too much on children being questioned by the teacher and coming up with the right answers that are affirmed, you know, and you move on as soon as you got the right answers and so on, is that, she is a little bit too concentrated on the course content, you know, and how to do it correctly, how to come up with the correct answer, whereas in the subject matter and this thing of wanting a more outcomes-based conclusion to the course, you want your students to be meditating or to reflect on or to actually come up with examples out of their own experience, to make the course content come alive to them.

The promoter:

But you must remember this was a specifically an exam preparation, it was a session that was aimed at preparing .....

Ms I:

Oh! That makes all the difference.

The promoter:

Ya no, this is all about how to, a tutorial on exams *(Oh right!)* On exam writing. This is not a ....

Ms I:

On exam writing! It's not on the course content, well then, that cancels out that criticism.

The promoter:

This was specifically on how to conduct a tutorial just before the exams.

Ms I:

Oh, I see! Okay! But then, that point, that she would make very certain that each member had grasped what she or he had to do, is still very important.

The promoter:

Those basic principles are still very, very true, you know, that you mentioned, that, you know, getting away, even in such a session, from the teacher role, providing the guidelines, but then allowing them to discover what it is that would make for a good question. I thought that, what was good, was the idea of encouraging them to give more, you know, okay that would be, but then, what else? What else? Because that's really what students don't do, they don't give enough. What they give might be correct, but they don't give enough. And I think she tried, in questioning, um, to ask them, you know, that's fine, but what more? But again, I agree with what you said, each one of them has to grasp that for themselves, not only for the group, and that would be very important. What I appreciated was, when they spoke about the exam and how one can relax and so on, there she did the other thing *(That's it!)* Then the whole group started participating and they all were in the same experience.

Ms I:

You know why? Because there the accent was on how each one felt, you know, on the experience, more than the correct answer, kind of thing.

The promoter:

And how to go about it. I liked it, I actually learnt a lot there from her in terms of, you know, not providing ways of, or suggesting ways of how you can relax yourself and how you can go into the exam in a good mental state, but to ask them, what is it that you do? And they came up with such good suggestions, and from that it was also clear that not everybody would do it in the same way. Some like to be isolated and not speak to others, because they build up confidence in themselves and then they don't want to be disturbed by others, whereas other people enjoy a social get-together and, you know, are so different.

Ms I:

That was an excellent demonstration of, um, allowing the answers almost to emerge from the audience and not providing them. You know, she would make a shift so easily if she was just made aware of, um, some of these points, because it's all there. It's a question of just using it more to elicit individual responses, which makes learning that more deep and it is when you personally experience something, when you come up with the answer yourself or you realise your own mistake, then you are learning, but when you are listening to other people's answers, you tend to want to copy it and to follow what they say, and then you haven't leant.

The promoter:

So again, here we have the old basic principle of, you provide the structure, the guidelines, but you allow the students to move flexibly within that structure and, um, for them each to discover it in their own unique way.

Ms I:

There was like, for example, there was a good point where a conversation developed and that led to that more flexible approach that you'll bring in. Very many more elements than just a prescribed few details, when one, I think it was a white lady, who, in answer to the question on identity diffusion and identity achievement said, well, what about another situation? You might have worked yourself out clearly in one direction, but then another complex issue arises, and you might, and she could adapt herself to that, to almost a paradoxical statement to what she had said quite firmly before, that no well, diffusion isn't possible after you've achieved identity, and then, oh ya finally, you would be able to say, diffusion is possible in a new situation.

The promoter:

I thought that was nice. I was wondering whether the tutor had deliberately accepted

that answer of no *(it's possible)*, and whether, if the student had not come up with that option,

whether that would have been the consensus, you know? Afterwards I thought, she had,

hopefully, I don't know, allowed that incomplete explanation in order to illustrate it, you

know, afterwards *(Phone rings.)* Oh well, that's enough.