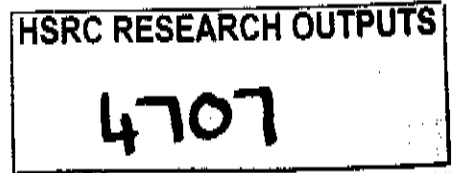


TEACHERS' SOCIAL CLASS, PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS AND PEDAGOGIC PRACTICE

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Introduction

There is consensus in the school effectiveness literature that the most significant *school* variable in contributing to students' success or failure is teacher quality. A number of issues have emerged as important, such as teacher qualifications (Darling-Hammond, 2000) and teachers' subject knowledge for teaching (Hill, Rowan and Ball, 2005), for example. In South Africa, teacher professional development (Spren, 2006) and teacher attendance (Van der Berg, 2006) have been identified in large-scale studies as possible key factors. It is not clear from these studies, however, what it is about teachers precisely (whether classroom interaction patterns, teachers' professional expertise, etc.) that affects student achievement (Rowan *et al*, 2002; Taylor *et al*, 2003), fraught as they are with theoretical and methodological difficulties.

When considering teachers at the level of the classroom, what emerges from the extensive number of studies into teachers and teaching is that research that focuses on pedagogy backgrounds the role of the teacher, whilst those that study teachers, neglect pedagogy. As a result of this the teacher becomes in a sense "invisible" in the pedagogy, and is afforded no systematic position in the process of social reproduction of difference that schooling engenders. This absence can be explained in terms of a long aversion to "teacher blame" explanations within research on teaching.

The aims of the article are three-fold. Firstly it attempts to re-insert the teacher into a systematic explanation of a system of 'sub-relays' within the schooling process, in particular in relation to pedagogy. Secondly, the work privileges the social class positioning of teachers as a potential explanatory factor for differential schooling processes and student outcomes. In this way it aims to open up the area of teacher characteristics by considering links between teachers' social class, professional dispositions and pedagogic practice. It does this through small-scale, theoretically-driven case studies, attempting to deepen the explanations of the large-scale studies cited above. Thirdly, the article reflects on the key policy intervention for addressing what teachers know and can do in the classroom: investments in teacher training. The article raises questions around models of teachers training, in relation to the arguments around teachers and social class presented in the article.

There has been very little work that explores teachers' social class backgrounds and associated dispositions as an explanatory aspect of pedagogic practice. Research on teachers' social class has generally been addressed in terms of analyses of the labour market and teaching as a category of work. The work highlights the ambiguous or contradictory class

location of teachers' work (Connell, 1985), the proletarianization of teachers, and the 'labour process of teaching' (Ginsburg, 1987; Ozga & Lawn, 1988; Robertson, 1990). In this work, teachers' class position as *workers* is interrogated, but not their social class positioning in terms of background. Metz's (1994) study is one of a few that does take account of teachers' social class background in a consideration of their work. Her study looks systematically at teachers' social class backgrounds and work identities in three different social class contexts, considering categories of influences that shape the daily work of teachers. Metz is concerned with how teachers' social class affects their definition of their jobs, but does not relate this to their pedagogic practice. Metz's (1994) primary interest is in teacher cultures, and her work points to distinctions between more 'professional' and more 'civil servant' orientations towards work, relating these to social class. Connell *et al* (1982), relate these distinctions of professional and civil servant to social class, and also to the schooling type that teachers find themselves in, i.e. state school or private. They identify the contradictions of some state school teachers' social class position, coming as they do from working-class backgrounds.

The issue of social class positioning is given sharper focus in this article. Drawing on a study by Hoadley (2005) different pedagogic forms in middle and working class classrooms are identified. We then show student outcomes in the classrooms based on tests conducted with the students. The article goes on to probe the relationship between the pedagogic forms, the social class positioning of teachers and their professional dispositions, and how this practice either amplifies or interrupts the reproduction of differences in learning outcomes between two sets of schools – working class and middle class. The article concludes with a consideration of the implications of the research presented for teacher education. Here we draw on a study by Ensor (1999) to raise questions around current models of teacher education and in particular the potential they offer for interrupting a cycle of poor performance in working class schools.

Orientation to meaning

In the research presented in this article, a particular aspect of schooling is privileged – that is the ways in which pedagogy opens up the potential for the acquisition of school knowledge, and school ways of making meaning and organising experience. Bernstein (1975) talks about this in terms of 'orientation to meaning'.

Orientation to meaning refers to the transmission and acquisition of more context-independent meanings (elaborated codes or a 'school code') and more context-dependent meanings (restricted codes, or a community code)¹. Previous research drawing on Bernstein's code theory shows how working class students enter the school with a 'community code' and do not have ready access to the school code. Developing the school code is not prioritized in the family prior to encountering formal pedagogy. Middle class students, whose processes of primary socialisation are regulated by pedagogic codes similar to school codes, acquire the school code more efficiently.

In relation to *teachers*, the interest is in whether there is a relationship between the social class and professional socialization of teachers, and how teachers acquire and 'carry'² the code. Do teachers of different social class backgrounds realize different orientations to meaning in the school?

¹ The distinction is usefully exemplified in the food sorting task presented later in the paper.

² In the Hegelian sense of 'trager' as bearer or supporter (Slonimsky, L. (2005) personal comment)

Pedagogic modalities

In order to suggest connections between pedagogy and teachers' professional dispositions and social class positioning, the pedagogic modalities derived from the broader research are briefly described. Detail can be found elsewhere (Hoadley, 2005; Hoadley, 2006). The sample for the research reported here consisted of four middle class teachers, teaching middle class children in two schools in affluent Cape Town suburbs, and four teachers from working class backgrounds teaching poor children in two lower working class urban settings. The sample represents two ends of a social class continuum: lower working class and upper middle class. The data for the research comprised classroom observations of Grade 3 numeracy and literacy lessons, and interviews with each of the eight teachers, as well as tests conducted with the Grade 3 learners.

From the two contexts, working class and middle class, two different pedagogic modalities emerge – one which is termed a horizontal modality, and the other a vertical modality. These modalities differ crucially in the potential they carry to specialize students' consciousness with respect to school knowledge. Such specialisation refers to whether the students' identity is strongly or weakly marked and bounded, and their whether their knowledge, thinking, comportment and language potentially gives voice to particular knowledge, such as school mathematics. The specializing work of pedagogy was analysed in terms of particular classification and framing values (Bernstein, 1975;1990) (how knowledge and its transmission is structured); instructional strategies (what kind of knowledge tasks refer to), and instructional form (how students are grouped for instruction, and how they are differentiated?). Different configurations of these dimensions will result in greater or lesser potential for students' voice to be specialized; for students to be inducted into the school code. The two pedagogic modalities are described briefly below with reference to an exemplary data text.

Classification refers to how students, teachers and knowledge and the relations between them are demarcated. Framing tells us about the locus of control within this differentiation – who has control over the way in which knowledge is selected, sequenced, paced and evaluated in the classroom, and who has control over the way in which communication between teacher and taught is conducted. Instructional strategies help us to analyse the extent to which the knowledge transmitted is specific to the discipline, or draws more on the everyday knowledge and experience of the learners. Finally, the instructional form elucidates the way in which students are organised for learning and how knowledge is distributed. In other words how are students grouped, and is knowledge distributed to different groups differentiated or uniform?

The horizontal modality

The horizontal pedagogical modality emerges from the working-class school context. The following data is taken from one of the working class classrooms and is used to draw out the salient characteristics of this pedagogic modality.

The teacher has just finished a lesson on rounding off to the nearest 100, which the learners have not been able to grasp. The teacher begins the following lesson, saying to the class:

Teacher: When I look at you it seems you don't understand properly, but now we are going to do patterns. It says here complete the pattern. There's a pattern I want you to complete. They link with the nearest hundreds but we'll come back to them. Now that you have an idea of

nearest hundred I want to see if you have an idea of patterns. For now, for example I want you to do this pattern.

The teacher stands in front of the class looking at a textbook. She copies out the following on the board from the textbook:

Complete the number pattern

50		100		150	_____	_____	_____
1	2	4		7	_____	_____	_____
4		7		12	15	22	_____

Teacher: *Complete the patterns. Write. Complete the patterns.*

The teacher leaves the class for five minutes and then returns. She arranges for the distribution of milkshake to other classes (part of the school's state funded feeding scheme). She chats to another teacher at the classroom door.

Teacher: Listen, when I am busy with something or being disturbed, don't make a noise. Noxolo hand out the maths books.

The learners continue to make a noise.

Teacher: You are uncontrollable.

The teacher walks around the class with a big ruler which she raps on the desks.

Teacher: Hey, let's not talk. Let's work.

She wipes the board clean of the previous day's work and the current rounding-off lesson. A learner starts to sing.

Teacher: No, no, what's that? You can't just moo like a cow.

The teacher goes out for a few minutes. She returns and begins a new lesson on literacy. None of the learners are observed to complete the patterns successfully. The rounding off and pattern task are not completed that day or on the following two days. The lesson lasts for 36 minutes.

The first dimension of the pedagogic modality pertains to the classification and framing arrangements of the pedagogic discourse. In the horizontal modality, sequencing, selection and pacing are strongly framed: the teacher has control over what knowledge is selected, in what order it is taught, and the expected rate of acquisition. Students in general are not given the opportunity to intervene in how their learning takes place. There is very weak framing over the evaluative criteria, and the requirements for the production of a legitimate text are unclear or implicit. The learners are not able to complete the patterns here, and no criteria for the successful execution of the task are transmitted. The teacher generally does not draw out the knowledge principles in exposition, and very little (in this case, no) attempt is made to make explicit what it is that learners should know, do or understand. The hierarchical rules are strong, the teacher has control over the order, character and manner of the conduct of learners in the relation between teacher and learner. Rules are based on assertion, or are simply stated without the reasoning or bases for the rules being given. The classification of discourses is weak, and the relation between school knowledge and everyday knowledge in particular is blurred. In this extract no specialized language is used –everyday terms such as 'patterns' and 'to the nearest hundred', rather than 'rounding off' or 'estimation'. There are also no specialized practices evident with respect to mathematics. The lesson appears to be more about keeping order.

The second dimension of the pedagogic modality, instructional form, refers to the classroom organization and differentiation between agents and contents. In the horizontal modality learners are communalized in the instructional practice of the teacher, and instructional knowledge is undifferentiated. In other words, as we see in the extract above, all pupils are treated as the same, they all work on the same tasks and the teacher works with the class as a whole, undifferentiated group. At no point in the lesson above does the teacher interact with individual students.

Thirdly, for the instructional strategies for individual tasks, each of the tasks is characterized in terms of localizing and specializing strategies. Simply, these indicate whether the knowledge is concrete, local or everyday (localizing), or whether it is more abstract knowledge referring to the knowledge of the discipline (for example specific literacy knowledge or mathematics operations, concepts or principles). The predominant strategy in the horizontal modality is that of localizing, as the tasks refer to non-specialised knowledge. The tasks incorporate knowledge that is familiar and particularistic, and meanings that are concrete and context-bound. In the extract above, the only instruction given to the learners by the teacher is to 'Copy the patterns and complete them'. No evaluative rules are transmitted, neither those for the principles underlying the tasks nor procedures for its completion. The learners' task therefore became one of mechanically copying out what was on the board. Although there was mathematics present in this example, the strategy used to induct the learners into the task did not require the learners to engage in the application of mathematical understandings, reasoning or procedures in order to derive a solution.

The vertical modality

The extract to illustrate the vertical modality, which emerges from the middle-class context, is taken from a literacy lesson in one of the middle class classrooms.

The teacher writes up a 'memory sentence' on the board, a device used at the school for phonics learning. Each week learners are given a sentence containing a particular phoneme, and the sentence changes each week. In this lesson the memory sentence focuses on the phoneme 'ow', and reads:

'They saw the little fellow throw his yellow arrow into the snow below the window.'

The learners copy the sentence into their workbooks. The teacher reads through the sentence. She talks through most of the words as she goes along, pointing out different spellings of saw and sore, and different meanings of the word saw. The learners read the sentence out aloud and click when they get to an 'ow' sound. They then read through the sentence twice more, once softly to themselves, and once aloud as a class.

The teacher then asks the learners to think of other words with the 'ow' sound in them. She draws two columns on the board, heading the columns with the words snow and cow to indicate the different sounds of the letter combination. Learners offer words which the teacher writes in the columns. The teacher discusses some of the words as she goes along. In response to a learner offering the word 'bow', the teacher says:

Teacher: When you have this word in a sentence you will need to see what it says in the sentence in order to know how to say it.

The learners read through the lists. The teacher asks a learner to place the word 'crow' in a sentence and then writes eight words on the board:

Teacher: Each word is a noun, so I want you to draw a small little picture next to each word, and then you are going to write a sentence for each one.

The learners copy down the columns of words, and write a sentence and draw a picture for each of the eight words. While the learners do this work, the teacher takes a small reading group on the mat in the front of the classroom. As learners complete the work they select new readers from a reading box on the side of the classroom, and read. The duration of the lesson is 39 minutes.

In the vertical modality, strong framing over sequence and selection is found. Framing over pacing is weaker, moderated by students' questions and interjections, for example, in the student above introducing the word 'bow'. There is strong framing over the evaluative rules: what learners are required to do and know is very explicit, and knowledge principles are drawn out of explanations and activities. In the extract students are given numerous activities to grasp the sound of the phoneme, and its usage in words and sentences. The hierarchical rules are weaker; relations between student and teacher are more personal, and reasons and

justifications for actions are given. The classification of agents and discourses is strong: the pedagogic identity of the child as 'student' of particular specialized knowledge is clearly marked and bounded. School knowledge is strongly bounded from everyday knowledge, and subjects are distinct from one another.

In the instructional form, learners are individualized in the instructional practice of the teacher, and instructional knowledge is differentiated. Different learners are required to do different tasks, and the teacher interacts with different learners as individuals and in groups. Learners are treated as different, with different learning competences and requirements (reading groups are ability-graded).

In the instructional strategies for individual tasks the predominant strategy is that of specializing, where the tasks are generated by knowledge of the subject – in this case literacy.

The table below shows the differences between the two modalities. These differences emerged from an analysis of 58 literacy and 31 numeracy lessons across the eight teachers, videotaped on three consecutive days in each of the classrooms. Conventional Bernsteinian notation is used to indicate strong boundaries (C^+) and weak classification (C^-) and strong and weak framing (F^+ and F^-).

Table 1: Pedagogic modalities

			Horizontal modality	Vertical Modality	
1. Classification and framing of pedagogic discourse	Sequence & selection		F^{++}	F^{++}	
	Pacing		F^{++}	F^-	
	Evaluative rules		F^-	F^+	
	Hierarchical rules		F^+	F^-	
	Discourses	Inter-disc (subjects)		C^-	C^{++}
		Inter-disc (school/every day)		C^-	C^+
	Agents		C^-	C^{++}	
2. Instructional form	Content		Undifferentiated (uniform)	Differentiated & uniform	
	Classroom organization		Communalized / homogenous	Communalized / homogenous & individualized/specialized	
3. Instructional strategies	Individual tasks		Localizing	Specializing	

A very definite picture of the contrasts emerges, whereas, in reality, classrooms are likely to exhibit hybrid forms of the two modalities defined, as well as more complex and nuanced interplay between social class actors. Nonetheless, the table makes explicit certain orientations to classifying experience and creating meaning privileged in the classrooms in the different social class contexts. The vertical modality presents greater opportunity than the

horizontal modality for the transmission of context-independent meanings, the specialization of learners' voice and the acquisition of the school code.

Learning outcomes

Ten students in each of the eight classrooms (a total of 80 students) were given two tasks³. The first was a mathematical task where both learners' solutions and the strategies they used for solving problems were recorded (the latter through observation). The task consisted of thirteen Grade 3 – level items. In terms of scores, the averages for the working-class classrooms ranged from 32% to 48%. Students scored on average between 80% and 91% in the middle-class context. 25% of the working-class sample (ten students) was not able to do more than two of the thirteen test items. Students in the working-class classrooms used concrete strategies for solving problems, predominantly the drawing of small counters in the form of lines on a page and using these for counting, or counting on fingers. In general, the methods used for calculation in the middle-class context consisted of mental calculations and the decomposition of numbers for solving problems (i.e. the use of a specialised mathematical procedure). Examples of the different methods for solving problems are given in the figures below.

Insert figure 1

The second task was a sorting task adapted from Holland (1981), where learners were asked to group pictures of food, and offer their criteria for their sorting. The interest in this task was to note whether students used 'school-based' criteria for their sorting initially (such as dairy, meat, cereal), or whether they initially used everyday categorisation (for example 'I like those'; 'my granny cooks those on Sunday). Holland (1981) had previously identified a class-based difference in sorting deployed by children, and had drawn out the implications of this for school learning.

Students from the working-class setting operated with context-dependent meanings; the way in which they organized experience was based on their everyday, particularistic experience. The middle-class learners initially deployed context-independent categories, which they construed as appropriate to the setting of the task – i.e. the school. When asked to sort the cards again, they shifted their categorizing and deployed more particularistic categorizations. The working-class students, on the other hand, retained the same principles for their first and second sorting, and those were primarily context-dependent. Middle-class students were able to both produce both context-independent and particularistic categorizations; working-class students realized predominantly context-dependent categorizations, and were mostly unable to recognize context-independent meanings.

The significance of these tasks lies in the notion that school knowledge is 'uncommonsense knowledge. It is knowledge freed from the particular, the local ...' (Bernstein, 1971, 215). What both tests showed in the case of the working-class students was that localised commonsense, concrete meanings and understandings were not interrupted by the schooling process. A community code, or restricted code, persisted, despite three years exposure to schooling.

³ See Hoadley (2005) and Hoadley (forthcoming) for more detail

Teacher-teacher relations

The differences in pedagogy and student outcomes described above are linked to differences between the two school settings in the social relations established between teachers, their patterns of work and levels of interaction. Data for this part of the discussion was gained through teacher interviews. Pseudonyms are used for the schools – Arbor and Rhodes for the middle class schools, and Lwazi and Uxolo for the working class schools. In the middle-class setting the relations between teachers were characterised as contractual, where relations were generally framed by the teachers' work, teaching and learning, and relations lacked the affective dimensions found in the working-class context. In the working-class setting relations were more personal and consensual between teachers, and hierarchical and conflictual between management and teachers. These differences in social relations suggested different forms of solidarity. This was seen in particular in the curriculum arrangements in the school, and in the planning practices of teachers.

A relatively undifferentiated curriculum was found in the working-class schools, with few specialist teachers. A simple division of labour, and mechanical solidarity characterized the relations amongst staff members. Each teacher taught a single class for the entire day. In the middle-class schools there was greater curriculum differentiation, an extensive array of specialist teachers, and consequently a more complex division of labour. Within the organization of the teachers' day, teachers at Arbor and Rhodes had the opportunity to meet with the other teachers during the course of the day, or mark, or prepare, whereas the teachers at Lwazi and Uxolo were afforded no free periods or time to interact with other teachers around these purposes.

With respect to planning, collective planning was not a regular feature of teachers' work in the working class school setting. There was very weak external regulation of the teachers regarding what they did in the classroom. In the middle class schools, staff tended to be far more interdependent than in the working class schools. Joint academic planning formed a core regulatory mechanism for what teachers did and how they did it. There were far higher levels of external regulation from school management, especially the Grade head and the curriculum committee.

Clear differences have emerged between pedagogic modalities, and teacher-teacher relations in the two sets of schools. In the following section we present further differences in the ways in which the teachers spoke about teaching, learning, and learners. Before doing so, we introduce data on the teachers' social class background, and their relations with the communities in which they live.

The teachers social class background

Using scales from Seekings (2003), the teachers' social class backgrounds were characterized in the first instance using parental education and occupation levels. Three of the teachers in the working-class setting came from working-class backgrounds. The occupations of four of their parents were classed as 'marginal working class', which includes domestic work and manual labour. One of the teacher's social class background was more ambivalent. Her mother was employed in semi-professional work (nursing) and her father worked as a doorman at a hotel. The education levels of the parents of the teachers in the working-class

setting were similar, and none had completed high school. One of the teachers' mothers had had no schooling, her father having received some primary schooling.

In the middle-class setting the teachers all came from middle-class backgrounds, where their fathers were engaged in professional work. Two of their mothers were in secretarial work, one was in the education field, and one was a medical doctor. Of the eight parents, all had completed secondary school, and five had attained a university qualification. Taking parental education and occupational levels as indicators of social class background, the teachers in the middle class setting all came from an unambivalently middle-class backgrounds.

The teachers' education

The teachers in the working class schools in this study were black, and the middle class teachers were white. The teachers had all been schooled and trained under the racially differentiated apartheid system of education, which meant very different quality of teaching and learning for people of different race groups, and exposure to vastly different forms of pedagogy.

The professional training of the teachers had also taken place in different kinds of institutions. The middle-class teachers' training had been in colleges and universities originally established for White pre-service training, and the teachers in the working-class setting had received most of their training in formerly Black institutions, or institutions located within or near working-class communities. It was possible, therefore, to broadly categorise the teachers' educational experience as stratified along racial lines.

The nature of the stratifications, and the pedagogical forms associated with them, are described by Enslin (1984). Institutions established for black students broadly focused on 'Christian National Education', and its attendant philosophy of 'fundamental pedagogics'. Hofmeyer (1993), Chisholm (1993) and Enslin (1990) report on the devastating effects of fundamental pedagogics on teachers' thinking and practice. In short, this was an authoritarian pedagogical philosophy, where the child was regarded as ignorant and undisciplined, in need of guidance from the teacher, whose authority was derived from the God of the Dutch Reformed Church (Ensor, 1999). It also promulgated a pedagogy devoid of analysis and critique (Taylor & Vinjevoold, 1999). Freer (1993) also comments that, in many of these colleges, the courses offered 'were repetitions of the three final years of an impoverished secondary programme' (p. 36). Particularly in the 1980s, Black teacher training colleges were understaffed and the college lecturers seriously underqualified (Hartshorne, 1992). Students entering teaching had very low schooling results. Hartshorne shows that in 1988, for example, 93% of the successful senior certificate group had 'F' aggregates (i.e. 33-39% of the total aggregate mark). This was the main pool from which student teachers were recruited (Hartshorne, 1992:249). The quality of training received in Black colleges, as a result of these various factors, was severely compromised. All the teachers in the working-class setting received their initial teacher training at a teacher training institute in a black township in Cape Town, originally established for the training of Black teachers, and in the 1980s, consistent in its structure with the description above.

In some institutions established for white students, especially White English universities, and in colleges linked to these institutions, the dominant discourse of Christian National Education was challenged, and alternative offerings became possible – from radical populist

to liberal progressive approaches (Ensor, 1999). All four teachers in the middle-class setting received their initial training in institutions falling into this category.

From the description of the teachers' schooling and training given above, it is apparent that there was a consistency in the type of education that the teachers *within* the different social class contexts had been exposed to. Given the broad characterization of South African schooling and teacher training types, the two sets of teachers in the sample had all undergone a programme of specialization for the teaching profession, and were, formally, fully qualified to teach. They had, however, been exposed to very different types of knowledge and socialization into pedagogic practice.

The material and social conditions of teachers' lives

The teachers from working class backgrounds in the study represented a form of class mobility that is very common in South Africa. These teachers emerged from working-class backgrounds, and had formally, via teaching, entered the middle-class. Because of the rapid change in the South African economy, it is not uncommon for children to occupy very different occupational levels to those of their parents and grandparents (Seekings, 2003:42). To probe this mobility further, the study looked more closely at this movement of the teachers from one social class location to another. What were the actual shifts in the teachers' particular lived experience? Although ostensibly having education and occupation levels consonant with a middle class social positioning, a consideration of the material conditions and social relations of the teachers' lives revealed significant differences. To summarize (further detail can be found in Hoadley (2005)), the analysis considered the teachers' family structure, dependents and the disbursement of their salaries; where the teachers lived; and their social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). This analysis allowed us to conclude that although we see the lineaments of class mobility in the teachers in the working-class setting, in terms of educational qualifications and occupational position, they had not physically or socially relocated into middle-class milieus. A consideration of the teachers' social networks indicates differences, not only in the kinds of networks that the teachers established (what the people they interacted with did and what their educational levels were), but also in the spatial configuration of those networks. The teachers in the working-class setting engaged in activities and formed relationships which derived from the community in which they lived (neighbours, people in their home, and people at church), whereas the middle-class teachers' relationships were not contingent on immediate community.

Although the teachers in the working-class context all had post-school qualifications, including degrees and diplomas, and ostensibly earned middle-class salaries, they all came from, and were firmly rooted within working-class communities, from which their social networks were drawn, and with which their leisure activities were associated. Through a consideration of the teachers' geographical locations, and their possession of economic, social and cultural capital, it was possible to characterize the teachers from the working-class setting as occupying a *hybrid* social class position. Although the lineaments of social class mobility are evident in the education and occupation of the teachers, their material and social conditions point to an ambivalence in social class location. This is evident in particular in the teachers' dependents. For example, one teacher in the working class setting was married with three children, two of whom were still at school. The third child was 22 and unemployed. Her husband was also unemployed and had been for a number of years. He had previously worked as a clerk in a revenue office. The teacher had recently run into severe financial problems. In general, the familial obligations of the teachers in the working-class setting, in

particular their financial obligations, were very different from those of the teachers in the middle-class setting. Whereas the latter all appear to have substantial mobility and sole claim on their salaries, the teachers in the working-class setting had a network of relations who were dependent on their salaries. The teachers in the working class setting were all the main breadwinners for their families and extended families.

In the next section we move from the teacher in the community, and their social class positioning, to the teacher in the school and their professional dispositions.

Professional dispositions

The use of 'dispositions' is loosely based on Bourdieu (1977), referring to relatively stable ways of looking at the world that guide action. These are structural classificatory and assessment propensities and are *socially acquired*, and manifest in opinions and outlooks. 'Strategic' and 'professional' confine the consideration of teachers' disposition to the education field – to their position as *teachers*. These dispositions entail a theory of instruction. The theory of instruction, according to Bernstein 'belongs to the regulative discourse, and contains within itself a model of the learner and of the teacher and of the relation. The model of the learner is never wholly utilitarian; it contains ideological elements' (Bernstein, 2000:35). This theory of reading the child – where the child is 'transformed into a text' – contains assumptions that teachers make about children and how they learn – i.e. an instructional discourse.

The professional or strategic dispositions of the teachers were read off the ways in which the teachers talked about learners, learning and knowledge. The way in which the instructional and the regulative aspects of pedagogy were constructed by the teachers suggested particular classification and framing relations in their work. Different strategic dispositions aligned with the teachers' different social class positioning: a communalizing impetus in the teachers' constructions in the working-class setting, and an individualizing orientation with respect to the middle-class teachers. Classification and framing, conventionally applied to analyses of pedagogic discourse, are used here to characterize dispositions. Classification is about boundaries between – how the teachers specialize particular aspects of their practice when they talk. Framing is about control within these boundaries, especially how the teacher constructs the relation between teacher and learner, and who has control over the hidden curriculum and the instructional content of the classroom.

Knowledge: the classification of discourses

Two interview items were used to consider the way in which teachers spoke about school knowledge, or in the terms introduced earlier, how they classified discourses. The first item asked teachers how they thought children learnt, and then more specifically, how children learnt phonics. We found that middle-class teachers were concerned with the particular specialized requirements of phonics, differentiating the learning of phonics clearly from other learning. Their construction of phonics learning can be described as strongly classified. In general descriptions of learning, the middle-class teachers provided a number of relatively precise conceptions of how students learn. These conceptions focused on 'inner' cognitive issues – the child's thinking and acquisition processes. For example, one teacher explained:

Phonics, I think, first of all, it's phonetic, it's the sound, so you're going through the sound. And our society today is so visual that they find phonics very difficult so you've got to try

lots and lots of sound type activities, um, looking at the um, trying to, 'cos at Grade 3 they can all read and they can mostly picture what the words look like, so it's quite difficult to do phonological awareness activities without them seeing the word in their head...

Another said: "through repetition. Because they are making the pattern themselves You know the brain is a pattern detecting device and you've got to provide the opportunity for the brain to make its own pattern". The teachers in the working-class setting, on the other hand, presented generalized statements on learning, which in the first instance focused on more 'outer', non-cognitive aspects, such as behaviour and enjoyment, and secondly provided diffuse comments on phonics learning which did not always take into account the specialty of the subject. For example, one teacher responded, "I think children they learn through play sometimes, and even /.../ if you introduce something to them, just introduce it as if they are in a game you know. Don't be serious when you talk to them, in order they learn so they must enjoy it". Another stated: "Um, children they learn phonics, you know by, by spelling maybe. Spelling first and then you take that letter with that letter". In other words, their construction of phonics learning was more weakly classified than that of teachers in the middle-class context. In the latter, there was an emphasis on individual learning styles, and the need to provide for diversity in learning processes among students. In the working class no such distinctions emerged in the interviews.

In the second interview item, the teachers were shown a set of four potential resources for use in a lesson on creative writing in order to access their orientation to school knowledge in a particular area of literacy learning – writing. The teachers were asked which of the resources they would use, and why. Again the interest is in the classification of subject knowledge, the extent to which the knowledge is bounded from other knowledge, and whether elements of literacy knowledge are highlighted. The teachers in the different settings classified subject knowledge differently in their selection and of tasks. In the middle-class setting the focus was generally on the learning potential that they recognized in a particular task. The discussion of the knowledge was strongly classified with respect to the instructional potential of the tasks by taking into account specific elements of literacy learning, and the cognitive level of both the tasks and the students. For example, one teacher selected a detailed picture of a city scene. She generated a range of potential tasks, and referred to a range of literacy elements in her response: sensory description, the poem and direct speech.

In the working-class setting the focus in the teachers' selection was generally on the potential enjoyment of learners, and their familiarity with the subject matter (often a theme that had been covered). For example, one teacher selected a task containing a birthday invitation and a set of questions, saying "It's going to be easy for them. They know the birthday party, they know the birthday parties, you know, we teach them, it is in their lessons". Subject knowledge was more weakly classified with respect to the instructional dimensions of the task, classification between writing as a subject and other knowledge was less strongly classified, and their criteria for selection tended more to aspects such as enjoyment, or to the everyday content of the resources.

Relations between teachers and learners

We showed above how the teachers in the working-class context differed in their emphasis on the outer, non-cognitive aspects of classroom activity, such as enjoyment and the behaviour of learners, compared to the middle-class teachers who placed greater emphasis on the

cognitive dimensions of learning. How did the teachers' construct the relationship teacher-learner, and how did they construct the child as learner?

The typifications of learners in the middle-class context were generated through a school ethos, exemplified in terms such as 'the Arbor child', and statements like 'We don't do that at Rhodes'. In the working-class setting, typifications of learners appeared to be strongly regulated by a community ethos. Teachers made constant reference to the types of homes and communities that the learners came from, and the social problems that they confronted. Typifications were also ascribed to learners on the basis that they came from the 'homelands', referring to historical, racially defined 'reservations'. The school itself, then, conferred on the learner a community, or local, identity.

The classification of agents, or the strength of the demarcation of students' pedagogic identities differs in the two contexts. In the middle-class setting there was a strong classification of the student and what being a student entailed. In the working-class setting this classification was weaker, with a focus on the child and their community (as opposed to school) location. These differences in the typifications of learners were mirrored by different orientations to the child. In the middle-class context the emphasis was on the learner (in a particular school and its set of practices) and learning, and in the working-class setting the emphasis was on the child (from a particular community), and *caring*. This was exemplified in statements by the teachers like "You encounter problems like, in fact from the kids, social problems. Then you as a teacher you need to be a mother to these kids, a counsellor, a social worker". And, I've got the love for the children, I've got the patience for the children. I can solve some problems for the children. The middle class teachers emphasised the instructional aspects of the =ir work: "The best thing is seeing something click, seeing a learner getting it". Another way of articulating this differences is to say that, in response to the interview questions, *in the working-class context, the student is first a child and then a learner, and in the middle-class context, the student is first a learner and secondly a child.*

Finally, it is possible to access the construction of particular framing relations (the teacher-learner relation) in the way in which the teachers spoke about their interactions with the learners in their classrooms. In the middle-class context the relations were more horizontal. Learners were seen as coming into the school with knowledge and interests. Three of the teachers mentioned learning from the children, and enjoying listening to their ideas. One teacher describes in some detail her interaction with a learner whose parents had complained that she was targeting him for discipline.

Now, and their perception is that I'm picking on him. So, am I? I don't mean to, but is it happening so often, is he not changing, is my voice getting an edge? I've got to look at how am I coming across to this little chap. So I spoke to him today, I said see this, and this was privately, I didn't do it in front of everybody, and his eyes just welled with tears, and I said Marty, I'm not cross, we need to understand each other.

'We need to understand each other' indicates a weakened the framing of the teacher-student relationship, and an individualised negotiated approach to interactions with students. In the working class context we encounter a very different orientation to learners. One teacher commented about children in her class who struggled:

Thando hasn't got brains. There's just nothing in his head but the TST [Teacher Support Team - in charge of professional development in the school] people don't want us to label the children as stupid, but it helps sometimes. One day I lined up the slow ones and I told them that God will take away their

brains if they don't use them. Now they have started borrowing books and they read on their own. The support teacher says that they have improved. Sometimes it helps to tell a person what she is.

Setting up '...we need to understand each other' against 'Sometimes it helps to tell a person what she is' is not to imply that the latter indicates a lack of care or concern. It simply indicates a different construction of the child and how the relationship between teacher and student is set up. In the broader Bernsteinian theory, different adult-child relations have implications for the development of different orientations to meaning (see also Hasan, 2001). In the analysis of the pedagogy we saw how this had consequences for the nature of knowledge made available in the classroom, how it is transmitted, and what is learnt.

In the foregoing discussion we have seen a difference in the way in which the teachers classified the knowledge aspects of their practice, and a difference in the framing of the relation teacher-student. In the middle-class context we see a strong classification of the instructional discourse and of agents, and a weaker framing of the social relation between teachers and students. The converse was true in the working-class setting, where pedagogic identities and the instructional were more weakly classified, and the relation teacher-student was more strongly framed.

Despite quantitatively equivalent training (albeit in stratified institutions), the teachers exhibit very different professional dispositions. In the working-class context these are more localized, communalized and less inclined towards strongly classified knowledge and agents. Here the student is first a child and then a learner. In the middle class context teachers' dispositions reflect a strong classification of knowledge, of learning and of the pedagogic subject; the student is first a learner and then a child.

In the next section we summarise the article thus far, in order to suggest relations between teachers, their social class positioning, their professional dispositions, pedagogic practice and student outcomes. The connections are exploratory; the purpose of the research was to begin to speculate on what the implications of teachers' social class positioning might be for pedagogy and student outcomes.

Discussion: teachers and social class

By virtue of being salaried employees in semi-professional occupations, with a certain level of education, all the teachers could be positioned as middle class. However, an analysis of the teachers' material and social circumstances, including a consideration of their access to economic, social and cultural capital, and their geographical location, showed how the teachers' social class positioning was in fact very different. The teachers in the working-class setting occupied an emerging middle-class social class position, between middle-class work and education levels, and working-class material constraint and social relations. This reflected a hybrid social class positioning.

From an examination of the professional dispositions of the teachers we also found differences. In the working class context, the teacher prioritizes the *child* and the need for discipline and caring, and the pedagogic identity of the learner was more weakly classified, and students were communalized, particularly through the invoking of local, community identities. In the middle-class context the emphasis was on the knowledge dimensions of the students' schooling experience, subject knowledge was more strongly classified and, in the relation teacher-student, the teacher prioritized the learner and his/her cognitive development.

There was a strong demarcation of the student's pedagogic identity, and an individualizing disposition was evident in the way in which the teachers spoke about students. Table 3 below summarizes the argument presented thus far.

Table 3: The teachers' positioning: social class, pedagogic disposition and school context

Social class of teacher	Pedagogic dispositions			School context			Classroom Pedagogic modality	Specialization of student voice
	Instructional	Regulative	Agents	Class context	Division of labour	Forms of solidarity		
Hybrid-class	C ⁻	Positional (F ⁺)	C ⁻	Working-class	Simple	Mechanical	⇒ Horizontal	⇒ Weak
Middle-class	C ⁺	Personal (F ⁻)	C ⁺	Middle-class	Complex	Organic	⇒ Vertical	⇒ Strong

The final columns show the summary analyses presented earlier – the pedagogic modalities identified in the classrooms in the different contexts, and the differential way in which student voice is specialized (identified through the two tasks). Bernstein's theory of the social points to the crucial relation between 'the material base of society (its class relations) and the forms of relay of 'symbolic controls' (discursive ways which structure our social experience)' (Shalem, 2004:60). The table raises the question as to which configuration is most likely to act as an amplifier or interrupter of particular codes brought to the school by students. It could be argued that there is an alignment between the home and the school in both the working-class and middle-class contexts in terms of the pedagogic modalities which they confronted in the school, and the individual/community emphasis. But the working class students required a greater break between the school and the home, an *interruption* such that they may be inducted into the school code.

Here a tentative comment can be made in relation to the teacher as a sub-relay, and the links between teachers' social class, strategic dispositions and pedagogic practice. The teachers from working-class backgrounds, rooted in working-class communities, and located in working-class schools, demonstrated particular strategic dispositions. Confronted by working-class students they were in a sense "held" within a community code, and constructed their practice along the lines of the horizontal pedagogic modality. This results in a weaker specialization of the students' voice with respect to the school code. The social organization of the school would appear to contribute to the absence of a systematic programme for the specializing of learners' voice with respect to the reproduction of knowledge in its weak external framing and simple division of labour.

A structural similarity between the middle-class teachers' strategic dispositions and the vertical pedagogic modality was suggested. Situated in middle-class schools with middle-class students the pedagogy supported the development of elaborated orientations to meaning and the strong specialization of students' voice with respect to the school code. The middle class teachers are strongly regulated by the social organisation of the school, and a complex division of labour.

If the fit seems neat, that is because the study was set up in such a way as to test a hypothesis and develop a model for the consideration of variation in terms of social class. Again, a greater range of forms would be expected across a greater number of research sites.

The teacher as interrupter

The literature on social class and the home-school interface emphasizes the challenge for working-class children to access the culture (Bourdieu, 1975; Larcau, 2000), language (Heath, 1985) and code (Bernstein, 1975) of the school. In the case presented here we see how the mismatch between the home and the school is in fact potentially reduced by the teachers in the working-class context who make available local, community meanings with which the learners are probably generally familiar. This is speculative, for we can't be sure what meanings are privileged in the home, short of going there. Nonetheless, it is clear from the analysis that the pedagogy in the working-class context does little to specialize the learners' voice with respect to the reproduction of school knowledge.

It appears from the discussion above that class does make a difference, not only for learners' performance in school, but also for teachers. The teachers in the two schooling contexts are confronted by learners who enter their classrooms with very different coding orientations. In the middle-class context, the majority of learners bring from the home an elaborated coding orientation, consistent with that privileged by schooling. In the working-class context the teachers encounter learners who make meaning and negotiate experience according to a community coding orientation. Whereas in the middle class context the teachers in constructing their pedagogy, are able to rely on the students' domestic acquisition of the school code, and this supports the vertical pedagogic modality, the teachers in the working class context are confronted with a very different pedagogic sanction. Crucially, what is required is that they *interrupt* the community code of the learners, in order to induct them into school ways of organizing experience and making meaning.

We are not able to offer any argument here about whether the working-class teachers, in another context and given a different set of circumstances and learners, with different social competences, would deploy a different pedagogic practice. Through a particular selection of schools, teachers and learners we have shown the mutually re-enforcing aspects of class in the schools. The suggestion is made that teachers' social class backgrounds and strategic dispositions are possibly related to particular pedagogic modalities and outcomes for students. These claims can be made, however, only in relation to this particular sample, with a specific school-teacher-student configuration in terms of social class location. Nonetheless, a metric is developed for setting pedagogic practice up against relevant school and teacher characteristics, the latter explored in terms of social class and professional dispositions. This can potentially be used in different settings in order to test the hypothesis further. However, if we are to find these mutually reinforcing aspects of social class, professional dispositions and pedagogic practice, what do we do about it? The crucial lever of teacher education is often presented as a point at which significant intervention can be made with respect to teacher practice. It is to this that we now turn.

Implications for teacher education

What are some of the implications of the findings of the study for teacher education? How might teacher education itself serve as both an amplifier (of "best practice" acquired by students while learners in schools) and an interrupter of those practices which are unlikely to

support learning in the present configuration of schooling in South Africa. In raising these questions Ensor's (1999) study on the recontextualising of pedagogic practices from a pre-service secondary mathematics teacher education course into schools is instructive.

Ensor found a particular form of pedagogy predominating on the teacher education course she studied which she describes as 'charismatic-therapeutic'; charismatic (loosely following Weber) in the sense that educational change was vested in the individual, and the individual capacity for change. In other words, changes in schooling were to be effected via the personal transformation of its agents. Therapeutic was used in the sense that the logic of pedagogy was intended to effect greater self-knowledge, and transformation, by encouraging the acquirer to reveal an array of personal resources which could, through such revelation and work on the self, become transformed. Pedagogy associated with this teacher educator position was less interested in mathematics teaching than in self-knowledge, and pedagogic strategies included circle dancing, claymodelling, faith walking and so forth. She also found, crucially, that the transmission of principles of practice of teaching were restricted to a single pedagogic site, the teacher education institution. The most successful students, and those who identified most strongly with the therapeutic strategies advanced on the course, were those from privileged backgrounds, and in particular white middle class female students. Coloured and African students, almost all from working class backgrounds, were clustered in the bottom grades. They confessed to being perplexed by the strong individualising message of the therapeutic practices and did not know what was expected of them. In a very real sense, students from working class backgrounds struggled to "crack the code" of the course.

Ensor argues, if student teachers are to be able to recruit effectively from teacher education courses (and if these courses are intended to make a difference to schooling), a number of structural constraints, which characterise most teacher education courses, need to be addressed. This includes amongst other things, the explicit communication of good practice, combined with the modelling of its tacit aspects, to make available to all students the criteria according to which it is evaluated. Shifting the demonstration of the privileged repertoire to school settings, explicitly showing students of different socialization experiences and social class, how to teach students from a range of backgrounds, offers the potential for the interruption of community codes that students bring to the school.

Conclusion

What do the arguments presented in the article suggest? Although tentative, it is that the privileging of horizontal modalities in working class schools has something to do with teachers' professional socialisation, something to do with what students from working class communities bring to the school, and something to do with shared community and school life of teachers and students and teachers' constructions of knowledge and learning.

The work also suggests that teacher education can assist teachers from working class backgrounds, moving into working class schools, to privilege a vertical modality if the teacher education courses *inter alia* take note of particular design features. One of the lessons of Ensor's study is that the highly individualised, student-centred competence mode type strategies privileged by the charismatic therapeutic position is not the way to go. For student teachers in that study from working class backgrounds the teacher education course didn't resonate with their experiences or what they prioritised, and was consequently not grasped. It was actually disempowering in spite of its rhetoric to the contrary. Teacher education has been at fault in the past in associating weakly framed pedagogic strategies with the key to

academic success at school. As a range of Bernsteinian studies have shown us, this widens the gap between working class families and the schools that serve them. We need greater sensitivity to the social relations of the home and school and how these might be aligned in ways that allow the privileging of a vertical modality. Teacher education should take this as a starting point, especially for primary school teachers. The question is how this might be done, and is a matter for further study.

It is true that social relations in the home support particular orientations to meaning. The gap between home and school is at its widest when we consider the working class child and the progressive primary school of the new middle class. But is there a way of narrowing the gap between working class home and a working class school which privileges a vertical modality – one which is more closely aligned with relations in the home and builds on them?

This leaves open the issue of the content of courses. Do we want to “make” all teachers middle class through the content we teach? Hardly. Rather, perhaps it is necessary to consider *who* it is that will be teaching, what prior socialization into practice they have undergone, which learners they will be teaching and in what particular settings in order that models of teacher education directly address the real exigencies of interrupting the process of social class reproduction for working class learners, and ensuring their *right* to the acquisition of the school code. That is, we need to interrogate models of teacher education, and curriculum, in the light of who is teaching and who is taught. Teacher quality viewed from this angle is a far more layered and challenging ‘factor’ than that presented in much of the research literature around what makes a difference for working class children.

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